Oklahoma
School Performance Review

Drummond Public Schools

December, 2018

Fellow Oklahomans:

The Office of Educational Quality & Accountability is pleased to present the Drummond Public Schools Performance Review upon the request of Drummond Public Schools (DPS).

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

We are grateful for the cooperation of DPS board, administration, staff, parents, and students for their input into this review. The administration and staff are also to be commended for their dedication toward improving educational opportunities for all students.

We are pleased to announce that this review is available in hardcopy through the Office of Educational Quality & Accountability and on the office's web site at www.oeqa.ok.gov

Respectfully yours,

Dr. Daniel Craig
Executive Director

Oklahoma School Performance Review

Drummond Public Schools
December 2018

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Executive Summary

The Oklahoma School Performance Review (OSPR) Program was authorized by the Oklahoma Legislature during the 2001 session, amended during the 2005 session, and amended again during the 2012 session. The responsibility to conduct school performance reviews was originally assigned to the Office of Accountability, which is now the Office of Educational Quality and Accountability. The purpose of a performance review is to develop findings, commendations, and recommendations regarding (1) containing costs; (2) improving management strategies; and (3) promoting better education for Oklahoma children.

The Office of Educational Quality and Accountability began the performance review of Drummond Public Schools (DPS) in April 2018. The Office of Educational Quality and Accountability contracted with Prismatic Services to assist with the review. The Prismatic consulting team conducted individual and small group interviews with district personnel. The team also reviewed operations by touring facilities, observing cafeteria operations, and riding school bus routes. Administrators, teachers, support staff, parents, and high school students completed confidential surveys. The consulting team tabulated the surveys and used the results in this review. Survey results are contained in **Appendices A** through **C**.

For comparison purposes, the Office of Educational Quality and Accountability selected five Oklahoma school districts as peer districts based upon size, geography, and demographics. They are: Robin Hill, Kremlin-Hillsdale, Sharon-Mutual, Pioneer, and Union City. These districts are called peer districts throughout this report.

For further comparison, a Community Group average is also used throughout the report. DPS falls into community group G1, which includes districts with an Average Daily Membership (ADM) of between 250-499 students. The "1" indicates that the percentage of DPS students eligible to receive free or reduced price meals is above the state average.

During this review, 66 recommendations were developed; they were designed to improve operations and support increased academic performance. In some cases, these recommendations should result in a net savings to the district, in some cases a net cost, and in some cases they should have no fiscal impact but should improve district effectiveness. A detailed list of costs and savings by recommendation appears in **Exhibit 5**.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The Office of Educational Quality and Accountability and Prismatic wish to express their appreciation to the Board of Education of Drummond Public Schools, its Superintendent, Mr. Brent Rousey, its principal, Mr. Jarrod Johnson, and the many district employees, students, parents, and community residents who supported and provided input for this review.

DRUMMOND PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Located in northwest Garfield County, Drummond covers 88 square miles. The DPS operates one campus that serves approximately 307 students from Pre-K through 12th grade.

In 2016-17, the fall enrollment in DPS was 344, mostly Caucasian and Hispanic (**Exhibit 1**). Of all students enrolled at Drummond Elementary School, more than half (52.3 percent) were approved for free or reduced-price meals. In grades 9-12 less than half of the students (40.5 percent) were approved for free or reduced-price meals.

Exhibit 1
DPS Student Enrollment and Socioeconomic Characteristics, 2016-17

School	Grade Span	Fall Enrollment	Caucasian	Black	Asian	Hispanic	Native American	Two or More Races	Eligible for Free or Reduced-Price Meals
Drummond Elementary	EC-8	260	78.5%	0%	0.4%	15.0%	3.9%	2.3%	52.3%
Drummond High School	9-12	84	85.7%	1.2%	1.2%	8.3%	2.4%	1.4%	40.5%

Source: Office of Educational Quality and Accountability, Profiles Database

Exhibit 2 shows demographic changes over the last five years in DPS. Over that time period, the average assessed property valuation per student increased by 0.7 percent, and eligibility for free and reduced-price meals decreased by 8.0 percent.

Exhibit 2
DPS Change in Demographics from 2012-13 to 2016-17

School Year	ADM	Ethnic Group					Average Assessed Property Valuation per Student	Eligible for Free or Reduced-Price Meals
		Caucasian	Black	Asian	Hispanic	Native American		
2012-13	324	80%	1%	1%	15%	4%	$37,728	54%
2013-14	330	82%	1%	1%	13%	3%	$35,285	42%
2014-15	318	81%	1%	1%	13%	5%	$41,485	45%
2015-16	308	83%	0%	1%	13%	4%	$42,485	49%
2016-17	348	80%	3%	6%	13%	4%	$37,991	49%
Change	**7.4%▲**						**0.7%▲**	**(8.0%)▼**

Source: Office of Educational Quality and Accountability, Profiles Database

Exhibit 3 compares DPS' demographics with its peers, the community group average, and the state for 2016-17. DPS had demographics comparable to those of most of its peers, although its Hispanic population was notably higher. The assessed property valuation in DPS was lower than that of most of its peers, the community group, and the state. DPS' percentage of students

eligible for free or reduced-price meals was in the middle of its peers, but lower than the community group and state.

Exhibit 3
Demographics of DPS, Peer Districts, and State, 2016-17

Entity	ADM	Ethnic Group					Average Assessed Property Valuation per Student	Eligible for Free or Reduced-Price Meals
		Caucasian	Black	Asian	Hispanic	Native American		
Drummond	**348**	**80.2%**	**0.3%**	**0.6%**	**13.4%**	**3.5%**	**$37,991**	**49.4%**
Robin Hill	318	75.2%	1.6%	0.0%	6.6%	11.0%	$23,297	40.8%
Kremlin-Hillsdale	303	83.7%	2.0%	1.0%	6.5%	2.0%	$105,070	40.2%
Sharon-Mutual	290	88.6%	0.0%	0.0%	7.3%	2.1%	$128,554	38.8%
Pioneer	387	81.5%	2.6%	2.8%	6.4%	4.4%	$26,905	59.0%
Union City	314	78.6%	0.3%	0.3%	7.9%	1.0%	$56,103	55.8%
Community Group	**361**	**69.3%**	**1.2%**	**0.6%**	**11.3%**	**10.7%**	**$77,595**	**52.3%**
State	**1,267**	**49.4%**	**8.8%**	**2.3%**	**16.8%**	**13.9%**	**$49,471**	**62.7%**

Source: Office of Educational Quality and Accountability, Profiles Database

The data in **Exhibit 4** reflect ADM trends compared to the peers, community group and state. DPS had the third-highest ADM increase among its peers and has increased more than the state and community.

Exhibit 4
Drummond, Peer Districts, and State Student ADM Trends, 2012-13 to 2016-17

Entity	ADM					Percent Change
	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	
Drummond	**324.1**	**330.0**	**317.5**	**308.4**	**348.0**	**7.4%▲**
Robin Hill	253.4	257.8	279.8	300.5	318.0	25.5%▲
Kremlin-Hillsdale	325.4	311.2	294.2	314.2	303.0	(6.9)%▼
Sharon-Mutual	306.7	301.2	303.7	307.4	290.0	(5.4)%▼
Pioneer	376.8	394.1	391.2	383.0	387.0	2.7%▲
Union City	288.0	296.6	295.9	294.8	314.0	9.0%▲
Community Group	**352.5**	**356.4**	**362.0**	**365.9**	**361.0**	**1.4%▲**
State	**1,271.1**	**1,292.2**	**1,299.4**	**1,305.4**	**1,267.0**	**(0.3)%▼**

Source: Office of Educational Quality and Accountability, Profiles Database

COMMENDATIONS

The Office of Educational Quality and Accountability identified "exemplary" or "best practices" in Drummond Public Schools that led to 24 separate commendations. The Office of Educational Quality and Accountability recommends that other school districts throughout Oklahoma examine these exemplary programs and services to see if they could be adapted to meet their local needs. The commendations are listed below and explained in detail in each chapter.

Chapter 1: MANAGEMENT, PERSONNEL, AND COMMUNICATIONS

The Drummond school board is commended for establishing an atmosphere of trust and cohesiveness at DPS.

The Drummond School Board and superintendent are commended for effective policy review and publication practices.

The DPS central office is commended for overall effective customer service to district stakeholders.

The school board and superintendent are commended for keeping an eye on the bottom line while still meeting the needs of the school district.

The superintendent is commended for succession planning in the best interest of DPS.

The superintendent is commended for being accessible to district staff and gaining the trust and confidence of staff and the community.

The school district is commended for seeking community involvement and partnership.

DPS is commended for utilizing a variety of communication strategies that have created pride and trust in the school district from patrons and staff.

Chapter 2: INSTRUCTIONAL DELIVERY SYSTEM

The district is commended for implementing departmentalization to improve student achievement.

The district is commended for the instructional leadership provided by the principal.

The district is commended for initiating improvements to the gifted education program.

The district is commended for employing a full-time counselor.

Chapter 3: BUSINESS OPERATIONS

DPS is commended for actively applying for competitive state and federal grants.

DPS is commended for getting the community behind their efforts and keeping them involved.

The superintendent and financial secretary are commended for providing the school board a listing of all purchase orders for approval and a listing of checks for review monthly.

Chapter 4: FACILITIES USE AND MANAGEMENT

DPS is commended for its diligent and precise management of the series bonding process, and its establishment of a long-term facilities planning and construction relationship with an experienced preK-12 school design firm with offices in Enid, only 15 miles away.

DPS is commended for its efforts to save money by its innovative use of an alternative source and form of electric energy.

DPS is commended for its awareness of security needs to protect the people of the school district, and its swift response to the OSSI Report with recommended security measures the district could implement in short order.

Chapter 5: SUPPORT SERVICES

DPS follows a thorough process for qualifying students for free and reduced meals through both the application and direct certification processes, resulting in eligibility rates for both that are higher than the peer averages.

DPS has a parent communication system in place.

DPS is commended for forming a partnership with Autry Technology Center to acquire donated equipment and computers.

DPS is commended for addressing security concerns by submitting and receiving a grant through the NRA for a building security system.

DPS is commended for allowing bus drivers to pre-drive each bus routes for safety and accuracy.

The transportation department is commended for supporting the safety of students riding the buses and adhering to the standard practices in discipline.

RECOMMENDATIONS AND PROJECTED COSTS AND SAVINGS

A list of recommendations with their associated costs or savings is provided in **Exhibit 5**. In each chapter, implementation strategies and the estimates of fiscal impact follow each recommendation in this report. The implementation section associated with each recommendation highlights the actions necessary to achieve the proposed results. Many of the recommendations have no costs or savings associated with them, but are designed to formalize, improve, and streamline operations. In some cases, the consulting team has made recommendations that will likely generate savings for the district, but in an effort to be conservative, no specific savings were estimated.

It must be understood that not all of the recommendations can be started at one time. The consulting team did not want to place priorities by indicating which recommendations should be

implemented immediately and which ones implemented later. It will be up to the district to decide which ones to implement and the timelines for beginning implementation.

The Office of Educational Quality and Accountability recommends that the Drummond Board of Education ask district administrators to review the recommendations, develop an implementation plan, and monitor its progress.

Exhibit 5
Summary of Costs and Savings by Recommendation

	Recommendation	Estimated (Costs) or Savings					Total Five-Year (Costs) or Savings
		2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	
Chapter 1	**Management, Personnel, and Communications**						
1	Consider scheduling board meetings in the evening once per quarter.						$0
2	Improve the data gathering process for the superintendent's evaluation to ensure board members have adequate information.						$0
3	Develop a succession planning process for administrators, veteran teachers, and for non-teaching staff.						$0
4	Use the results of this performance review to bring teachers, support staff, parents, and other community leaders into a school strategic planning process. .						$0
5	Use a sign-in sheet to track those having access to personnel files.						$0
6	Develop and implement an evaluation system for support staff.						$0
7	Reacquire copies of evaluations from the teachers themselves in order to have a reference file.						$0
8	Develop a clearly articulated multi-year plan or schematic that describes the professional development program for teachers and non-teaching staff including detailed objectives and multi-year strategies for achieving the training necessary.						$0
9	Develop strategies for improving the availability of substitute teachers.						$0
10	Study and develop a systematic volunteer program for DPS.						$0
11	Update regularly the content of the DPS website and Facebook page.						$0
12	Task the office secretary with the upkeep of communications lists, including email groups and phone lists, then have DPS leaders explore additional options to enhance internal communications.						$0
	Subtotal	**$0**	**$0**	**$0**	**$0**	**$0**	**$0**
Chapter 2	**Instructional Delivery System**						
13	Develop and implement a plan to annually evaluate instructional resources, software, enrichment, and remediation resources.	($10,000)	($10,000)	($10,000)	($10,000)	($10,000)	($50,000)

	Recommendation	Estimated (Costs) or Savings					Total Five-Year (Costs) or Savings
		2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	
14	Implement processes and procedures to monitor the effectiveness of departmentalized grades in math and ELA and adjust as needed.						$0
15	Develop and implement district-wide processes and procedures for administering criterion-referenced benchmark assessments to monitor progress and ensure mastery of OAS.	($1,500)	($1,500)	$0	$0	$0	($3,000)
16	Develop and implement processes and procedures to vertically align and pace the core curriculum from Kindergarten through grade 12.	($5,000)	($5,000)	$0	$0	$0	($10,000)
17	Implement district-wide accountability procedures to ensure all OAS standards are taught, assessed, and paced with fidelity.						$0
18	Implement an in-depth assessment to ensure all teachers have access to, and use, up-to-date teaching materials, digital resources, or textbooks that align with all aspects of the OAS.						$0
19	Implement a district-wide process for analyzing student performance data throughout the school year and use the analysis results to adjust curriculum and instruction.						$0
20	Implement a tiered interventions model for remediation.						$0
21	Implement a formalized, research-based district-wide PLC process with regularly scheduled release time, standardized norms, and support structures for teachers to collaborate and focus on continuous school improvement.	($5,000)	$0	$0	$0	$0	($5,000)
22	Strengthen services to special education students through implementing more inclusionary classrooms and co-teaching practices.						$0
23	Explore options for offering supportive instructional resources, digital learning opportunities, and collaborative learning activities between the library and the regular classroom.						$0
24	Continue to strengthen the gifted and talented program thorough enriched instruction in the regular classroom.						$0
	Subtotal	**($21,500)**	**($16,500)**	**($10,000)**	**($10,000)**	**($10,000)**	**($68,000)**
Chapter 3	**Business Operations**						
25	Develop a formal policy for the district's general fund balance that establishes a fund balance target range, provides guidance on how to maintain the minimum balance, and requires reports for fund balance status to the school board.						$0

	Recommendation	Estimated (Costs) or Savings					Total Five-Year (Costs) or Savings
		2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	
26	Include a variety of stakeholders in the budgetary process.						$0
27	Purchase a time clock system or use the timekeeping system that MAS has available.						$0
28	Adopt an investment policy to earn interest on idle cash and research possible investment options that are permitted by Oklahoma state law and Federal regulations that could yield a higher interest rate, thus earning the district additional revenue.						$0
29	Develop and adopt fixed asset policies and procedures, such as capitalization thresholds, surplus procedures, and lost asset recovery; then, inventory fixed assets using a consolidated inventory listing.						$0
30	Improve handling of child nutrition money, by transferring money collected on a more regular basis.						$0
31	Adjust gate receipt procedures by placing two people in charge of gate money to count the gate receipts after the event, complete a receipt of money along with a deposit slip, and make a night deposit at the bank.						$0
32	Allow only teachers, the financial secretary, and cafeteria staff to collect money.						$0
	Subtotal	**$0**	**$0**	**$0**	**$0**	**$0**	**$0**
Chapter 4	**Facilities Use and Management**						
33	Review and revise the current conceptual plans.						$0
34	Schedule preventive maintenance.	($7,735)	($3,320)	($3,320)	($3,320)	($3,320)	($21,015)
35	Hire one full-time maintenance and repair technician.	($30,000)	($30,000)	($30,000)	($30,000)	($30,000)	($150,000)
36	Conduct an inspection of all facilities, document all deficiencies, and correct them.	($5,000)	$0	$0	$0	$0	($5,000)
37	Hire two additional 0.5 FTE custodians.	($15,500)	($15,500)	($15,500)	($15,500)	($15,500)	($77,500)
38	Conduct a feasibility assessment and initiate a performance contract.						$0
39	Establish an energy conservation awareness program at DPS.						$0
40	Implement the recommendations of the OSSI report.						$0
41	Implement the recommendations of the OSSI report.						$0
	Subtotal	**($58,235)**	**($48,820)**	**($48,820)**	**($48,820)**	**($48,820)**	**($253,515)**

	Recommendation	Estimated (Costs) or Savings					Total Five-Year (Costs) or Savings
		2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	
Chapter 5	**Support Services**						
42	Develop a formal process for evaluating the performance of the FSMC and perform this assessment annually, prior to contract renewal.						$0
43	Assess options for changes that will result in a more cost-effective food service program.						$0
44	Develop strategies for increasing student participation rates, focusing first at the secondary level.						$0
45	Provide nutrition education to students using a variety of venues.						$0
46	Increase the use of technology by implementing components available from the POS software provider that will enable parents to apply online for meal benefits and make student payments.						$0
47	Develop a kitchen equipment replacement plan by monitoring repair frequency and age of items; include an annual amount for repairs and capital expenditures in the child nutrition budget.	($4,742)	($4,742)	($4,742)	($4,742)	($4,742)	($23,710)
48	Develop and implement a "student as technician" program in cooperation with Autry Technology Center and a teacher technician program paid with stipends to supplement technology support at the sites.	($2,850)	($2,850)	($2,850)	($2,850)	($2,850)	($14,250)
49	Establish a district technology budget that is realistic and supportive of classroom needs.	($25,000)	($25,000)	($25,000)	($25,000)	($25,000)	($125,000)
50	Identify staff member(s) to teach computer basics to students and assist teachers and students in computer labs.	($5,000)	($5,000)	($5,000)	($5,000)	($5,000)	($25,000)
51	Develop a training program that focuses on increasing teachers' basic technology skills and integrating technology into the instructional program.						$0
52	Create a technology committee comprised of administrators, teachers, and parents or students to develop and update the district's technology plan.						$0
53	Implement Google for Education to increase communication and classroom collaboration throughout the district at no cost.						$0
54	Complete and implement support procedures and a technology work order system that includes features such as logging, priority assignment, and completion.						$0

		Estimated (Costs) or Savings					Total Five-Year (Costs) or Savings
	Recommendation	**2019-20**	**2020-21**	**2021-22**	**2022-23**	**2023-24**	
55	Develop district technology standards, procedures, and processes for administrative tasks, equipment and software purchases, implementation, and upgrades.						$0
56	Update and expand the district website. Increase efforts to provide clear and consistent methods of communicating with stakeholders.	($2,300)	($1,800)	($1,800)	($1,800)	($1,800)	($9,500)
57	Adopt a formal inventory process and procedure for computers and other technology equipment that includes assigning new equipment and maintaining a record of all technology devices.						$0
58	Develop procedures to assess technology use and satisfaction with the goal of establishing higher use.						$0
59	Assess all areas of the school building and increase the number of wireless access points where needed.	($1,100)	$0	$0	$0	$0	($1,100)
60	Assign clerical transportation functions to clerical staff.						$0
61	Adopt and implement a plan for special needs considerations for students transported via regular buses.						$0
62	Develop an operation's manual specific to student transportation.						$0
63	Assign a teacher or clerical staff member to partner with local industry peers and the OSDE to gain knowledge of pupil transportation's roles, objectives, and responsibilities.						$0
64	Remind parents of the need to be on-time at the bus stop and enforce rules for boarding buses.						$0
65	Begin the process of cataloging all vehicle repairs, invoicing parts, services and any financial information related to the operation of support vehicles.						$0
66	Review cleaning and inspection requirements with all bus drivers.						$0
	Subtotal	**($40,992)**	**($39,392)**	**($39,392)**	**($39,392)**	**($39,392)**	**($198,560)**
	Total savings	**$0**	**$0**	**$0**	**$0**	**$0**	**$0**
	Total costs	**($120,727)**	**($104,712)**	**($98,212)**	**($98,212)**	**($98,212)**	**($520,075)**
	Total net savings and costs	**($120,727)**	**($104,712)**	**($98,212)**	**($98,212)**	**($98,212)**	**($520,075)**

School Performance Review reports are typically lengthy and densely packed with information. They can at first be overwhelming to district stakeholders. For that reason, the Office of Educational Quality and Accountability has identified the most likely "tipping point" recommendations. These are recommendations that the Office of Educational Quality and Accountability believes are the most important to implement and most likely to have the greatest organizational impact.

Of the 66 recommendations made, the Office of Educational Quality and Accountability believes these seven recommendations to be the most critical:

- **Develop a succession planning process for administrators, veteran teachers and for non-teaching staff.** Currently, DPS has no succession plan for veteran staff and teachers. The implementation of a cross training program and a succession plan can lead to more effective and cost-efficient transitions for DPS.

- **Implement district-wide accountability procedures to ensure all OAS standards are taught, assessed, and paced with fidelity.** DPS lacks a standardized accountability monitoring system to ensure all state standards are taught with fidelity. The accountability system should enable teachers to document OAS standards taught and student progress toward mastery is closely monitored. The accountability system should enable teachers to document OAS standards taught and student progress toward mastery is closely monitored. The process is a support system to ensure students are appropriately prepared for success on state assessments.

- **Adopt an investment policy to earn interest on idle cash and research possible investment options that are permitted by Oklahoma state law and Federal regulations that could yield a higher interest rate, thus earning the district additional revenue.** DPS is not maximizing the potential for earning interest on its idle cash that is permitted under Oklahoma Statues: Title 70-5-115. Investing idle cash by using sweep accounts will result in a higher rate of return on investments and higher interest earnings.

- **Hire one full-time maintenance and repair technician**. The APPA standard for maintenance is one employee for approximately 45,000 square feet of facilities. With 83,300 square feet of facilities to maintain, the district should have approximately 2.0 maintenance staff but currently has only one technician serving only on weekends. Additional technicians will allow the district to catch up on needed equipment, safety, and life safety maintenance. It will also allow the district to implement a viable preventive maintenance program.

- **Develop a formal process for evaluating the performance of the child nutrition contractor and perform this assessment annually, prior to contract renewal**. A committee should be formed, comprised of the principal, the financial secretary, and the cafeteria manager. This group should set goals such as participation levels to evaluate the performance of the contractor. This group should diligently assess this data to decide if the contract is still cost-effective as a replacement for a self-operated program.

- **Complete and implement support procedures and a technology work order system that includes features such as logging, priority assignment, and completion.** Currently, DPS

has no formal procedures or documented process for submitting and tracking technology issues and resolutions. The absence of procedures leads to inefficiencies, additional costs, and unresolved support issues. With an online work order system and written procedures, staff will be able to access it from the district network to report issues or dilemmas with technology.

- **Adopt and implement a plan for special needs considerations for students transported via regular buses.** The transportation department has a limited understanding of the needs of special needs students its buses daily transport. The transportation director and bus drivers should receive educational training and information on each student's individual situation, and each driver should receive supplementary training to understand, monitor, report, and interact with any student assigned to his or her vehicle.

Chapter 1:

Management, Personnel, and Communications

Chapter 1

Management, Personnel, and Communications

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

    A. Governance
    B. Organization and Management
    C. Planning and Evaluation
    D. Personnel Management
    E. Community and Parent Involvement
    F. Communications/Public Relations

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

Once the school board adopts goals and objectives for the district, it is the responsibility of the superintendent and staff to establish administrative policies and procedures to achieve the desired results. That achievement involves recommending the hiring and retention of employees, as well as ongoing communication with the community to ensure a clear understanding of the goals and the district's efforts to accomplish them.

Background

Located in northwest Garfield County, Drummond covers 88 square miles. The DPS operates one campus that serves approximately 307 students from Pre-K through 12th grade.

In 2016-17, the fall enrollment in DPS was 344, mostly Caucasian and Hispanic (**Exhibit 1-1**). Of all students enrolled at Drummond Elementary School, more than half (52.3 percent) were approved for free or reduced-price meals. In grades 9-12 less than half of the students (40.5 percent) were approved for free or reduced-price meals.

Exhibit 1-1
DPS Student Enrollment and Socioeconomic Characteristics, 2016-17

School	Grade Span	Fall Enrollment	Caucasian	Black	Asian	Hispanic	Native American	Two or More Races	Eligible for Free or Reduced-Price Meals
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Drummond High School	9-12	84	85.7%	1.2%	1.2%	8.3%	2.4%	1.4%	40.5%

Source: Office of Educational Quality and Accountability, Profiles Database

Exhibit 1-2 shows demographic changes over the last five years in DPS. Over that time period, the average assessed property valuation per student increased by 0.7 percent, and eligibility for free and reduced-price meals decreased by 8.0 percent.

Exhibit 1-2
DPS Change in Demographics from 2012-13 to 2016-17

School Year	ADM	Ethnic Group					Average Assessed Property Valuation per Student	Eligible for Free or Reduced-Price Meals
		Caucasian	Black	Asian	Hispanic	Native American		
2012-13	324	80%	1%	1%	15%	4%	$37,728	54%
2013-14	330	82%	1%	1%	13%	3%	$35,285	42%
2014-15	318	81%	1%	1%	13%	5%	$41,485	45%
2015-16	308	83%	0%	1%	13%	4%	$42,485	49%
2016-17	348	80%	3%	6%	13%	4%	$37,991	49%
Change	**7.4%▲**						**0.7%▲**	**(8.0%)▼**

Source: Office of Educational Quality and Accountability, Profiles Database

Exhibit 1-3 compares DPS' demographics with its peers, the community group, and the state for 2016-17. DPS had demographics comparable to those of most of its peers, although its Hispanic population was notably higher than most. The assessed property valuation in DPS was lower than that of most of its peers, the community group, and the state. DPS' percentage of students eligible for free or reduced-price meals was in the middle of its peers, but lower than the community group and state.

Exhibit 1-3
Demographics of DPS, Peer Districts, and State, 2016-17

Entity	ADM	Ethnic Group					Average Assessed Property Valuation per Student	Eligible for Free or Reduced-Price Meals
		Caucasian	Black	Asian	Hispanic	Native American		
Drummond	**348**	**80.2%**	**0.3%**	**0.6%**	**13.4%**	**3.5%**	**$37,991**	**49.4%**
Robin Hill	318	75.2%	1.6%	0.0%	6.6%	11.0%	$23,297	40.8%
Kremlin-Hillsdale	303	83.7%	2.0%	1.0%	6.5%	2.0%	$105,070	40.2%
Sharon-Mutual	290	88.6%	0.0%	0.0%	7.3%	2.1%	$128,554	38.8%
Pioneer	387	81.5%	2.6%	2.8%	6.4%	4.4%	$26,905	59.0%
Union City	314	78.6%	0.3%	0.3%	7.9%	1.0%	$56,103	55.8%
Community Group	**361**	**69.3%**	**1.2%**	**0.6%**	**11.3%**	**10.7%**	**$77,595**	**52.3%**
State	**1,267**	**49.4%**	**8.8%**	**2.3%**	**16.8%**	**13.9%**	**$49,471**	**62.7%**

Source: Office of Educational Quality and Accountability, Profiles Database

The data in **Exhibit 1-4** reflect ADM trends compared to the peers, community group, and state. DPS had the third-highest ADM increase among its peers and has increased more than the state and community.

Exhibit 1-4
DPS, Peer Districts, and State Student ADM Trends, 2012-13 to 2016-17

Entity	ADM					Percent Change
	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	
Drummond	**324.1**	**330.0**	**317.5**	**308.4**	**348.0**	**7.4%▲**
Robin Hill	253.4	257.8	279.8	300.5	318.0	25.5%▲
Kremlin-Hillsdale	325.4	311.2	294.2	314.2	303.0	(6.9)%▼
Sharon-Mutual	306.7	301.2	303.7	307.4	290.0	(5.4)%▼
Pioneer	376.8	394.1	391.2	383.0	387.0	2.7%▲
Union City	288.0	296.6	295.9	294.8	314.0	9.0%▲
Community Group	**352.5**	**356.4**	**362.0**	**365.9**	**361.0**	**1.4%▲**
State	**1,271.1**	**1,292.2**	**1,299.4**	**1,305.4**	**1,267.0**	**(0.3)%▼**

Source: Office of Educational Quality and Accountability, Profiles Database

A.　　GOVERNANCE

Oklahoma state education laws, as codified in the Oklahoma State Department of Education (SDE) and district policies, establish the powers and responsibilities of the district board of education and the superintendent. The School Law Book contains 1,469 sections numbered

consecutively and each section provides legal guidance for school district governance and operations. The information provided in **Exhibit 1-5** reflects sections relevant to board of education organization and basic governance principles.

Exhibit 1-5
OSC: Board of Education Governance and Organization

Topic	Section
School District – Definition	8
School System – Administered by State Department of Education, etc.	17
Positions in School System – Definitions	18
General Fund – Definition	22
Building Fund – Definition	23
State Board of Education – Powers and Duties	32
Governing Body of School District	123
Independent and Dependent School Districts – Board of Education – Members Election	125
Expansion of Board	126
Workshops for New Board Members – Expenses of Members Attending	127
Relation by Affinity or Consanguinity Prohibition	129
Employment of Relative of Member of Board of Education	130
Excluding Litigious Board Member from Proceedings	131
School District Treasurer – Assistant Local Treasurer	132
Local Treasurer – Surety Bond – Duties – Cash Investment Ledgers	133
Oath of Office	135
Requirements for Bonds for Employees and Officers	136
Powers and Duties	138
Meetings of Board – Executive Sessions – Compensation of Members of Boards of Districts with ADA Exceeding 15,000 or Population Exceeding 100,000	148
Officers of Board	149
President – Duties	150
Vice President – Duties	151
Clerk – Duties	152
Oklahoma Open Meeting Act	787
Executive Sessions	793

Source: Oklahoma School Law Book, 2015

Powers and duties of the board of education are contained in Section 32 of the School Law Book. These powers and duties cover all activities related to operating public school districts. Key powers and duties include:

- election of officers;

- establishing board policies;

- building and operating schools and related facilities; and

- contracting for an annual audit of all district and school activity funds.

Section 126 addresses the size and election of school boards in Oklahoma, and Section 149 provides a description of the required officers for school boards. The Drummond board consists of five members, each of whom is elected to a five-year term. **Exhibit 1-6** reflects the year elected and the next election date for each board member.

Exhibit 1-6
Drummond School Board Members

Board Member	Board Position	Year of Election or Appointment	Term Expires
Curtis Mack	President	2016	2021
Forest Mann	Vice President	2017	2022
Lisa Donaldson	Clerk	2015	2020
Matt Buchanan	Deputy Clerk	2014	2019
Scot Gorton	Member	2018	2023

Source: DPS, August 2018

The district holds board elections each February. The board members swear in elected members and vote on officers at the next meeting. A contract is in place for an annual audit of district finances. Sections 157, 158, and 159 list the duties of each officer of the board of education. The board must elect a clerk, who may or may not be a member of the board.

Section 127 outlines the training requirements for school board members. Within 15 months following election, new school board members are required to complete 12 hours of instruction on education issues in the areas of:

- school finance;

- legal issues (employment, due process, new laws, the *Oklahoma Open Records Act,* and the *Oklahoma Open Meeting Act*); and

- duties and responsibilities of district board of education members (including special education and ethics).

The 12 hours must include one hour of instruction in school finance, one hour of instruction in the *Oklahoma Open Records Act* and the *Oklahoma Open Meeting Act*, and one hour of instruction in ethics. The remaining hours may be satisfied by attending a two-day workshop to be held by the SDE or other workshops held by another organization or association approved by the Oklahoma State Board of Education.

Reelected board members are required to complete six hours of instruction within 15 months of reelection. Included in these six hours is one hour of instruction in the following:

- school finance;

- the *Oklahoma Open Records Act* and the *Oklahoma Open Meeting Act*; and

- ethics.

The remaining hours may be satisfied by attending a workshop, class, or seminar addressing the education issues set forth above for new members.

Board of Education Meetings

The Drummond Board of Education meets on the second Thursday of the month at 6:00 am in the school library. The meeting place and time may be changed by agreement of a majority of the board members. Special meetings are held as needed, and board members receive agendas and any supporting information in advance of the meeting.

The superintendent provides the school board with a packet the week before each meeting. The routine business items are located together on the consent agenda and acted upon before getting into any other topics. The agenda is posted online on the school website and on the front and back door of the DPS school building. Minutes of all previous board meetings are kept in a folder in the office of the finance officer who also serves as the minute's clerk. Minutes are also posted on the district's website. In the school handbook the following values statements are included near the front page:

> Drummond strives to maintain an atmosphere in school and at school activities, which enhances the potential for success of every member of the school community.

> Drummond's commitment to learning includes the concept that, in order to learn, students must be guaranteed an environment that is safe, classrooms where mutual respect is the underlying principle and where rules are publicized, explained, and enforced.

> The school's rules derive from the goals of respect for self, for property, and for others.

> In enforcing the rules of the school, the district, the state, and the staff of Drummond believes that students must understand that their actions do have consequences. As students become responsible for their own behavior, they develop the self-discipline needed for good citizenship.

> To ensure the success of students in a school environment; teachers, administrators, and parents must work cooperatively. Teachers and administrators will be responsible for modeling and teaching students the behavioral standards desired in the classroom and in the school.

Parent support is essential to school staffs' efforts to ensure that students respect and follow the rules and regulations of the school.

Students are responsible for appropriate behavior, regular school attendance, and continued striving for academic excellence.

Parents are expected to take an active role in supporting the academic, attendance and discipline policies of the school and the individual teachers. Parents are encouraged to call the classroom teacher periodically to inquire about their child's progress/homework. Homework is an integral part of the school program. Students will have homework on a regular basis and parents are expected to monitor and supervise homework assignments.

Parents are also asked to read the school newsletters and any other memos or bulletins sent home from the school.

FINDING 1-1

The school board is strongly supportive of the superintendent, the principal, and district staff. Its members recognize the efforts to improve district conditions and student achievement. The school board hired a new superintendent (he has been in the district three years) and have supported series bond measures to update facilities. Several members mentioned that they are already talking to the community about the needs represented in the upcoming bond issue (February). The school board is focused on improving the school district and all board members were available to the consulting team. In separate phone interviews, it became clear that board members are highly cooperative with one another, realistic about the current status of the school district, and focused on DPS becoming a great school district. Board members also clearly understand that their role is not to micromanage the district but to hire the superintendent and then work together to accomplish the school district business and goals. All of the board members expressed satisfaction with the performance of the superintendent, the principal, and teachers. They were all confident in the current direction of the school system. Staff and patrons likewise seem confident in the school board. **Exhibit 1-7** provides the results of parent and staff surveys regarding the board.

Exhibit 1-7
Staff and Parent Survey Responses Regarding the School Board

Survey Group	Survey Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Parent	School board members listen to the opinions and desires of parents and community members.	22%	28%	39%	11%	0%
Parent	School board members know and understand the educational needs of students in the district.	22%	39%	28%	11%	0%
Staff	School board members listen to the opinions of parents and community members.	31%	46%	23%	0%	0%
Staff	The school board understands the needs of the school district.	33%	52%	15%	0%	0%

Source: Prismatic Survey Results, May 2018

In the current funding climate for public schools in Oklahoma, school district administration, teachers, and school board must act in consensus to improve public education and defend its role in communities. This is particularly true for rural communities where resources other than state funding are hard to come by. Cohesiveness in beliefs and action is a best practice that starts with the school board and can lead to more effective decision-making at all levels of the school district.

A recent study published by the Center for Public Education cites eight characteristics of effective school boards.[1] Paramount is the establishment of goals and collaboration with stakeholders. **Exhibit 1-8** shows the eight characteristics and the evidence the consulting team found regarding whether DPS' board of education processes meet each characteristic. The setting of goals is the trigger for all other effectiveness indicators in this analysis.

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[1] CPE. (2011, January 28). *Eight characteristics of effective school boards: At a glance*. Retrieved from http://www.centerforpubliceducation.org/Main-Menu/Public-education/Eight-characteristics-of-effective-school-boards

Exhibit 1-8
Eight Characteristics of Effective School Boards

	Characteristic	DPS

1	Effective school boards commit to a vision of high expectation for student achievement and quality instruction and define clear goals toward that vision.
	  a. Establishing "non-negotiable" goals (goals that all staff must act upon once set by the board) in at least two areas: student achievement and instruction goals.
	  b. Having the board align with and support district goals.
	  c. Monitoring goals for achievement and instruction.
	  d. Using resources to support achievement and instruction goals.
		Partially Present

2	Effective school boards have strong shared beliefs and values about possibilities for students and their ability to learn the system and its ability to teach children at high levels.
	  a. Board members consistently expressed their belief in the learning ability of all children and gave specific examples of ways that learning had improved as a result of district initiatives.
	  b. Poverty, lack of parental involvement, and other factors were described as challenges to be overcome, not as excuses.
	  c. Board members expected to see improvements in student achievement quickly as a result of initiatives.
	  d. Comments made by board members were indicative of the differences in high achieving versus low achieving schools. In a high-achieving district, for example, comments might include: "This is a place for all kids to excel." Another might be, "Sometimes people say the poor students have limits. I say all have limits. I believe we have not reached the limits of any of the kids in our system."
		Present

3	Effective school boards are accountability driven, spending less time on operational issues and more time focused on policies to improve student achievement.	Present
4	Effective school boards have a collaborative relationship with staff and the community and establish a strong communication structure to inform and engage both internal and external stakeholders in setting and achieving district goals.	Partially Present
5	Effective boards are data savvy; they embrace and monitor data, even when the information is negative, and use it to drive continuous improvement.	Present
6	Effective school boards align and sustain resources, such as professional development, to meet district goals.	Present

7	Effective school boards lead as a united team with the superintendent, each from their respective roles, with strong collaboration and mutual trust:
	  a. a trusting and collaborative relationship between the board and superintendent;
	  b. creation by the board of conditions and organizational structures that allow the superintendent to function as the chief executive officer and instructional leader of the district;
	  c. evaluation of the superintendent according to mutually agreed-upon procedures; and
	  d. effective communication between the board chair and superintendent, and among board members.
		Present

8	Effective school boards take part in team development and training, sometimes with their superintendents, to build shared knowledge, values, and commitments for their improvement efforts.	Present

Source: Adapted by Prismatic, February 2013

The effectiveness indicators were examined for DPS through review of board of education interviews, community focus groups, and survey data, as well as superintendent and principal interviews. Effectiveness indicators two, three, five, six, seven, and eight were present in DPS. Indicators one and four were partially affected by recommendations elsewhere in this report. Overall, this is a highly effective board of education.

COMMENDATION

The Drummond School Board is commended for establishing an atmosphere of trust and cohesiveness at DPS.

FINDING 1-2

The school board meetings are consistently organized and efficiently operated. Meeting agendas are posted appropriately, and agenda items include reports on academics and activities. The superintendent provides a board packet of relevant material prior to the meeting and provides a superintendent and principal oral report to keep board members up to date on the district. The finance officer also provides regular financial reporting to the school board. The finance officer works with the superintendent to create the agendas and takes minutes in the meetings.

The only concern noted by the consulting team is that board meetings are held at 6:00 am. Although all board members are supportive of this schedule and think it works well for school administration, it likely does not promote teacher and community participation at the meetings. board members mentioned that student or group recognition activities take place at 7:00 am, after the regular board business is completed.

Various reasons were given for the early schedule, including that it works better for some of the administration and for some board member work schedules. The early morning schedule started during the previous superintendent's tenure.

It is an unusual practice to have all board meetings in the early mornings. One of the positives mentioned for continuing this practice is that staff do not have to make an extra trip back to the school at night. This morning schedule would, however, seem difficult for teachers or families getting children ready for school and might preclude them from attending. That said, parents and staff were given the opportunity to comment at the end of the administered surveys on anything else desired, and there was no mention of the board meeting schedule. The community focus group also did not address this issue. One of the three teacher focus groups noted that the 6:00 am schedule helps keeps dissent and complaints to a minimum but also keeps teachers from attending. The consulting team also noted that the district has occasionally scheduled special meetings at 7:00 am.

The school board is charged with providing elected representation, and activities should be accessible to the entire community. **Exhibit 1-9** reflects a concern that parents responded to the survey regarding the school board with *no opinion* as often as any other response. Typically, that response is prevalent when people are uninformed about school operations and have no frame of reference from which to form an opinion. In a small community, this should be a concern of administrators and school board members.

Exhibit 1-9
Parent Survey Responses Regarding the School Board

Survey Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
School board members listen to the opinions and desires of parents and community members.	22%	28%	39%	11%	0%
School board members know and understand the educational needs of students in the district.	22%	39%	28%	11%	0%

Source: Prismatic Survey Results, May 2018

RECOMMENDATION

Consider scheduling board meetings in the evening once per quarter.

Between now and the time for development of the next board meeting calendar, the superintendent and board should discuss changing the calendar to incorporate a few evening meetings. The superintendent and principal could in the meantime have some informal discussions with staff about the possibility of change. A more formal step might include issuing a survey to stakeholders and staff to gauge their interest in a board calendar change.

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING 1-3

The school board indicated during interviews that it has established goals for the superintendent and has an evaluation plan that also provides objectives for the superintendent. Several board members mentioned that the evaluation instrument used with the superintendent is cumbersome and asks questions concerning the superintendent's performance that board members do not typically have a chance to observe without being intrusive.

The reality is that an evaluation instrument seldom includes all of the information needed to assess performance. That makes individual instruments difficult to use alone in an evaluation process. A more viable process would provide board members with additional factual information to consider. There are several methods for doing this prior to the evaluation session. A common method is to have the superintendent maintain a drop file during the year into which evidence of activities that contribute to goal accomplishment may be stored. Then, close to the evaluation session, copies are provided to board members with whatever explanations the superintendent desires. A second common method is to utilize an anonymous response survey sent to a sample of key individuals inside and outside the school district by the board president. A third method would be to have the superintendent compile a 360-degree anonymous response

survey completed by a sampling of staff.[2] Changes in the evaluation process should be acceptable to the superintendent before implementing.

RECOMMENDATION

Improve the data gathering process for the superintendent's evaluation to ensure board members have adequate information.

Prior to the superintendent's next evaluation and preferably no later than the summer of 2019, the board president and superintendent should determine the method that will be utilized, and the steps needed to complete the evaluation process.

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING 1-4

The superintendent brings policies to the school board for updating as regulations change. The board policy book was established by the current superintendent. Comments from interviews indicate that there was no board policy book before this superintendent. Both the principal and the finance officer maintain copies of the policy book. Interviews suggest that administrative staff and board members are knowledgeable and comfortable with the current practice.

Policies provide a basis of consistency to district and school level decisions. Consistent policies serve to inform the public regarding how the district operates and convey a sense of stability and fairness. The policy book is available in a printed form and on the district's website.

COMMENDATION

The Drummond School Board and superintendent are commended for effective policy review and publication practices.

B.   *ORGANIZATION AND MANAGEMENT*

The superintendent of a school district serves as the chief executive officer and is the administrative leader responsible for policy implementation and day-to-day operations. An effective central office organizational structure is essential to the efficient delivery of services throughout a school district. Efficient central office organizational structures have the appropriate spans of control for district leadership with clearly defined lines of authority that are reflected in the district's organizational charts. Effective central office structures encourage communication at all levels.

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[2] http://www.osba.org/-/media/Files/Resources/Board-Operations/2017-SuperintendentEvaluation-Workbook.pdf?la=en

The superintendent is in his third year at DPS. The principal has been in his position for about five years. The principal moved to the position from a teaching position and is in charge of both elementary and secondary schools. As is typical of small districts, all central office personnel have multiple responsibilities. For example, the counselor registers students, sends for records, signs parents up for the parent portal, and helps with the testing program. As such, job titles often do not delineate the full scope of responsibilities. **Exhibit 1-10** reflects the current organizational chart for DPS.

Exhibit 1-10
DPS Organizational Chart
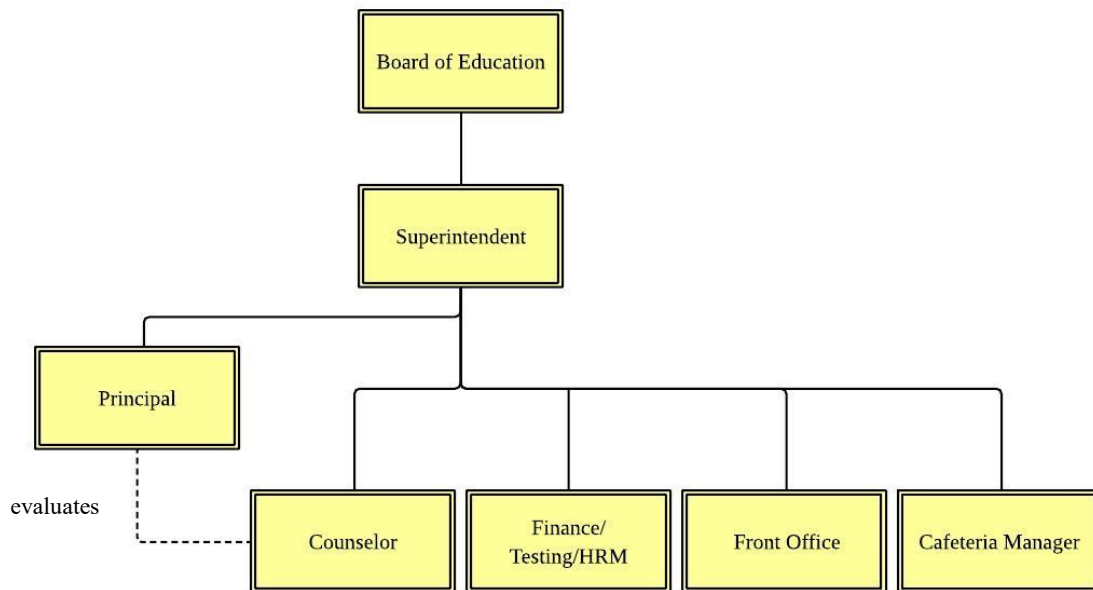
Source: Created by Prismatic, August 2018

FINDING 1-5

The central office administrative organization appears to be optimal concerning the split of duties, particularly given the budget issues faced by all Oklahoma school districts. Interviews, surveys, and focus groups suggest that the central office is viewed in a positive manner by both staff and parents.

Survey results support the perception of an effective central office organization (**Exhibit 1-11**). Of the staff, 66 percent *strongly agree* or *agree* that the central office effectively communicates with district staff. Staff also believes the district communicates effectively with parents and community members (78 percent). Most parents believe that district and school staffs are accessible (83 percent).

Exhibit 1-11
Staff and Parent Survey Responses Regarding the Central Office

Survey Group	Survey Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Staff	The central office effectively communicates with district staff.	33%	33%	4%	22%	7%
Staff	The district effectively communicates with parents and community members.	22%	56%	7%	11%	4%
Parent	District and school staffs are accessible to parents.	39%	44%	11%	6%	0%

Source: Prismatic Survey Results, May 2018

COMMENDATION

The DPS central office is commended for overall effective customer service to district stakeholders.

FINDING 1-6

The expense of administrative staff in small districts is under constant scrutiny by patrons and the media. It is understandable when you look at simple numbers but that is deceiving. Small school administration must accomplish the same basic duties as any other school, no matter the size of that school. Small school administrators often must accomplish duties with less staff assisting and all doing many different jobs on top of the main job responsibilities. Nevertheless, small schools should be roughly comparable while still providing enough flexibility for district differences in needs.

Considering all districts in the G1 Community Group and the district's current enrollment, having 1.9 administrative positions is comparable to similarly sized Oklahoma districts. **Exhibit 1-12** compares the number of administrative positions with student enrollment for all 53 of the G1 districts. The DPS data point is shown in orange. As shown, DPS' 2016-17 administrative staffing is in line with many peers and below that of several.

Exhibit 1-12
Administrative Staffing as a Function of Enrollment
All G1 Oklahoma School Districts, 2016-17
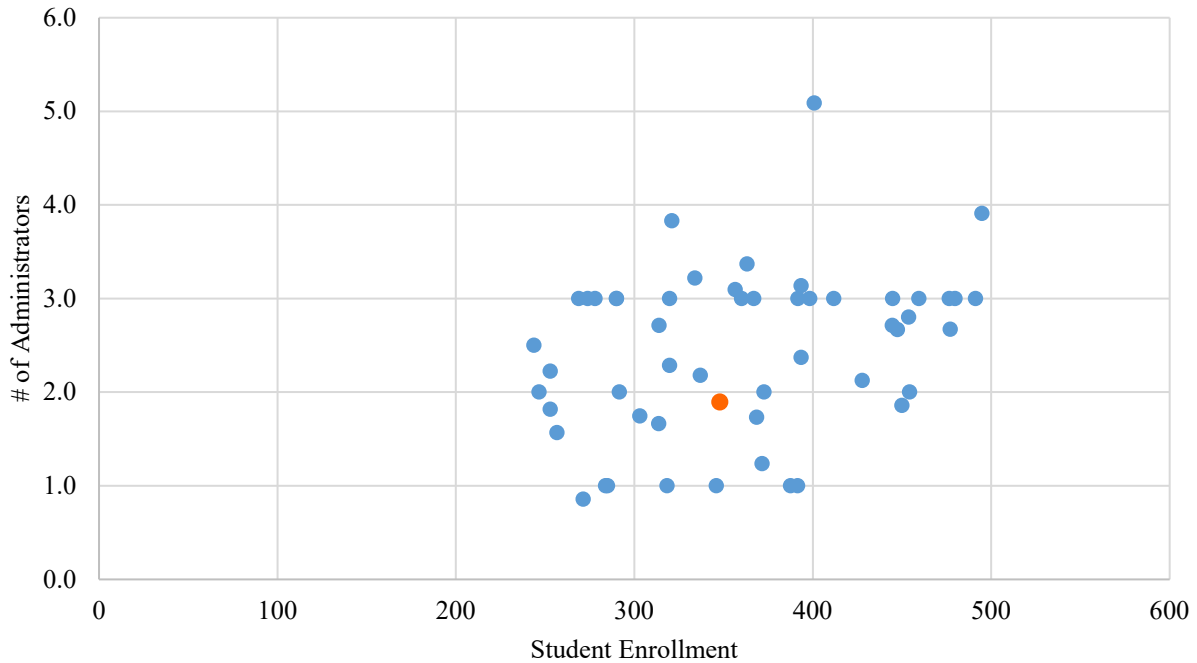
Source: Office of Educational Quality and Accountability, Profiles Database

Exhibit 1-13 compares the DPS ratio of administrative staff to teaching staff against the five comparison schools. DPS has the third lowest ratio of teachers to administrators. It is slightly below the average peer ratio of 10 to 1; three comparison schools have a higher ratio and two have a lower ratio.

Exhibit 1-13
Comparison of Teacher and Administrator Staffing, 2016-17

Entity	ADM	Number of Administrators (FTE)	Number of Classroom Teachers (FTE)	Ratio of Teachers to Administrators
Drummond	**348**	**2**	**17**	**9:1**
Robin Hill	318	1	17	17:1
Kremlin-Hillsdale	303	2	20	10:1
Sharon-Mutual	290	3	19	6:1
Pioneer	387	1	22	22:1
Union City	314	3	17	6:1
Peer Average	**322.4**	**1.9**	**19**	**10:1**

Source: Office of Educational Quality and Accountability, Profiles Database and Prismatic calculations

Exhibit 1-14 compares DPS' per-student spending on administrator salaries with that of its peer districts. As shown, DPS' spending was about the same as the peer average of $499 per student.

Exhibit 1-14
Administrative Expenditures Comparison, 2016-17

Entity	ADM	Number of Administrators	Total Salary	Administrator Cost per Student
Drummond	**348**	**2**	**$170,082**	**$489**
Robin Hill	318	1	$87,491	$275
Kremlin-Hillsdale	303	2	$162,292	$536
Sharon-Mutual	290	3	$244,869	$844
Pioneer	387	1	$92,602	$239
Union City	314	3	$216,343	$689
Peer Average	**322.4**	**1.9**	**$160,719**	**$499**

Source: Office of Educational Quality and Accountability, Profiles Database

Exhibit 1-15 compares DPS and peer districts on 2018-19 certified administration and reflects the variety of configurations that are used to provide administrative services. In the last two years, three school districts have added more administration and three have stayed the same. Three have combined the superintendent's position with a principal position and three have kept the positions separate, including DPS.

Exhibit 1-15
DPS Certified Administrators compared to Peer Districts 2018-2019

School	Position	Position	Position	Total
Drummond	Superintendent	Elem/ Sec. Principal		2
Robin Hill	Superintendent/Principal	Assistant Principal		2
Kremlin-Hillsdale	Superintendent	Secondary Principal	Elementary Principal	3
Sharon-Mutual	Superintendent	Secondary Principal	Elementary Principal	3
Pioneer	Superintendent/Principal			1
Union City	Superintendent/HS Principal	Elementary Principal		2

Source: Created by Prismatic, August 2018

COMMENDATION

The school board and superintendent are commended for keeping an eye on the bottom line while still meeting the needs of the school district.

FINDING 1-7

The superintendent has a preliminary and informal succession plan taking shape for his eventual retirement from DPS. Succession planning is not often found even in larger districts, but it is a management best practice that should be considered.

Succession planning is especially valuable in circumstances where the district is rural and the pool of available applicants for executive jobs is small. It is exemplary that the superintendent has started to develop a strategy well before he is ready to leave the district. This succession plan includes planning for facilities upgrades (bond issue) and completion of that construction effort, as well as developing timing for teacher additions as the population grows.

The superintendent's plan also includes providing broader leadership experiences to staff who may be considered later by the board more formally as a replacement. As part of the effort, the principal has voluntarily assumed other duties not typically a principal's, as an informal training arrangement with the current superintendent. This seems to be working well but the arrangement may need to be reviewed as the school grows in size, enhances curriculum, and adds staff and technology improvements. The effort may be counter-productive if it interferes with aspects of the principal's normal job responsibilities. Nevertheless, it is a good method of training for the principal who also holds a superintendents' certificate.

COMMENDATION

The superintendent is commended for succession planning in the best interest of DPS.

FINDING 1-8

There is, at this time, no succession planning for veteran staff such as the principal, finance officer, or front office support, and no formal plans for replacing veteran teachers. There is not a cross training program for non-teaching staff which could help not only succession planning but also prepare the district for staff suddenly becoming ill or requiring surgery. Certain areas, like payroll, are essential. The superintendent and others have mentioned that there are always plenty of teacher applicants for positions in DPS. Most of those come from Enid, but some also come from other surrounding school districts. Nevertheless, there is a concern regarding veteran teachers and being able to replace that knowledge and experience when the time comes, and it is necessary. Replacing veteran staff is particularly important in small school districts where teachers and non-teaching staff perform a variety of functions other than their main job. Those secondary job assignments also have to be filled when someone leaves. Accomplishing a few planning steps can lead to more effective and cost-efficient transitions for DPS.

Veteran teachers in a school district carry the history of the district and fulfill a variety of roles with the ease of experience. They are difficult to replace. The same is true of principals, central office staff, superintendents, custodians, cafeteria workers, bus drivers, maintenance workers, and coaches.

Thoughtful and deliberate planning for changes in teachers, non-teaching staff, and leadership is needed in order to avoid organizational chaos and instability. Students and staff benefit from

smooth transitions and agenda continuity. Short tenures are not helpful. Typical succession planning includes several elements outlined below:[3]

- anticipate the district needs, considering growth factors, the economy, community, age of staff, likely retirements, financial resources, and timing. Determine both the district's short and long-range goals as an organization. Chart the district's vision for the future (strategically plan). Identify the type of leaders needed to get the district there and develop a profile of what the district is looking for in a leader in DPS;

- adopt the attitude that the district will search for teacher, administrative, and central office candidates proactively before a vacancy happens. Establish recruiting practices that help with this. These recruiting practices can range from advertising hard to find positions such as math, science, or special education before vacancies happen, to seeking intern teachers, partnerships with other organizations, shared teaching staff, outsourcing, and many other techniques;

- provide for distributed leadership throughout the district's organization which recognizes and allows motivated individuals, no matter their position, to lead. Deepen the district's leadership pool by creating a deep bench of experienced staff who assume leadership. For example, teacher's providing training to other teachers, bus drivers involved in solving routing issues, chairing committees, leading professional development, leading professional learning communities, and volunteering to mentor new staff;

- once potential leaders are identified, mentor/coach them and continue to give them opportunities to experience leadership;

- for specific positions, as existing staff departure approaches, provide for overlap of tenures to allow the new person to benefit from training next to the person that is leaving. The longer the time they have together, the better the outcome. Practical experience is the best training; and

- annually evaluate the district's planning for succession.

Succession planning is a relatively new concept in education and key staff may need to do research regarding how to do it and perhaps acquire some training. When the point of comfort with the concepts is reached, a more formalized succession planning effort could take place, which includes board policy and gathering of specific information concerning veteran staff and their many responsibilities. As succession plan policies and activities are developed a review by the district legal counsel is also appropriate.

RECOMMENDATION

Develop a succession planning process for administrators, veteran teachers, and for non-teaching staff.

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[3] Hanover Research. (2014). *Best practices in succession planning*. Retrieved from https://www.hanoverresearch.com/media/Best-Practices-in-Succession-Planning.pdf

The superintendent or his designee should develop a committee to address succession planning. for veteran school staff. Timing on this should coincide with efforts to profile the district and its needs in a strategic planning process. Lastly, the district does not have to enter full-blown succession planning to benefit from some of its concepts. Those include:

- identifying potential leaders based on what they voluntarily do such as chairing committees or leading professional development;

- regarding key staff, clearly identifying all of the things specifically that they do and, more importantly, how they do them;

- selecting staff for cross training in key job duties in the event that a key staff member becomes ill or is out for more than a week;

- providing necessary cross training;

- searching for replacement staff before vacancies happen and creating a potential employee list; and

- broadening the opportunities in DPS for staff to voluntarily take on leadership roles.

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING 1-9

The superintendent's leadership style has been described as open door and approachable. He is viewed as being direct in communications with staff but is not involved in the direct supervision of teachers, as that duty is delegated to the principal. The superintendent is often out greeting students when arriving in the morning and teachers describe him as well-liked by the students. During interviews with staff, it was noted that the superintendent attends many of the evening sports and activities. He also coaches the basketball team.

The community overall views the superintendent as knowledgeable about the district, motivated, interested in the community, and committed to student success. **Exhibit 1-16** shows that 86 percent of staff *strongly agree* or *agree* that the superintendent is accessible. More than half believe he communicates effectively with district staff (67 percent). Of the parents who responded to the survey, 50 percent feel the superintendent is a respected and effective leader. The exhibit reflects that 39 percent of the parents had *no opinion* on the superintendent. This seems a matter of lack of contact or opportunity to develop an opinion. Several comments noted in the community focus group and at the end of parent survey responses seem to support this interpretation.

Exhibit 1-16
Staff and Parent Survey Responses Regarding the Superintendent

Survey Group	Survey Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Staff	The superintendent is accessible to district staff.	30%	56%	4%	11%	0%
Staff	The superintendent effectively communicates with district staff.	19%	48%	15%	15%	4%
Parent	The superintendent is a respected and effective leader.	28%	22%	39%	11%	0%

Source: Prismatic Survey Results, May 2018

COMMENDATION

The superintendent is commended for being accessible to district staff and gaining the trust and confidence of staff and the community.

C.   *PLANNING AND EVALUATION*

To be effective, a strategic plan must lay out key milestones to measure progress, establish a priority ordering of the items to be accomplished, provide a timeline for which each item is to be accomplished, and assign accountability for each item to a specified position in the school district organization. Finally, the organization must provide periodic reports on the status of the plan's implementation and any changes that must be made due to changes in circumstances or changes in assumptions.

According to Cook (2000), strategic planning requires total concentration of the organization's resources on mutually pre-determined measurable outcomes.[4] Strategic planning allows an organization to have a clear focus on what it is doing and what it intends to do based upon established and monitored goals. A strategic plan will include long-term goals, which typically can be achieved in five to ten years. Short-term goals, which typically can be achieved in a year, support the attainment of the long-term goals.

In 2007, Reeves summarized his work, which analyzed hundreds of strategic plans across 20 dimensions, controlled for school demographics, and compared student achievement to a baseline year.[5] The study found that substantially higher achievement was realized if strategic plans included:

- monthly monitoring of student performance, teacher strategies, and leadership practices;

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[4] Cook, Jr., W. (2000). *Strategics: The art and science of holistic strategy.* Westport, Connecticut: Quorum Books.
[5] Reeves, D.B. (2007). *Leading to change/making strategic planning work.* Educational Leadership, 65(4).

- continued self-evaluation by teachers and administrators regarding every program initiative and strategy; and

- attribution by teachers and leaders that their work is the fundamental cause of student growth rather than demographics.

Reeves concludes that school leaders must decide whether the strategic planning process is focused on achievement and therefore adds value. All too often, organizations develop strategic plans that are broad statements with no ties to specific goals. For example, a school district may establish a goal of "improving student performance" without setting a target or identifying the strategies it plans to employ to achieve the desired outcome, or even fully defining "student performance." A better goal would be "improving student achievement by 10 percent from last year to this year as measured by state standardized testing." The district would then identify the means by which this goal would be achieved, such as through additional small group instruction with benchmark testing to monitor progress.

According to the Balanced Scorecard Institute:[6]

> There are many different frameworks and methodologies for strategic planning and management. While there are no absolute rules regarding the right framework, most follow a similar pattern and have common attributes. Many frameworks cycle through some variation on some basic phases:
>
> 1. analysis or assessment, where an understanding of the current internal and external environments is developed;
>
> 2. strategy formulation, where high level strategy is developed, and a basic organization level strategic plan is documented;
>
> 3. strategy execution, where the high level plan is translated into more operational planning and action items; and
>
> 4. evaluation or sustainment/management phase, where ongoing refinement and evaluation of performance, culture, communications, data reporting, and other strategic management issues occur.

The graphic in **Exhibit 1-17** explains the logic of the balanced scorecard approach to strategic planning.

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[6] http://balancedscorecard.org/Resources/Strategic-Planning-Basics

Exhibit 1-17
Balanced Scorecard Approach

Source: Balanced Scorecard Institute,[7] September 2008

FINDING 1-10

Other than a tight grip on spending and the bond issue planning, there is not a longer-term strategic plan. The superintendent, principal, and school board have discussed the long-term financial health of the school district but planning and evaluation of the district remains an informal process with only administrators involved.

DPS depends on state funding and has little in the way of local resources. The lack of extra money in an extremely tight budget requires much forethought on expenditures.

The pervasive attitude, even through the teaching staff, is to spend only for something you must have that would otherwise affect the quality of the teaching program for students. The superintendent has, through careful planning, successfully raised the district's fund balance. His stated goal is to achieve a fund balance that would allow for some summer projects and still have a conservative fund balance in the event that state funds continue to be cut. The bond issue planning involved a bond committee to review district needs and put them in rank order from 1 to 30. The superintendent and school board seem in agreement that the future of DPS is dependent upon DPS setting itself apart from other small school districts through quality teaching, academic expectations, and pride in student activities. In this scenario, DPS becomes a destination school for transfers and ensures both its continued growth and its place and role as a "hub" school to be consolidated with, not vice versa. Beyond that discussed vision, DPS leadership has not engaged in long-term strategic planning that included all stakeholders.

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[7] http://www.balancedscorecard.org/BSCResources/TheNineStepstoSuccess/tabid/58/Default.aspx

Exhibit 1-18 shows that 71 percent of staff surveyed *strongly agree* or *agree* that the district has a long-range strategic plan that guides the decision-making process. Teaching staff in interviews and comments from surveys indicated a broad understanding of the district's philosophy as spelled out above. Most seem to equate bond planning with strategic planning.

Exhibit 1-18
Staff Survey Responses Regarding Organization and Planning

Survey Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
The district has a long-range strategic plan that guides the decision-making process.	19%	52%	26%	4%	0%

Source: Prismatic Survey Results, May 2018

RECOMMENDATION

Use the results of this performance review to bring teachers, support staff, parents, and other community leaders into a school strategic planning process.

This performance review may provide a basis for more long-term planning and an opportunity to broaden the range of people involved in planning. That can help ensure the continued positive growth of DPS. This effort might also lead naturally to a broader discussion of what the community must accomplish economically to sustain quality schools (DPS has the lowest property valuation of the districts in its comparison group). Drummond as a community lacks housing and business development, which is a concern for the long-term financial health of the school district.

Moving forward, a strategic planning process is a perfect opportunity to create a district sustainability plan as a sub-task. Steps towards a sustainability plan should include:

- honest appraisal of the school comparing it to researched standards of rural school sustainability in order to identify gaps and targets for improvement;

- administrative initiatives to improve or add services geared towards sustainability issues that are low cost and can be done immediately, while beginning to frame a plan for funding other costlier initiatives. This could include new grants and partnerships, bond issues, donations, or other fund-raising efforts;

- development of a committee heavily weighted towards parent and community membership to work closely with administration. This committee can provide opinions on which sustainability initiatives have a high probability of acceptance by the community. Additionally, the committee can review barriers to school sustainability and make recommendations for removal of barriers to administration;

- school sustainability viewed as a long-range planning issue, to develop into a part of a broader strategic plan for the school district; and

- a broad and sustained communications effort to promote the school's reputation and image. This effort should also highlight new initiatives and enrichment efforts implemented by DPS.

Citing statistics from the National Center for Education and a report by the Rural School and Community Trust, the Center for American Progress issued a report titled "The Rural School Solution: How Community Schools Can Reinvigorate Rural Education." [8] **Exhibit 1-19** provides a set of ideas from that report that could provide a basis for action in DPS. The key for DPS is to review current programming for gaps in delivery and use that knowledge to improve programming.

<div align="center">

Exhibit 1-19
Rural School Sustainability Strategies

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Area	Strategies Used to Promote Stable Enrollment
General Operations	• Move to multi-grade classrooms as a cost savings • Open facilities to serve community functions* • Switch to four-day school week (where distance to school is a problem)
Staffing	• Provide special in-service opportunities • Create partnerships with other schools • Employ teachers with multiple certifications* • Pass a local levy*
Fiscal	• Obtain bids and comparison pricing on all purchases • Join a consortium of schools to leverage purchasing • Cooperate with other districts for specialized personnel • Promote the school's reputation* • Increase student count through approaches such as all-day Kindergarten
Distance Learning	• Use for professional development • Use for student enrichment • Offer Advanced Placement classes online

<div align="center">

Based on Source: The Rural Educator, Fall 2011
*Indicates an activity currently present in DPS

</div>

The district should develop a study group to determine how DPS might benefit from a strategic planning process. This group should involve teachers, parents, business owners, board representation, and the superintendent. If the decision is to proceed into strategic planning, then this study group can lay out a plan of action to begin the process.

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[8] Center for American Progress. (2010). The rural school solution: How community schools can reinvigorate rural education. Retrieved from http://www.americanprogress.org/issues/education/report/2010/09/22/8376/the-rural-solution/

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

D.   PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT

Personnel costs typically represent the largest expense in school districts. As a result, efficient and effective management of human resource functions is critical to the overall effectiveness of a district. In small districts, human resource functions are usually managed by the superintendent with clerical assistance. Typical tasks of a school district's human resources department include the following:

- recruiting employees;

- overseeing the interviewing, selection, and processing of new employees;

- retaining employees;

- processing promotions, transfers, and resignations;

- determining and maintaining compensation schedules;

- managing insurance programs;

- managing employee benefits programs;

- planning and forecasting personnel needs;

- maintaining complete employee records, including records on training and certification;

- developing and maintaining job descriptions, which would include establishing required job credentials;

- managing the employee evaluation process;

- handling employee complaints and grievances, including grievance procedures;

- developing personnel policies; and

- ensuring that the employer follows all laws and regulations.

To support the mission of a school district, it is important that these human resource functions be efficient, effective, and aligned to federal and state law. Like most employers, public school districts must comply with federal laws governing human resource management. These laws include:

- *Fair Labor Standards Act*, which governs wages and hourly payments;

- *Americans with Disabilities Act*, which requires employers to provide reasonable accommodation to any employee or job applicant who has a disability; and

- *Equal Employment Opportunity Act*, which prevents employers from making hiring and firing decisions based upon age, race, religion, gender, or other factors not related to performance.

In addition, state laws govern school district human resource administration in areas such as grievances, due process, termination, and contract renewal. Personnel selection and retention are part of a continuous process necessary to ensure an experienced, quality teaching staff.

Personnel management coordination in DPS is the overall responsibility of the superintendent, assisted by non-teaching staff and the principal. The area of professional development is the responsibility of the superintendent or principal assisted by the professional development committee. Personnel records and benefits documentation are maintained by the finance secretary who also generates a monthly payroll with information provided by employee records.

Exhibit 1-20 reflects high satisfaction by staff with personnel-related district activities. Interviews and document reviews suggest a high rate of efficiency by staff charged with the various aspects of personnel management.

Exhibit 1-20
Staff Survey Responses Regarding District Personnel

Survey Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
I have an accurate, written job description to guide me in my work.	33%	44%	11%	7%	4%
I know to whom I report for all my job functions.	59%	37%	0%	0%	4%
I understand the district's salary schedule and justification for paying extra-duty stipends.	44%	48%	4%	4%	0%
The district actively recruits high quality staff to fill vacant positions.	22%	67%	7%	4%	0%

Source: Prismatic Survey Results, May 2018

FINDING 1-11

DPS personnel files are secure. The file cabinets have locks and are kept behind a locked office door. Across the files reviewed by the consulting team, the contents included in the files were consistent. The only area of concern in regard to personnel files is that the district does not maintain a sign-in sheet indicating who has had access to the file.

According to the Society of Human Resource Management (SHRM) guidelines, personnel files and medical records are private documents and should be maintained in locked file cabinets in a secure location. Files should only be accessible to those people with a legitimate need to access the files. Special guidelines apply to securing and handling medical information obtained through medical examinations and tests.[9] The *Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)* also requires that medical records be secured and accessible only for safety and health purposes.

RECOMMENDATION

Use a sign-in sheet to track those having access to personnel files.

To avoid potential problems, district staff should review guidelines related to personnel file security. Then, the district should incorporate a sign-in sheet to track accessing of files.

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING 1-12

The district does not have a consistent personnel evaluation system for support staff. As a result, employees do not receive consistent feedback to enhance their performance and have limited opportunity for formal supervision. In interviews and documentations, the consulting team did not see evidence of a consistent plan of evaluation for support staff, nor a format for the evaluation activity. **Exhibit 1-21** provides an evaluation tool used in another rural school district.

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[9] www.shrm.org

Exhibit 1-21
Evaluation Tool for Non-Teaching Staff

Performance Criteria	Appropriate Level of Performance	Room for Growth	Unsatisfactory
Attendance			
Job Knowledge			
Quality of Work			
Attitude			
Dependability			
Conduct			
Teamwork			
Neatness			
Do you recommend remediation?	Yes / No		
I agree with the above evaluation	Check		
I disagree with the above evaluation	Check		
I request a job targets report for the Needs to Improve ratings checked above	Check		
Two week notice statement			
Signature lines			

Source: Blair Public Schools, 2013

RECOMMENDATION

Develop and implement an evaluation system for support staff.

Supervisors should provide support employees with a deliberate and thorough evaluation process. Support staff should provide input into the development of an evaluation form and schedule. The evaluation form does not necessarily need to be tailored to each position (paraprofessional, bus driver, etc.), but it should include clear descriptors of expectations. It should also include a place that the employee can add comments, if desired. Most importantly, it should include a signature line so that each employee performance is officially documented. Any disciplinary action against an employee without this measure would be fairly easy to contest.

Once the form and schedule have been determined, the district should designate who is responsible for evaluating each support staff member. The results of the evaluation process should be used to support improved and continued high performance of support staff.

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

Professional Development

While the development of a competent team of certified teachers and non-teaching staff is often considered a human resource function, the professional development of personnel is also a critical component of instructional delivery and school improvement. Professional development programs enhance the professional knowledge, skills, and attitudes of educators to improve student learning. The base of knowledge in education is growing so rapidly in every academic discipline that educators must stay current and develop new expertise. Effective school districts provide ongoing learning opportunities for all educators. The SDE standards specify that professional development should increase competencies in core curricular areas.

The organization Learning Forward, formerly the National Staff Development Council, has established standards for quality professional learning that increase educator effectiveness and results for all students.[10] These standards characterize quality professional learning as that which:

- occurs within learning communities committed to continuous improvement, collective responsibility, and goal alignment;

- requires prioritizing, monitoring, and coordinating resources for educator learning;

- integrates theories, research, and models of human learning to achieve its intended outcomes;

- aligns its outcomes with educator performance and student curriculum standards;

- requires skillful leaders who develop capacity, advocate, and create support systems for professional learning;

- uses a variety of sources and types of student, educator, and system data to plan, assess, and evaluate professional learning; and

- applies research on change and sustains support for implementation of professional learning for long-term change.

The *No Child Left Behind Act* (*NCLB*)) quality professional development guidelines specify that professional development should be ongoing, targeted to student achievement, and distributed over time. Single presentation and one-time only activities are not considered quality professional development under *NCLB* guidelines. These guidelines apply to professional development activities that are funded with federal funds.

FINDING 1-13

The teacher evaluation model adopted by DPS is the Teacher and Leader Effectiveness (TLE) model and it is designed to provide teachers and principals with data that can lead to self-improvement. The TLE model is utilized for teacher evaluation but the consulting team was

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[10] http://learningforward.org

unable to view a sample due to a computer glitch that erased the administrator's prior year evaluations.

The TLE model provides a link to improvement through professional development by utilizing an evaluation rubric that clearly profiles areas of needed improvement. The teacher is expected to assist the principal in evaluation activities and to select professional development that will enhance teacher performance and improve outcomes for students. The principal assists the teacher by removing barriers and helping the teacher acquire high quality professional development. The principal has the role of analyzing the results of TLE for the entire staff and noting trends and areas where larger groups of teachers could use training to increase effectiveness and then reporting that to professional development planners. The TLE model also includes evaluation models for non-teaching certified staff such as counselors and speech pathologists. **Exhibit 1-22** shows the evaluation rubric for teachers.

Exhibit 1-22
Tulsa TLE Observation and Evaluation Rubric for Teachers

Domain	Relative Weight	Dimensions
Classroom Management	30%	1. Preparation 2. Discipline 3. Building-Wide Climate Responsibility 4. Lesson Plans 5. Assessment Practices 6. Student Relations
Instructional Effectiveness	50%	7. Literacy 8. Common Core State Standards 9. Involves All Learners 10. Explains Content 11. Explains Directions 12. Models 13. Monitors 14. Adjusts Based upon Monitoring 15. Establishes Closure 16. Student Achievement
Professional Growth and Continuous Improvement	10%	17. Uses Professional Growth as an Important Strategy 18. Exhibits Professional Behaviors and Efficiencies
Interpersonal Skills	5%	19. Effective Interactions/Communications with Stakeholders
Leadership	5%	20. Leadership Involvements

Source: Tulsa Public Schools,[11] *October 2012*

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[11] *http://ok.gov/sde/sites/ok.gov.sde/files/TLE-TPSFramework12.pdf,*

RECOMMENDATION

Reacquire copies of evaluations from the teachers themselves in order to have a reference file.

In order to establish a reference file, the principal should obtain copies of personnel evaluations from the teachers. In the future, guard against loss of electronic evaluations by making a backup copy on a flash drive. At some point, placing a paper copy in personnel files would be appropriate.

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING 1-14

The professional development plan seems to be comprised of a beginning of the year workshop effort for the teaching staff. From there it is dependent on teachers asking to attend workshops during the school year.

There does not appear to be a planned effort to provide high quality professional development for teaching or non-teaching staff. Focus group comments from both teaching and non-teaching staff suggest technology training, such as for SMARTBoards, has been inconsistent. Additionally, except for the beginning of the year, regarding professional development sessions, teachers and non-teaching staff members are on their own to request and attend relevant training.

There does not appear to be an effort to tie training into evaluation results or into any identifiable district curriculum initiatives. The district does not have a multi-year plan or schematic that describes a professional development program for teachers that include detailed objectives and multi-year strategies for accomplishing these. Without this, teachers may lack an understanding of the professional development focus and how initiatives connect over time. The absence of a multi-year plan can result in fragmented school improvement initiatives.

RECOMMENDATION

Develop a clearly articulated multi-year plan or schematic that describes the professional development program for teachers and non-teaching staff including detailed objectives and multi-year strategies for achieving the training necessary.

The district should charge the professional development committee with assessing professional development needs of teachers and non-teaching staff. Those needs should directly tie to curriculum initiatives, technology implementations, personnel evaluations, and job responsibilities. This type of planning will reduce fragmentation and increase teacher understanding of the initiatives designed to improve student achievement. This approach should also lead to greater professionalism, greater buy-in to overall school improvement, and enhanced performance of teaching and non-teaching staff.

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING 1-15

The district does not have a pool of quality substitutes to fill positions when necessary. As shown in **Exhibit 1-23**, 45 percent of staff *strongly agree* or *agree* that substitutes are available, 11 percent have *no opinion* and 44 percent *strongly disagree* or *disagree*. Providing quality substitutes seems to be an issue, as it is in most small districts.

Exhibit 1-23
Staff Survey Responses Regarding Substitute Availability

Survey Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
The district has a pool of quality substitutes to fill positions when necessary.	4%	41%	11%	37%	7%

Source: Prismatic Survey Results, May 2018

The effects of not having enough available and qualified substitutes are manifold:

- teachers cover absences during their planning periods or even double up classes. This affects instruction in two classes instead of one;

- there is a reduction of time for teachers to plan together, discuss students' progress and/or curriculum improvements, and mentor new teachers;

- classroom aides are pulled from their assignments, again affecting two classes instead of one; and

- poor instruction and, often, poor conduct is the result of a poorly prepared substitute.

RECOMMENDATION

Develop strategies for improving the availability of substitute teachers.

The district should study methods of improving the quality and availability of substitutes. The consulting team recommends that the district take the following steps:

- visit nearby colleges and universities with teacher preparation programs to promote the valuable experience that substitute teaching can provide, and ensure that prospective substitutes know that DPS is a nearby option;

- offer certified substitutes and those in certification programs a performance evaluation. These would be completed by the teacher for whom the substitute was obtained. They would be printed on DPS letterhead and signed, so that teachers looking for permanent positions could use them in their application packages;

- ensure that DPS is paying slightly higher for substitutes than neighboring districts;

- implement a tiered salary schedule, offering an incremental increase in pay to substitutes after they have completed 30 and 60 days of substituting each year;

- provide for a greater substitute pay differential between certified and noncertified substitutes;

- consider reviewing anticipated job openings and employing the candidate for the opening as a substitute teacher in different classes, as illnesses in staff occur and until the opening actually happens;

- develop a volunteer program as a potential source and pool of trusted substitutes; and

- provide staff development training targeting special needs of the substitutes.

FISCAL IMPACT

Many of these strategies can be implemented at minimal or no cost to the district.

E.   *COMMUNITY AND PARENT INVOLVEMENT*

School districts are a vital part of communities, often associated with a community's identity, sense of pride, and quality of life. This is especially true in smaller communities. In order to strengthen this role, school districts should develop effective communications and community involvement programs that lead to a more informed and engaged staff and community. Research demonstrates that community outreach benefits both the community and the schools.

Effective community involvement programs should highlight the unique characteristics of the school district and the community. These programs can substantially affect citizen perceptions of and engage the community with the school system. Effective programs will rally public support and involvement. They can result in parent and community volunteers, public participation in the decision-making processes that affect the schools (e.g., bond and board elections), and productive business and community alliances.

FINDING 1-16

DPS has an active Parent-Teacher Association (PTA) at the elementary level. Last year they raised funds and upgraded the playground for the district. The district has made the dome available for community events. The library may also be accessed by the community and several retired residents frequent it for the morning newspaper and coffee with the principal. Parents are comfortable coming into the school and, as noted in the parent survey, are positive towards DPS. The community focus group summarized their view with the comment, "We would rather be here than Enid or anywhere else!"

Exhibit 1-24 reflects the various activities of community involvement that were mentioned in documents, interviews, and focus groups.

Exhibit 1-24
DPS Community Involvement and Partnerships

Community Alliances
Sports Booster Clubs
Quiz Bowl/Academic team
Future Farmers of America
Family, Career, Community, Leaders of America
Band Boosters
Partnerships on Grants (4)
Partnerships with other institutions (2)
Parent Teacher Association

Source: Compiled by Prismatic, August 2018

COMMENDATION

The school district is commended for seeking community involvement and partnership.

As the Southwest Educational Development Laboratory points out, based on its work on family and parent involvement, school improvement efforts are more sustainable when parents and the community understand them and have been involved in the decision-making process. Apathy, distrust, and confrontation are often manifested when the community is not involved in the decisions affecting the education of their children. With diverse student populations, parent involvement presents challenges as schools strive to create welcoming environments and outreach programs that involve parents in their communities. Studies show that when parents and community members are engaged with and in schools, student performance improves, attendance increases, and dropout rates decrease.[12]

FINDING 1-17

DPS lacks a school volunteer program. There is currently no formal or systematic volunteer program to leverage the talents that parents and families can bring to the school setting.

The use of parent and community volunteers can be an effective method of assisting staff that are stretched thin and fulfilling numerous responsibilities. Additionally, as volunteers become known to staff and comfortable in the school, they can provide a trusted pool for substituting in classrooms. DPS makes some use of volunteers but there is not a plan in place to actively encourage the use of school volunteers.

Without district guidelines and emphasis, volunteering can quickly be lost in all the other pressures that schools face. The National Parent Teacher Association's *Seven Steps to a Successful Volunteer Program* provides useful information for creating and maintaining an active school volunteer program.[13]

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[12] http://www.sedl.org/pubs/family29/1.html
[13] https://www.pta.org/home/run-your-pta/one-voice-blog/Seven-Steps-for-Organizing-Volunteers

The steps are:

- assessing the volunteer needs each school has;

- working with and training principals, teachers, and school staff on using and supervising volunteers effectively;

- setting goals and objectives for volunteer assignments;

- recruiting volunteers;

- training and orienting volunteers;

- training and recognizing volunteers; and

- evaluating volunteer performance and program success.

RECOMMENDATION

Study and develop a systematic volunteer program for DPS.

The information presented above seems to support an expanded role for parent and community volunteers to go to work in the school. Action on enhancing the use of volunteers will not only benefit the school and staff but it will help create a more informed and engaged community, which can lead to greater support for school board and bond elections. Additionally, an enhanced effort to use volunteers can help create a pool of trusted substitutes and people that can be relied on for input and advice regarding the school district.

DPS should study and develop a volunteer program that promotes parent and community involvement in the district, with specific goals in leveraging volunteer efforts toward improved academic outcomes. The superintendent should gather and task a committee with researching successful small school volunteer programs and then develop a DPS volunteer program. It should include administrators, teachers, parents, and community members.

The program can include classroom and school grounds volunteers, formal development of parent/teacher organizations, and programs that are aimed at involving specific groups like grandparents. It should seek consistency in policies and practices throughout the district and should also be formally approved by the school board.

The committee should be flexible in thinking of opportunities for parents, grandparents, and guardians to be involved outside the traditional concept of classroom volunteering and should focus on ways they can help support academic outcomes. To allay fears regarding the quality of volunteers, the program should provide training to the volunteers so that expectations are understood. The parent input provided through the surveys should be used as a starting point to inform district leaders of parent priorities and concerns.

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

F.   COMMUNICATIONS/PUBLIC RELATIONS

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

FINDING 1-18

DPS has both formal and informal efforts at communication. The district utilizes a variety of methods and channels to communicate with staff, parents, students, and the community.

All school board meetings are open to the public, which is a foundational method of formal communication. Beyond that, the district's formal communication strategies include using a variety of technology-based mechanisms:

- the school messenger program;

- district website;

- email;

- social media (e.g., Facebook); and

- a student information parent portal - Wen-Gage i-Student Information System has several different modules including student information, grade book, lunchroom and the guardian/student portal. The school counselor manages the program.

Another formal method of communicating with parents is through parent conferencing. **Exhibit 1-25** shows a five-year comparison of parent conference attendance rates for DPS, its peers, and the state. The district had a participation rate at parent/teacher conferences that was well above the state averages in all years except 2012-13, where it was also lowest among its peers. Overall, DPS tends to have average conference attendance rates of 90 percent, which is higher than those of its peers.

Exhibit 1-25
Trend in Parent Conference Attendance

Entity	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17
Drummond	**67.1%**	**89.2%**	**96.0%**	**82.0%**	**90.0%**
Robin Hill	95.0%	95.0%	95.0%	90.0%	90.0%
Kremlin-Hillsdale	92.1%	93.8%	96.0%	98.0%	74.0%
Sharon-Mutual	89.7%	93.0%	88.0%	88.0%	91.0%
Pioneer	91.0%	90.0%	90.0%	80.0%	90.0%
Union City	75.5%	89.6%	90.0%	86.0%	65.0%
State	**74.0%**	**74.1%**	**74.0%**	**74.0%**	**73.0%**

Source: Office of Educational Quality and Accountability, Profiles Database

Informally, DPS leadership is visible and open to regular communication with stakeholders. The school board members are accessible in the community and often talk to people about the schools. Several of the school board members have children currently attending all levels of the district and are regularly at school events. The superintendent attends many of the evening activities and is accessible to the community at those events. Likewise, the principal is involved in activities and school events. The community lacks formal groups such as Chamber of Commerce or Rotary Club; the closest equivalent to such a group is perhaps the local Cooperative. The schools are, however, heavily involved in activities that create awareness and pride in the district. FFA and FCCLA are highly active organizations, the academic team is top-notch, and the Quiz bowl competition has been owned by DPS for years. The baseball and basketball sports teams are also a source of local pride.

The perceptions of the effectiveness of DPS communication strategies are consistent between staff, parents, and students. Staff survey results in **Exhibit 1-26** indicate that 78 percent believe the district communicates effectively with parents and community members. More than half of all staff surveyed feel there is effective communication from their principal (85 percent). Most believe they are communicating effectively with students and parents (92 percent). All staff surveyed *strongly agree* or *agree* that they use email to communicate with one another.

Exhibit 1-26
Staff Survey Responses Regarding Communication

Survey Statements	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
The district effectively communicates with parents and community members.	22%	56%	7%	11%	4%
The principal effectively communicates with their staffs.	41%	44%	7%	7%	0%
The teachers effectively communicate with students and parents.	33%	59%	4%	4%	0%
District staff and administrators often use email to communicate with one another.	62%	39%	0%	0%	0%

Source: Prismatic Survey Results, May 2018

Parent survey results in **Exhibit 1-27** reflect that, 83 percent of parents *strongly agree* or *agree* that they receive timely communications from their child's teachers. Also, 77 percent *strongly agree* or *agree* they are receiving enough information from the district regarding academic expectations for their child. Additionally, 50 percent of the parent's *strongly agree* or *agree* that the school board listens to them.

Exhibit 1-27
Parent Survey Results Regarding Communication

Survey Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
I receive timely communications from my child's teachers regarding his/her progress in school.	33%	50%	0%	6%	11%
I receive enough information from the district regarding academic expectations for my child (i.e. student testing, retention, etc.).	33%	44%	11%	11%	0%
School Board members listen to the opinions and desires of parents and community members.	22%	28%	39%	11%	0%

Source: Prismatic Survey Results, May 2018

Student survey results in **Exhibit 1-28** indicate that half of all students who responded to the survey believe that their teachers communicate regularly with their parents regarding their academic progress.

Exhibit 1-28
Student Survey Responses Regarding Communication

Survey Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
My teachers communicate regularly with my parents about my academic progress.	20%	30%	38%	8%	4%

Source: Prismatic Survey Results, May 2018

COMMENDATION

DPS is commended for utilizing a variety of communication strategies that have created pride and trust in the school district from patrons and staff.

FINDING 1-21

The district has a website and a Facebook page but they are not updated regularly. This makes them unreliable sources of information for district stakeholders, which is concerning as a sizeable portion of the DPS families live outside the immediate community area and there is no

local media such as newspaper or radio that can be utilized regularly for school information.

The district maintains two websites but neither appear to be updated on a regular basis. A central calendar would require regular updating and an information flow that would support that type of updating.

On both the parent and staff surveys, a sizable proportion of respondents had negative views of the DPS website. Among the parent respondents, 28 percent do not find that it is a useful tool. Among the staff respondents, 31 percent did not feel that it is useful. The community focus group did not mention the district website, however, at least one parent commenter on the survey mentioned that the website is "pitiful" and that a "change was promised three years ago and not delivered." This parent wanted a central location where all parents and students could get timely current information about things happening in the district. Another individual indicated that there is not one calendar or schedule of events but many floating around, and there should be one for people to refer to.

RECOMMENDATION

Update regularly the content of the DPS website and Facebook page.

To implement improvements, the district should determine the content desired on social media and what be updated regularly to be useful. Then, the district should determine an individual or group that can maintain these items either as a part of their job or as an add-on assignment with a stipend paid.

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING 1-22

The district has technology available that can serve to enhance and improve timely internal communication but does not appear to rely on it. This limits effective communications within the district.

According to interviews and focus groups, email groups are not set up or maintained, need-to-know lists are not developed, phone lists are not up to date, and the teacher directory is outdated. This keeps the effectiveness of email and phone for internal communications low. A surveyed staff member indicated that timeliness of announcements and other changes that need to go from principal to parents, through teachers, are sometimes a concern.

Additionally, there seems to be a glitch involving information flow from non-teaching to teaching staff. For example, hypothetically, who needs to know when a teacher has called in sick and needs a substitute teacher? Likewise, information such as daily announcements and changes are not available to outlying buildings. The new locking systems reveal a problem since if no one in the building knows you are outside, you can easily be locked out. In one focus group, it was noted that it is just courtesy that office staff know where you are when you are out and not in

places you would be normally. Emergency notification planning depends on knowing how to reach people.

As reflected in **Exhibit 1-29,** less than 66 percent of the staff *agree* that the central office effectively communicates with district staff while 29 percent did not think so.

Exhibit 1-29
Staff Survey Responses Regarding the Central Office

Survey Group	Survey Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Staff	The central office effectively communicates with district staff	33%	33%	4%	22%	7%

Source: Prismatic Survey Results, May 2018

RECOMMENDATION

Task the office secretary with the upkeep of communications lists, including email groups and phone lists, then have DPS leaders explore additional options to enhance internal communications.

To address a number of the internal communication issues noted is straight forward. The principal and superintendent need to have the ability, when appropriate, to push out notices to parents either utilizing school messenger, or once a parent has signed up for the online grade book, district staff could use the guardian module in Wen-Gage. This eliminates putting teaching staff in the middle and taking class time or planning time to email parents.

Internal email groupings should include whole district groups available to the superintendent and principal plus typical working groups such as all secondary teachers or all elementary teachers. Support staff should be included in need to know groups and have a computer or phone available to check messages. Internal announcements should be pushed out in email as much as possible and over intercoms only if timing is an issue. This prevents interrupting classrooms with numerous intercom announcements. Additionally, need to know lists should be developed and email groups labeled based on the circumstances or content of announcements. For example, if an elementary teacher is ill and needs a substitute but one cannot be found, a group to notify could be: principal, counselor, and other teachers that must fill in on plan times or combine the class. This type of planning and ongoing effort to communicate is everyone's responsibility but someone should also be assigned to facilitate, follow-up, and make sure it is done and then revisit lists as groups change.

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

Chapter 2:

Instructional Delivery

Instructional Delivery System

This chapter addresses the instructional delivery of Drummond Public Schools (DPS) in the following sections:

    A. Curriculum
    B. Instructional Delivery and Student Performance
    C. Special Programs
    D. Student Services

The primary purpose of any school system is educating children. Effective schools deliver quality instruction based upon a district's capacity to manage and implement a rigorous, relevant curriculum. The education process requires robust policies and procedures that direct the instructional process, provide well-designed programs to meet the needs of all students, and provide resources to support program implementation. The monitoring and evaluation of program effectiveness based upon student performance data are also essential.

A.   CURRICULUM

Oklahoma state education laws, as codified in the Oklahoma Administrative Code (210 OS § 15), manage the instructional process to ensure academic success for all students. It is the responsibility of the school district to meet the requirements of the law. A district's instructional program, along with its allocation of resources, is how a district attempts to meet the educational needs of all students. A well-designed and managed process for developing curriculum and directing instruction, collecting assessment data to evaluate and monitor programs, and providing the resources needed to support educational efforts is essential if a district is to meet the needs of its students.

Curriculum development and instructional delivery are critical components of student learning. The presentation of materials, concepts, skills, and new ideas greatly affect the acquisition of knowledge. Curriculum content and instructional strategies need proper alignment and regularly scheduled evaluations. This promotes improvement of student performance and ensures curricular relevance, rigor, and equity.

Oklahoma school boards and superintendents provide principals and teachers with necessary tools to deliver the state adopted standards. The Oklahoma Academic Standards (OAS) drive educational delivery. With OAS, educators are encouraged to shape their educational efforts by integrating the best practice of instructional shifts. The goal is that such efforts will provide the rigor and relevance students need to be college and career-ready.

The OAS provides a consistent, clear articulation of learning expectations, guides teacher instruction, and assists parents in knowing what they need to do to assist in the educational process. The academic standards are intended to mirror the robust, relevant, real world knowledge and skills that students need for success in college and careers. The OAS defines the content, knowledge, and skills students should gain during their K-12 educational careers. It

prepares high school graduates for success in college courses and in workforce environments. **Exhibit 2-1** further explains the OAS standards.

Exhibit 2-1
Oklahoma Academic Standards

What the OAS Does	What the OAS Does Not Do
• Focus on deep thinking, conceptual understanding, and real-world problem-solving skills • Set expectations for students to be college, career, and citizenship ready • Incorporate literacy in science, social studies, and technical subjects • Emphasize the use of citations and examples from texts when creating opinions and arguments • Increase rigor and grade level expectations • Determine the full range of support for English language learners and students with special needs	• Dictate how teachers should teach • Mandate a specific curriculum • Limit advanced work beyond the standards • Require the purchase or development of entirely new instructional materials • Prescribe all that can or should be taught • Limit efforts to prepare students for college, career, or citizenship readiness • Prescribe interventions for students below grade level

Source: The Oklahoma State Department of Education (SDE), 2018

Exhibit 2-2 provides a 10-year comparison of DPS instructional expenditures as a percent of total expenditures as well as the annual instructional expenditures per student. Over that period, instructional expenses have ranged from 47 percent to 57 percent of all expenditures. Instructional dollars per student have varied from $3,675 per student in 2016-17 to $4,831 in 2015-16.

Exhibit 2-2
Trend in Instructional Spending
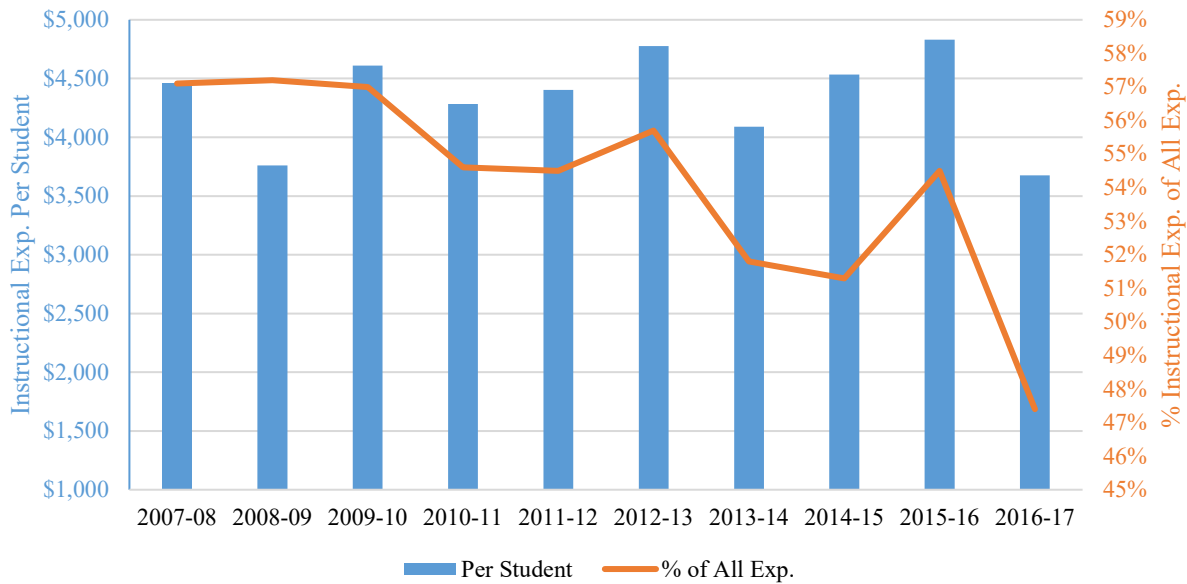
Source: Office of Educational Quality and Accountability, Profiles Database and Prismatic calculations

A comparison of core curriculum units shows DPS lower than all its peers, the community group, and the state in language arts while tied with Sharon-Mutual for the lowest in science. It tied with all its peers in the number of math units but was second-lowest in social studies. DPS matched the community group for fine arts but was lower than the state and community group in all other subjects. The total number of core curriculum units offered by DPS was tied for the second-lowest with Union City and lower than both the community group and state (**Exhibit 2-3**).

Exhibit 2-3
Comparison of Core Curriculum Units by Subject, 2016-17

Subjects	Drummond	Robin Hill	Kremlin-Hillsdale	Sharon-Mutual	Pioneer	Union City	Community Group	State
Language Arts	4.0	DNS	6.0	5.0	DNS	6.0	4.5	5.2
Science	3.0	DNS	6.0	3.0	DNS	4.0	4.7	6.2
Math	4.0	DNS	4.0	4.0	DNS	4.0	4.5	5.7
Social Studies	5.0	DNS	9.0	3.0	DNS	7.0	5.2	6.8
Fine Arts	5.0	DNS	5.0	1.0	DNS	0.0	5.0	8.1
Languages	0.0	DNS	2.0	0.0	DNS	0.0	1.0	2.4
Total	**21.0**	**DNS**	**32.0**	**16.0**	**DNS**	**21.0**	**24.9**	**34.4**

Source: Office of Educational Quality and Accountability, Profiles Database

FINDING 2-1

The district lacks processes and procedures to annually:

- evaluate instructional resources, software, enrichment, and remediation resources;

- review supplemental resources to determine alignment with OAS, student performance data, or relevant student need;

- evaluate programs to assess the selection, modification, and adjustment of all instructional resources;

- measure the overall effectiveness of curricular and instructional resources; and

- evaluate the impact of instructional resources on improved student achievement.

Across the district, there are no defined efforts to routinely collect data to determine the efficiency and effectiveness of instructional resources and the impact on student achievement.

The consulting team did not find evidence of an evaluation process to determine how supplemental and remedial interventions, instructional strategies, and enrichment activities are aligned with student need. The elementary school departmentalizes first grade reading, as well as third, fourth, and fifth grade math and reading. The remainder of the school day, students are in self-contained classrooms. In the middle school and high school, select teachers communicate regarding curricula and instructional resources. However, teachers primarily work in isolation and select their own supplemental resources. Textbooks were found to have copyrights in the early 2000s. Interviews and focus group conversation revealed the need for additional instructional resources to update and supplement the texts. There was no evaluation process to ensure current supplemental resources aligned with OAS.

Most federal and state instructional resource/programs require individual instructional resource/program evaluations. However, highly effective schools take the evaluation process to the next level and evaluate all locally implemented instructional resources/programs. This ensures instructional resources/programs work in concert and are effective for remediation or enrichment at each grade level and content area. An annual evaluation process ensures all instructional resources, programs, and software are not "busy work" but directly improve student learning. Likewise, an annual evaluation process determines if instructional resource materials are addressing student learning gaps or redundant and repetitive overlaps. All teachers need resources that are relevant, support curricula rigor, and most importantly, seamlessly align with state standards.

Without comprehensive instructional resource/program evaluations, schools risk getting into curricular and instructional traps. They continue doing what they have always done and serving students a number of instructional resources without focused intent and alignment to state standards and targeted student learning need. Systematically collecting and analyzing quantitative and qualitative information regarding instructional resources provides district administrators and teachers with valuable assessment information.

Evaluations should measure and answer questions such as:

- Is there a need to improve, modify, or abandon the supplemental instructional resources?

- Does the resource yield the intended effect on improved student learning?

- Are the resource goals still relevant to student need and aligned to state standards?

- Do the resources render unintended outcomes?

- Is there a need to change or refine the implementation strategies and procedures?

- Are all the individual resource components valuable and effective in improving student achievement?

- Does the instructional resource/program have positive impact on students, teachers, school climate, and culture?[1]

Districts can then use the evaluation to make data-driven, informed decisions. The evaluation should guide the district to keep or abandon instructional resources/programs. Based on data, modifications, additions, deletions, or revisions to instructional resources/programs can be determined. Such information is crucial for aligning district funds and resources with new purchases that are effective instructional resources/programs and best practices. Without implementing a regularly scheduled evaluation system, DPS positions itself to fund instructional resources/programs that are not meeting student needs or the intent behind their implementation. Most of all, DPS needs assurance the district is not spending money and time on ineffective instructional resource/programs.

RECOMMENDATION

Develop and implement a plan to annually evaluate instructional resources, software, enrichment, and remediation resources.

High performing districts annually evaluate all instructional resource/programs, new initiatives, grants, and district processes. The combined data determines if there is need to eliminate components or discontinue the resource or instructional resource/program. The data should also provide evidence that the instructional resource/program positively:

- impacts improved student learning;

- contributes to the relevance and rigor of instruction and curriculum;

- meets the intended curricular and instructional purpose, and

- supports best instructional practices.

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[1] http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/edlabs/regions/pacific/pdf/REL_2014007.pdf

In the long term, instructional resource/program evaluations focus on improving student achievement. Evaluation is a guide to build upon successes and leads to ongoing improvement in practices and outcomes.

The DPS superintendent, principal, and all teachers should develop a list of all curricular and instructional resources they routinely implement to supplement, remediate, or enrich their instruction, and support the curriculum. The evaluation process includes a rank ordering of total dollars spent on each implemented resource. The superintendent should then direct evaluation efforts to those with the highest costs and the strongest correlation to student performance data in the bottom quartiles.

The superintendent and principal must work with teachers to identify and abandon resources and materials that are no longer robust and relevant to the knowledge base students need for the next level of study and college and career-readiness. This evaluation and abandonment process must be simple, easily implemented, and directly focused on supporting improved student performance.

All materials can undergo a formative and summative evaluation. A formative instructional resource/program evaluation can be used in purchasing new instructional resources/programs and during the implementation of the resource. Such evaluation promotes close examination of instructional resource/program implementation, as to whether there were changes, adjustments, or improvements, and that it is adapted with fidelity. **Exhibit 2-4** presents examples of formative evaluation questions to explore.

Exhibit 2-4
Formative Instructional Resource/Program Evaluation

While the instructional resource/program is ongoing, these questions should be asked several times:

- Is the instructional resource/program being implemented as it was designed?
- Do the students understand the instructional resource/program's concepts?
- What are the misconceptions about the instructional resource/program?
- Are all DPS instructional resource/program implementers implementing the instructional resource/program in the same way?
- Is the instructional resource/program being implemented on schedule?
- Is there enough time to implement all aspects of the instructional resource/program?
- What aspects of the instructional resource/program do not seem to be working as well as you intended?
- Do instructional resource/program implementers need additional training on the instructional resource/program?
- Are there any negative outcomes surfacing?

Source: http://www.janetwall.net/attachments/File/9_Step_Evaluation_Model_Paper.pdf

The following will assist DPS with summative evaluation. Summative instructional resource/program evaluation takes place after the instructional resource/program has been implemented and is conducted at the end of each school year, or another logical time, such as the

end of instructional resource/programmatic intervention. **Exhibit 2-5** presents examples of summative evaluation questions to explore.

Exhibit 2-5
Summative Instructional Resource/Program Evaluation

After an instructional resource/program has been implemented ask:

- What did the instructional resource/program accomplish?
- Did the instructional resource/program reach its goals and objectives?
- What impact did the instructional resource/program have on students?
- What were the outcomes?
- Who benefited from the instructional resource/program?
- How much was the benefit to improved student achievement?
- Was the benefit greater with this instructional resource/program when compared with another instructional resource/program?
- Did all types of students benefit from the instructional resource/program?
- What were the positive outcomes?
- What were the negative outcomes?
- What should be improved/changed in the instructional resource/program?
- Does the benefit of the instructional resource/program warrant the cost?

Source: http://www.janetwall.net/attachments/File/9_Step_Evaluation_Model_Paper.pdf

In addition to asking the above evaluation questions, it is also important to make certain the instructional resources/programs align tightly with the OAS depth of knowledge (DOK) expectations, and Oklahoma's expected student performance levels. DPS demographics such as poverty, mobility, ethnicity, and bottom quartile student test scores should also be taken into consideration for abandonment or retention purposes. Teachers cannot afford to implement instructional resources/programs and materials that do not have high impact on closing the achievement gap and improving student performance. There are many free resources available to gather additional information, including:

- https://www.cde.state.co.us/fedinstructional resource/programs/designing-and-planning-your-instructional resource/program-evaluation offers resources on designing and planning instructional resource/program evaluation;

- https://www.cde.state.co.us/fedinstructional resource/programs/designing-and-planning-your-instructional resource/program-evaluation is another resource for designing and planning;

- https://managementhelp.org/evaluation/instructional resource/program-evaluation-guide.htm provides a basic guide to instructional resource/program evaluation; and

- https://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/oese/sst/evaluationmatters.pdf provides an evaluation matrix and template.

Initially, existing DPS monies could be objectively and fairly evaluated using internal personnel.

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources. However, federal guidance notes that districts should expect to spend between five and seven percent of the total funding of an instructional resource/program on evaluation. In time, it would be preferable to contract with an outside evaluation firm with credibility and expertise in statistical analysis. Using federal monies, the consulting team recommends that a minimum of $10,000 per year be allocated to evaluation efforts.

Recommendation	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
Evaluate all instructional efforts and initiatives.	($10,000)	($10,000)	($10,000)	($10,000)	($10,000)

FINDING 2-2

The district has departmentalized math and English Language Arts (ELA) in 3rd through 5th grade. The primary rationale for departmentalizing was to improve student achievement because teachers are more effective when teaching to their strengths, interests, and innate expertise. According to interview and focus group input, the departmentalization allows teachers to specialize and teach one content area in-depth.

The administration contended that when teachers can teach what they love, they are more invested and students have greater learning opportunities.

In reaching the current departmentalization, the teachers and administrators reviewed student performance results and felt students would be better prepared for the next grade by implementing a new structure. The teachers wanted to focus on one subject area where they could provide a greater level of expertise and deeper understanding. The district staff contends that in departmentalized classrooms teachers had greater ability to differentiate their instruction to meet the needs of all learners.

The American Association of School Administrators (1965) reported on a nationwide survey that was conducted by the Educational Research Service. The results of the survey concluded that departmentalization can be successful for students and teachers when implemented to fit the needs of both the student and the school.[2]

COMMENDATION

The district is commended for implementing departmentalization to improve student achievement.

FINDING 2-3

This is the first year DPS has departmentalized 3rd through 5th grade in math and ELA. The district lacks a standardized framework to assess and monitor the effectiveness of this initiative.

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[2] https://www.ukessays.com/essays/education/organizational-structures-of-the-elementary-classroom.php

There are no foundational measures to determine how the departmental process better serves the learning needs of students. There are no guidelines to ensure vertical continuity of curricular and instructional delivery methodologies based on best practice.

Staff reported that there are meetings to address "what's working and what's not working." However, adjustments and modifications are not based on pre-determined standards of quality. There were no guidelines presented to ensure continuity of curricular and instructional delivery methodologies based on best practice for all grade levels. Classroom observations indicated there may be need for more manipulatives to keep all learners engaged. The district has no pre-determined inventory ensuring each grade level teacher now has the needed resources and instructional materials to appropriately deliver instruction to students in three different grades.

The research that deals directly with departmentalization versus self-contained classrooms is inconclusive. The research on the effectiveness of departmentalizing and the overriding long-term effect on test scores is varied. Some research details the potential hazards of departmentalizing for lower elementary students. Younger children often need the stable and secure learning environment provided by self-contained classrooms. Younger students need the opportunity to develop a close personal relationship with their teacher. Some students have a hard time "resetting" quickly. Research also addresses the need for consistent discipline. Students changing classrooms can struggle when they have different teachers with differing expectations. Students are often asked to learn multiple sets of rules and routines from each teacher. The younger children may not be ready to adjust easily, resulting in discouragement or misbehavior.

Research indicates departmentalization influences time management issues for teachers. More time is required for communicating, collaborating, and coordinating among the teachers. There is less flexibility because each block period is dedicated to a designated subject. Teachers don't have freedom to spend more than the allotted time or pick up a topic later in the day. It is more difficult to make connections across the grade levels curriculums when teachers aren't in control of all the curriculum content. For example, in self-contained classrooms, teachers can present a lesson that incorporates reading, writing, and math. In departmentalized classrooms, the daily content may or may not interface with other content being taught.

Districts implementing departmentalization report the importance of communicating properly, managing time well, and teachers getting along personally. Additional time is needed to conference, develop, and adjust procedures and schedules. When teachers share students, a daily debriefing is important. It is hard for some students to keep up with materials so organizational structures and expectations need constant dialogue. Teachers often experience less classroom community because they are not the sole educators for the students. A high level of trust among teachers is foundational to effective departmentalization.[3]

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[3] https://www.weareteachers.com/should-elementary-schools-deparmentalize-we-look-at-the-pros-and-cons/

RECOMMENDATION

Implement processes and procedures to monitor the effectiveness of departmentalized grades in math and ELA and adjust as needed.

The superintendent, principal, and teachers need regularly scheduled times to continuously monitor the newly implemented departmentalization process. A study by McGrath and Rust (2002), noted the importance of watching for a decrease in academic achievement and a loss of instructional minutes, due to transitions between classes. There must be continuity in classroom discipline, teacher expectations for classroom organization, and structure. It is important to hear the voices of parents and students to determine the effectiveness of departmentalization. The principal and teachers should adopt quality standards criteria to measure departmental effectiveness.

The characteristics of effective teaching are also important for each teacher to implement consistently. These characteristics must be common to each departmentalized classroom. There are a number of resources and tools online for monitoring, measuring, and making timely adjustments to the departmentalization process.[4]

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING 2-4

The district is not benchmark testing. Criterion-referenced formative assessments are limited and sporadic. Teachers use insufficient benchmark measures to determine student mastery or the need for remediation or reteaching. The benchmarks do not measure student performance against a fixed set of predetermined learning standards (i.e., OAS - teachers lack timely, ongoing, formative data to adjust instruction for reteaching and reviewing content). Periodic benchmark testing is randomly used by teachers to determine if students are progressing on grade level and mastering the state standards. During interviews and focus groups the consulting team found no uniform expectations for all teachers to administer benchmark assessments to monitor student progress.

In focus groups and interviews, teachers expressed limited knowledge regarding a defined process for benchmarking. The teachers did not clearly understand the process for how benchmark data translate to instructional design and curricular adjustments. Interviews also found that teachers have marginal understanding of how benchmark data are used to identify small group learning arrangements and remediation strategies. DPS has no benchmark data to align curriculum and inform pacing and instructional design. Use of benchmark assessment results as feedback for both parents and students was minimal. Overall, no comprehensive evidence was presented to indicate there are clear directions, district-wide expectations, and

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[4] https://www.tes.com/teaching-resource/characteristics-of-effective-learning-6339923; https://www3.northamptonshire.gov.uk/councilservices/children-families-education/early-years/information-for-childcare-providers/the-early-years-curriculum/Documents/Characteristics%20of%20Effective%20Learning%20Prompt%20sheet.pdf.

consistent accountability for teachers to administer criterion referenced benchmark assessments. Criterion-referenced benchmark assessments yield formative data. Criterion-referenced assessments test student knowledge and performance against a fixed set of content or a state standard. Formative benchmarks are assessments administered regularly throughout the school year. Teachers have a measure of whether their students are on grade level and grasping the material. These data help teachers decide what they need to teach, re-teach, or remediate. It also gives teachers input ensuring the written, taught, and tested curriculum are aligned. By using benchmark results teachers learn what needs reviewing with individual students, as well as which students have attained mastery and need to be challenged. Benchmarking also helps students keep track of their grade level success and their progress to mastering standards.[5]

Formative benchmark assessment is a proven research-based best practice. Benchmarks directly support high-quality instruction and effective assessment. The primary purpose for teachers to incorporate benchmarks is because it improves both their teaching and individual student learning. Formative assessment is a practice that informs teachers about "how" students learn and "what" they are not learning. It focuses on the day-to-day learning interactions between the teacher and the students. Teachers routinely using periodic criterion-referenced benchmarks as a standard classroom practice have an immediate measure of what students know and how well they are learning standards and content. This enables teachers to promptly adapt instruction to meet students' needs. Formative benchmarks guide the teacher to make instructional adjustments that keep students on the path to mastery.[6]

Formative assessment is a "process." Heritage (2007) describes it as "a systematic process to continuously gather evidence about learning."[7] Boston (2002) explains that it is "the diagnostic use of assessment to provide feedback to teachers and students over the course of instruction (p. 2)." Whatever method a teacher uses – oral questions, a short test or quiz, a paragraph, or any other classroom activity – formative assessment uncovers the degree to which students understand and have mastered what is being taught on a day-to-day basis. It is a process to customize instruction based on what students know, not on what the textbook or program says to teach next. Formative assessments inform the next days or immediate instructional path and measures student progress toward the end of unit summative test.[8]

DPS summative scores for the Oklahoma Core Curriculum Tests (OCCT) are cited in **Exhibits 2-10** through **2-18**. To move students from one OCCT category (i.e., below basic, basic, proficient, advanced) to the next, intentional instructional steps are needed. Districts fine tune and improve instruction by identifying and then focusing on eliminating learning gaps. Formative benchmark assessment data locate and direct teachers in closing gaps. It exposes what students really know and what they must learn to move to the next category. Thus, teachers can address specific content and provide additional learning strategies to fill in the gaps. Application of routine formative assessment data leads students to mastery of summative assessments.

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[5] https://www.edglossary.org/criterion-referenced-test/https://www.edglossary.org/criterion-referenced-test/
[6] www.ascd.org/publications/books/110017/chapters/Questions-and-Answers-About-Formative-Assessment.aspx
[7] Heritage, M. (2007). Formative assessment: What do teachers need to know and do? *Phi Delta Kappan*, 140.
[8] Boston, C. (2002). The concept of formative assessment. *ERIC Digest*. Retrieved from:
http://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED470206.pdf

RECOMMENDATION

Develop and implement district-wide processes and procedures for administering criterion-referenced benchmark assessments to monitor progress and ensure mastery of OAS.

The superintendent and principal should set expectations for all teachers to administer formative criterion benchmark assessments. The district needs an accountability procedure to ensure benchmark tests are administered and used to design instruction. Staff meetings and PLC meetings should be used to discuss how the assessment is aligned with OAS, DOK, and how the results guide teachers to change and target instruction. The principal should engage teachers in dialogue and discussions about how benchmark results give students a clear understanding of what they do not know or what they have mastered in the current unit of study. The results provide feedback to students, so they know exactly what they need to learn to improve their academic performance. Motivation to learn and be successful grows from knowing what learning gaps exist.

The district leadership and teachers must embrace the mindset that benchmark assessments are a key part of the learning process. Criterion-referenced benchmark assessments are an ongoing check for student progress and mastery of content and standards. The assessment results guide teachers in decision-making about future instruction. The principal should use staff meetings, PLC meetings, and one-on-one dialogue to articulate expectations and raise awareness of the importance of administering benchmarks.

The district could purchase software that generates benchmark tests assessing OAS. Teachers can also create their own benchmarks using SDE resources.[9] Several websites offer practical information and examples of formative assessment. This will help administrators refresh teacher awareness and understanding of the benefits for administering formative assessment.

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources initially. If it is determined necessary, the district could contact an external firm to provide assistance.

Recommendation	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
Hire a firm to help with implementing assessments, if needed.	($1,500)	($1,500)	$0	$0	$0

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[9] http://www.edutopia.org/blog/dipsticks-to-check-for-understanding-toddfinley?utm_source=facebook&utm_medium=post&utm_campaign=blog-dipsticks-to-check-for-understandingimage-repost; http://www.ascd.org/publications/books/110017/chapters/Questions-and-Answers-About-FormativeAssessment.aspx; http://www.scholastic.com/teachers/article/what-are-formative-assessments-and-why-should-we-use-them; http://edglossary.org/formative-assessment/; http://wvde.state.wv.us/teach21/ExamplesofFormativeAssessment.html

FINDING 2-5

Although DPS has initiated dialogue and some pacing and alignment efforts, the process is not yet finished. Core curriculum at all grade levels and content areas is in differing stages of horizontal pacing and vertical alignment. There is no uniform grade level and content area, horizontal or vertical pacing, or curriculum alignment process. There are isolated efforts at aligning curriculum, yet the district has no full-scale curriculum alignment process among the schools.

DPS lacks intentional and targeted efforts to align the core curriculum and implement pacing calendars that are ongoing working documents. As they continue to push forward, there is need to standardize horizontal and vertical curriculum alignment and pacing processes and procedures based on student performance results.

With no curriculum guides and pacing calendars, neither is there an instructional plan outlining foundational student-centered outcomes for critical thinking, technology skills, goal setting and organizational skills, and communication. The consulting team heard inconsistent and negligible descriptions telling how these components are woven into daily curriculum and instructional delivery. The district administrators expressed expectations to teach OAS, yet, monitoring and accountability are not uniform across the district. DPS teachers engage in random dialogue about curriculum, instruction, and assessment of standards. District-wide efforts to formalize this across all grade levels and content are primarily in the developmental stages. Systems for accountability and adjustments based on student performance also need development, refinement, and implementation.

Student test scores indicate there are still learning gaps. These scores are indicators of the need to address the curricular and instructional gaps that are obstacles to improved student performance.

Curriculum that is vertically mapped and aligned is a process for detailing what content and skills are required and taught at each grade level and course during a school year. Calendar pacing tells when the content is taught and revisited. The curriculum maps provide a year-long overview, rather than a daily classroom perspective, of what content and skills are required over the course of the school year (Jacobs, 1997). Curriculum mapping creates a document for teachers to follow and gives guidelines to monitor accountability and ensure the required curriculum is being followed (O'Malley, 1982).[10]

Curriculum pacing guides are created to help teachers stay on track, pace the frequency content, and ensure skills are taught and revisited for maintenance. These pacing guides serve a similar purpose to that of traditional scope-and-sequence documents, which lay out expectations of the material to be covered in each subject at each grade level. Pacing guides are different because they map out the skills and content that are expected to be on the annual state test. Teachers schedule these topics before the spring testing dates. Pacing guides are tied to benchmark assessments that take place quarterly or even more frequently, further delineating what teachers

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[10] http://www.ascd.org/publications/curriculum-handbook/421/chapters/Overview.aspx

must teach and when they teach it. Some pacing guides specify the number of days, class periods, or even minutes that teachers should devote to each topic.[11]

Research and best practice recommend the identification and specific sequencing and scaffolding of content skills and learning objectives horizontally and vertically. Also recommended is identifying learning gaps based on student performance. Teachers must know which skills and objectives have not been mastered and require remediation and re-teaching. Curriculum alignment or mapping involves a second-order change. Marzano, Waters, & McNulty (2005) state that second-order change:

> ...involves dramatic departures from the expected, both in defining a given problem and in finding a solution. Curriculum Mapping may be considered a second-order change for our district because it challenges the status quo of historical practices and therein may result in resistance. However, it has the potential of resulting in transformative learning.[12]

Jacobs (1997) states:

> To make sense of our students' experiences over time, we need two lenses: a zoom lens into this year's curriculum for a particular grade and a wide-angle lens to see the K–12 perspective. The classroom (or micro) level is dependent on the site and district level (a macro view).
>
> Though the micro and macro levels are connected throughout a district, there is a conspicuous lack of macro-level data for decision-making. Yet we need that big picture for each student's journey through his or her years of learning. With data from curriculum mapping, a school and its feeding and receiving sites can review and revise the curriculum within a larger, much-needed context. Data on the curriculum map can be examined both horizontally through the course of any one academic year and vertically over the student's K-12 experience.[13]

The Curriculum Decisions Website examines mapping research and provides pragmatic rationale. The site addresses the importance of the horizontal and vertical curriculum alignment and serves as a valuable foundational resource. It also provides descriptions of the mapping process and how the process is completed.[14]

The teacher survey results in **Exhibit 2-6** indicate teachers and school administrators had knowledge of curriculum alignment and pacing issues. However, no digitalized evidence or documents were presented to support the survey results. In interviews and focus groups the consulting team heard only sporadic dialogue referring to the use of SDE resources.

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[11] http://www.ascd.org/publications/educational-leadership/oct08/vol66/num02/Pacing-Guides.aspx
[12] Marzano, R. J., Waters, T., & McNulty, B. A. (2005). *School leadership that works: From research to results*. (pp. 66). Alexandria, VA: The Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.
[13] Jacobs, H. H. (1997). Chapter 1: The need for calendar-based curriculum mapping. *Mapping the big picture: Integrating curriculum & assessment K-12*. Alexandria, VA: The Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.
[14] http://www.curriculummapping101.com/curriculum-mapping-general

Exhibit 2-6
Teacher Survey Responses Regarding Curriculum

Survey Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Teachers know what is to be taught and when because they have access to a district-adopted Pacing Calendar that reflects the current Oklahoma Academic Standards (PASS).	44%	15%	19%	15%	7%
The district's curriculum is aligned from grade to grade and from class to class.	33%	33%	22%	11%	0%
Teachers have scope and sequence documents that determine what is taught and when.	33%	26%	15%	19%	7%

Source: Prismatic Survey Results, May 2018

The district lacks processes and procedures to vertically align and calendar pace the core curriculum. There is no common framework detailing the curriculum at each grade level. Teachers have limited guidance for moving from textbook-based to standards-driven curriculum and instruction. There are no guidelines detailing rigor, relevance, or best practice. There are no processes and procedures to ensure vertical continuity from Kindergarten through grade 12.

RECOMMENDATION

Develop and implement processes and procedures to vertically align and pace the core curriculum from Kindergarten through grade 12.

Electronic maps and pacing calendars at all grade levels and in core content areas should become the comprehensive "text" from which teachers deliver instruction. The district's administrators must assume the responsibility of instructional leaders and deliberately schedule time and develop processes, procedures, and clearly defined expectations for horizontal and vertical curriculum alignment. It is the teachers' responsibility to have a sound knowledge base of the standards and content taught. Equally important is the teachers' obligation to translate the aligned and paced content, skills, and outcomes into their daily lesson plans.

To improve alignment of the DPS curriculum, the superintendent, principal, and teachers should take the lead in aligning Pre-Kindergarten through grade 12 core curriculum and creating pacing

calendars based on student performance data. Throughout the 2018-19 school year, the district should allot teachers release time to vertically align core curriculum and create pacing calendars.

Aligned curriculum maps identify the skills, content, and pacing period for all OAS skills and content. Each grade level and core content area need to be mapped and calendar paced. For each course and grade level the process indicates when skills are to be introduced, taught to mastery, and maintained or reinforced for long-term retention. The process should culminate in the creation of electronic documents that are user friendly and guide daily instruction for each course and/or grade level. The maps should also incorporate the student-centered outcomes and support DOK requirements, SDE blueprints, and OAS.

Properly developed and implemented curriculum maps and pacing guides, along with the use of frequent benchmark formative assessments, free teachers of the intense, last minute, "teaching to the test" reviews. Formative assessments provide cumulative documentation of student performance; the aligned core curriculum is mapped, paced, and adjusted to meet student need and testing requirements. This gives teachers a reliable roadmap for preparing students for success.

Each year the maps and pacing calendars should be updated and also shared with new teachers. All teachers must understand the content and the instructional expectations of their specific course and grade level. Placing maps on the district's website communicates the academic and instructional expectations to the community and parents. Teachers find creating their own curriculum maps most useful and pragmatic. This creates ownership and a deeper understanding for implementation. There are many free resources available for teachers to use as a guide, such as:

- https://www.engageny.org/resource/year-long-draft-curricular-maps-in-ela-and-mathematics offers yearlong draft maps available for both language arts and math;

- http://www.ok.gov/sde/curriculum-mapping provides information regarding curriculum mapping; and

- http://sde.ok.gov/sde/building-academic-vocabulary provides information on alignment.

FISCAL IMPACT

The development of curriculum maps and pacing guides to improve the DPS curriculum will take time. Professional development days, before school, after school, and summer meetings could become work days. The consulting team estimates that $5,000 should be budgeted for substitute pay (if teachers miss class time for the meetings); stipends (if teachers work outside the contract day); and materials (office supplies, binding, etc.) for each of the next two school years.

Recommendation	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
Develop curriculum maps and pacing guides to improve the DPS curriculum.	($5,000)	($5,000)	$0	$0	$0

FINDING 2-6

DPS teachers have no district-wide processes or procedures holding them accountable for teaching and testing the state standards. Each teacher is individually responsible for monitoring and documenting when they teach the OAS. As a result, the district lacks uniform monitoring to ensure all standards are taught with fidelity.

Teachers are expected to create weekly lesson plans. There are multiple lesson planning formats in use in the district. No common lesson planning format is implemented to document how the curricula are paced and revisited for remediation or maintenance. Teachers indicated they document the date when each OAS objective is taught. There is no standardized accountability process to track or monitor the standards mastered by students. It was unclear how students are monitored to ensure they receive the needed remediation or reinforcement. Interviews and focus groups reported random efforts for how teachers incorporate the state's blueprints, item specifications, and released items as resources to support teaching and assessing OAS. Teachers indicated limited understanding and use of the blueprints and item specifications.

Oklahoma school districts can use the Teacher Leader Effectiveness evaluation process (TLE) to assist in the process of holding teachers accountable for implementing OAS appropriately. However, the consulting team received little information that DPS used TLE data to support accountability efforts. The TLE framework clearly states all learning objectives and state content standards are explicitly communicated to all students. TLE requires teachers to implement curriculum and deliver instruction in accord with OAS. The TLE framework also says the teacher "facilitates tracking of student progress using a formative approach to assessment and monitors the extent to which students understand their level of performance."

RECOMMENDATION

Implement district-wide accountability procedures to ensure all OAS standards are taught, assessed, and paced with fidelity.

The district administration should reinforce expectations that all OAS standards are taught and monitored with accuracy. The lesson planning process should be refined to meet accountability expectations. Currently, there are multiple lesson planning formats. Adopting one common lesson planning system and infusing accountability procedures could meet accountability expectations. If pacing calendars are put in place, they can also serve as an accountability measure for the taught, tested, and mastered curriculum. The principal should see if select teachers have a process that is working. If their test scores concur, perhaps their process could be adapted for district-wide implementation.

The accountability system should enable teachers to document OAS standards taught and ensure student progress toward mastery is closely monitored. The process is a support system to ensure students are appropriately prepared for success on state assessments. Previous student performance test data needs scrutiny. Standards with a strong pass rate need targeted review and teachers need to determine why students were successful. Probing curriculum pacing, frequency taught, instructional strategies, and methodologies implemented need analysis. Failed standards also need the same examination. This data provides teachers with information to adjust pacing, instructional strategies, and to increase the frequency for teaching OAS. The district should build upon existing electronic processes and examples found on multiple websites and programs.[15]

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing funds.

FINDING 2-7

The DPS curriculum is mostly textbook driven. Few teachers reported using only standards-based, student-centered curriculum as their primary teaching source. The district purchases used textbooks, leaving many classrooms with older texts. Some teachers were not knowledgeable of how to crosswalk the state standards with the older textbook content. Some indicated the older texts did not include needed content or the content was misaligned with OAS. Some teachers use textbook-published tests. No evidence was provided to ensure these tests assessed students with appropriate DOK questions nor do they fulfill the writing expectations required by state standards.

Teaching and learning resources significantly impact student achievement by supporting, enriching, and challenging student learning. They also add important structure to lesson planning and delivery of instruction. For example, if a language arts teacher is teaching new vocabulary words, playing a related game gives students practice and reinforces learning. Hands-on resources make learning fun. Resource materials also assist teachers in differentiating instruction. Differentiation of instruction tailors lessons to different learning styles and student capacities. Hands-on and interactive instructional resources enable teachers to present content in a variety of modalities.[16] Regardless of what kind of resources are implemented, it surpasses "answer the questions at the end of the chapter."

The internet has digital teaching materials and many of them are free. These significantly increase teaching and instructional tools and peak student engagement. Many teachers make their own materials. Any time or money invested in securing and implementing relevant, supplemental instructional resources yields learning dividends for all students.

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[15] https://www.stjohns.k12.fl.us/year-at-a-glance/; http://www.ascd.org/publications/educational-leadership/oct08/vol66/num02/Pacing-Guides.aspx
[16] http://www.ehow.com

RECOMMENDATION

Implement an in-depth assessment to ensure all teachers have access to, and use, up-to-date teaching materials, digital resources, or textbooks that align with all aspects of the OAS.

The superintendent and principal need to set clear expectations that all teachers use effective supplemental instructional resources. It should be clear that hands-on resources are a valued component in the teaching and learning cycle. The goal is to move teachers toward "standards driven" curricula. Digital and hands-on resources need to supplement the outdated textbooks. The internet has many digital resources and most publishers have online resources for teachers. 21st Century classrooms are no longer a teacher lecture followed by chapter reading and worksheet assignments. Today's classroom is student-centered and characterized by small interactive groups, multiple modes for learning, and digital media.

Professional development days and PLC meetings can be venues for teachers sharing resources. A portion of professional development days can provide teachers with time to make, search the internet, and acquire resources that reinforce learning of OAS. Teachers should methodically peruse the content they teach and selectively determine areas lacking in resource materials. If there are content standards with a pattern of failure, or the content is difficult to teach, these are areas to add supplemental resources. It is important that aligning and pacing the curricula works in concert with selecting relevant, rigorous teaching materials that enhance learning and student engagement.

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

B.   *INSTRUCTIONAL DELIVERY AND STUDENT PERFORMANCE*

High-achieving districts have curriculum maps that clearly define standards and learning objectives for each subject and grade level so that teachers know the content expectations and instructional timelines for student mastery of objectives. It takes strong instructional leadership to implement the curriculum. The principal and teachers, working collaboratively, are responsible for consistent implementation, quality instruction in the classroom, and student performance. The principal's instructional leadership is the catalyst for effective instructional delivery and high student performance.

The College of Education at Washington University, Center for Educational Leadership, has developed a framework for instructional leadership. According to their website, the framework is not the sum total of the work of instructional leaders, rather it is a description of the most important aspects of instructional leadership. **Exhibit 2-7** describes the five core beliefs that drive the work in school leadership at the Center and **Exhibit 2-8** describes the four dimensions of instructional leadership.

Exhibit 2-7
Core Beliefs - Center for Educational Leadership

Beliefs	
1	Instructional leadership is learning-focused, learning for both students and adults, and learning which is measured by improvement in instruction and in the quality of student learning.
2	Instructional leadership must reside with a team of leaders of which the principal serves as the "leader of leaders."
3	A culture of public practice and reflective practice is essential for effective instructional leadership and the improvement of instructional practice.
4	Instructional leadership addresses the cultural, linguistic, socioeconomic, and learning diversity in the school community.
5	Instructional leadership focuses upon the effective management of resources and of people – recruiting, hiring, developing, evaluating – particularly in changing environments.

Source: http://info.k-12leadership.org/4-dimensions-of-instructional-leadership

Exhibit 2-8
Dimensions of Instructional Leadership

Dimensions	
Vision, Mission, and Culture Building	School leaders, committed to collective leadership, create a reflective, equity-driven, achievement-based culture of learning focused upon academic success for every student.
Improvement of Instructional Practice	Based upon a shared vision of effective teaching and learning, school leaders establish a focus on learning; nurture a culture of continuous improvement, innovation, and public practice; and monitor, evaluate, and develop teacher performance to improve instruction.
Allocation of Resources	School leaders allocate resources strategically so that instructional practice and student learning continue to improve.
Management of People and Processes	School leaders engage in strategic personnel management and develop working environments in which teachers have full access to supports that help improve instruction.

Source: http://info.k-12leadership.org/4-dimensions-of-instructional-leadership

Waters, Marzano, and McNulty (2003), from the Mid-Continent Regional Educational Laboratory (McREL), synthesized the body of research on the effects of leadership practices on student achievement. In their research, McREL identified 21 leadership responsibilities and 66 practices that are significantly associated with student achievement. These characteristics and responsibilities are now integrated into a Balanced Leadership Framework.[17] Much of the TLE evaluation process adopted for Oklahoma administrators uses this research.[18]

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[17] www.mcrel.org/~/media/Files/McREL/Homepage/Products/01_99/prod54_BL_Framework.ashx page 15
[18] http://ok.gov/sde/sites/ok.gov.sde/files/TLE-McRELBooklet.pdf page 3

PRISMATIC
SERVICES, INC.

School administrators must have pragmatic knowledge, skills, strategies, and tools to positively affect student achievement. They must move their instructional leadership skill set past abstract and theoretical thinking to concrete, day-to-day practices to be effective leaders. Instructional leaders understand the need for multi-faceted strategies that enable them to know when, how, and why leadership action must be taken.

Superintendents and principals form the core of educational leadership in school districts. The school leader is no longer simply that of a building manager who makes sure that schedules are met, the school is maintained, and that discipline is properly enforced. Today, the educational leader is responsible for consistency of implementation of an aligned curriculum, the quality of instruction in the classroom, and student performance. Recent research contends that school leaders influence classroom teaching, and consequently student learning, by staffing schools with highly effective teachers and supporting those teachers with effective teaching and learning environments.[19]

Effective learning environments begin with strong educational and instructional leadership and include:

- Instructional Vision - instructional practices that are guided by a common, research-based instructional vision that articulates what students do to learn the subject effectively.

- Continuous Improvement of Instruction - resources (i.e., professional development, allocation of teacher time, budget decisions), policies, and procedures (i.e., school improvement plans, teacher evaluation) aligned toward continuous improvement of instructional practice guided by the instructional vision.

- High Expectations - for all students, academically, behaviorally, and in all aspects of student well-being.

- School Culture - a safe, collaborative, and supportive space that places high priority on ensuring that students are successful in school and life.

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[19] http://www.youblisher.com/p/110815-New-thinking-about-educational-leadership/

Exhibit 2-9 provides the current organizational structure for instructional delivery at DPS.

Exhibit 2-9
Organizational Chart
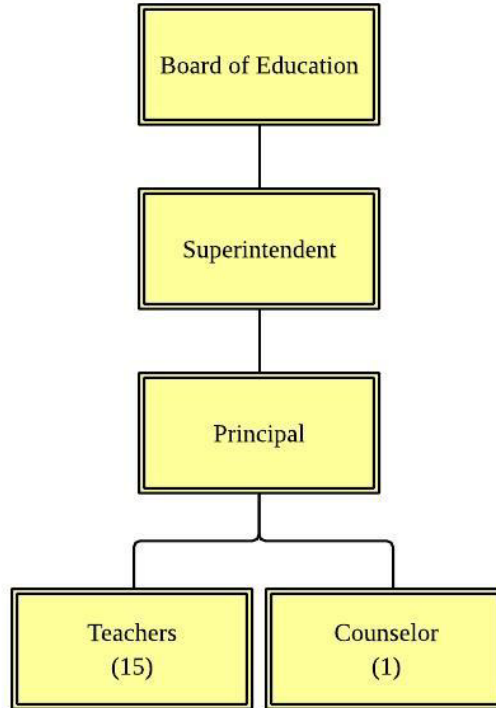
Created by Prismatic, September 2018

Exhibit 2-10 provides illustrations of a typical DPS classrooms.

Exhibit 2-10
DPS Classrooms

Source: Prismatic, August 2018   *Source: Prismatic, August 2018*

Oklahoma School Testing Program

Student assessment is an integral part of measuring student performance. The Oklahoma School Testing Program (OSTP) continues implementation of the current standards-based tests that students must take during the school year. The OCCT consist of Criterion-Referenced Tests (CRTs) designed to measure student attainment of skills established for core subjects. The OCCT helps monitor student and school performance relative to the OAS. The OSTP program uses a phase-in process to increase tested grades and subjects. CRTs are currently administered in 3rd through 8th grade. Exams are administered for selected grades and courses in this manner:

- third grade: Reading and Mathematics;

- fourth grade: Reading and Mathematics;

- fifth grade: Reading, Mathematics, Science, Social Studies, and Writing;

- sixth grade: Reading and Mathematics;

- seventh grade: Reading, Mathematics, and Geography; and

- eighth grade: Reading, Mathematics, Science, US History, and Writing.

Beginning in 2019, students enrolled in 11th grade are given the Oklahoma College and Career Ready Assessment (CCRA), which will consist of two parts. For part one, each district administers either the ACT or SAT, including the writing section. Part two consists of Science Content Assessment which is aligned to the OAS for Science, and U.S. History Assessment which is aligned to the OAS for U.S. History. Historically, Oklahoma districts have administered either the ACT or SAT in 11th grade, as well as tested 10th grade students in science and history.

All students in the tested grades and subjects participate in the OSTP. The test results are for all students who attend a Full Academic Year (FAY). Current administrative rules define FAY as any student who has enrolled by October 1st.

The SDE uses performance level descriptors (PLDs) advanced, proficient, basic and below basic in reporting student test scores. Also, test scores are reported in one of the following four categories:

- Advanced – Student demonstrates superior performance on challenging subject matter;

- Proficient (called Satisfactory prior to 2009) – Student demonstrates mastery of appropriate grade level subject matter and is ready for the next grade, course, or level of education, as applicable;

- Limited Knowledge – Student demonstrates partial mastery of the essential knowledge and skills appropriate to his or her grade level, course, or level of education, as applicable; and

- Unsatisfactory – Student does not perform at least at the limited knowledge level.

To assist teachers and districts in teaching the OAS and preparing students for the OCCT, the SDE provides a variety of resources on its website. These resources include the following:

- the OAS by subject and grade level;

- test blueprints for each grade level and subject area test that show what percentage of the test each skill will represent;

- test/item specifications highlight important points about the items' emphasis, stimulus attributes, format, content limits, distracter domain, and sample test items;

- released test questions;

- writing samples;

- a list of words, called the academic vocabulary, that are used on each test; and

- DOK levels and percentage weights for all OCCT test questions in test specifications.

The OAS along with the blueprints, PLDs, item specifications, DOK, writing samples, and released items define the testing requirements for 2014 through 2017.[20]

Exhibit 2-11 provides the results of the math OCCTs in 2016-17. DPS students were generally in the middle of the peer districts at each grade level, except for eighth grade, when they were the lowest of the peers and below the community group and state. In most grades, DPS scored higher than the community group and the state.

Exhibit 2-11
Percentage of DPS and Peer District
Full Academic Year Students Scoring Proficient or Above in Math
2016-17

Entity	3rd Grade	4th Grade	5th Grade	6th Grade	7th Grade	8th Grade
Drummond	**58%**	**68%**	**65%**	**50%**	**50%**	**13%**
Robin Hill	87%	72%	71%	50%	60%	29%
Kremlin-Hillsdale	73%	53%	38%	39%	24%	25%
Sharon-Mutual	50%	64%	57%	50%	18%	DNS
Pioneer	73%	83%	65%	48%	67%	39%
Union City	43%	44%	17%	47%	24%	38%
Community Group	**63%**	**54%**	**46%**	**46%**	**44%**	**31%**
State	**54%**	**49%**	**42%**	**42%**	**42%**	**29%**

Source: Office of Educational Quality and Accountability, Profiles Database

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[20] http://sde.ok.gov/sde/assessment-administrator-resources-administrators

Exhibit 2-12 provides the results of the reading OCCTs in 2016-17. DPS students in the third, fourth, and seventh grades were generally in the middle of the peer districts, while students in the fifth and sixth grades were the lowest of the peer districts. DPS students in the third, fourth, sixth, and seventh grades compared favorably to the community group and state, while those in fifth and eighth did not.

Exhibit 2-12
Percentage of DPS and Peer District
Full Academic Year Students Scoring Proficient or Above in Reading
2016-17

Entity	3rd Grade	4th Grade	5th Grade	6th Grade	7th Grade	8th Grade
Drummond	**58%**	**52%**	**35%**	**50%**	**55%**	**33%**
Robin Hill	81%	64%	67%	50%	67%	57%
Kremlin-Hillsdale	55%	42%	38%	70%	47%	50%
Sharon-Mutual	38%	57%	64%	67%	27%	18%
Pioneer	60%	80%	70%	60%	58%	55%
Union City	43%	44%	42%	59%	24%	63%
Community Group	**59%**	**51%**	**50%**	**52%**	**47%**	**47%**
State	**49%**	**46%**	**49%**	**48%**	**42%**	**43%**

Source: Office of Educational Quality and Accountability, Profiles Database

Exhibit 2-13 shows the 2016-17 science scores. In both grades, DPS students scored among the lowest of the peer districts, as well as below the community group and state.

Exhibit 2-13
Percentage of DPS and Peer District
Full Academic Year Students Scoring Proficient or Above in Science
2016-17

Entity	5th Grade	8th Grade
Drummond	**48%**	**40%**
Robin Hill	76%	64%
Kremlin-Hillsdale	31%	60%
Sharon-Mutual	57%	29%
Pioneer	65%	71%
Union City	25%	56%
Community Group	**56%**	**56%**
State	**51%**	**50%**

Source: Office of Educational Quality and Accountability, Profiles Database

Exhibit 2-14 shows that, from 2012-13 to 2015-16 DPS math scores have improved for the third graders and fourth graders. For the rest of the cohorts of fifth through eighth, the scores have generally declined. The 2016-17 percentages reflect Oklahoma's higher performance standards adopted in 2017.

Exhibit 2-14
Five-year Data Trend in Math

Grade	2012-13 Drummond	State	2013-14 Drummond	State	2014-15 Drummond	State	2015-16 Drummond	State	2016-17 Drummond	State
3rd	59%	75%	67%	75%	88%	71%	90%	75%	58%	54%
4th	79%	78%	79%	74%	86%	79%	100%	77%	68%	49%
5th	80%	75%	85%	75%	82%	77%	78%	79%	65%	42%
6th	93%	77%	71%	76%	74%	76%	90%	76%	50%	42%
7th	88%	74%	100%	74%	85%	76%	93%	76%	50%	42%
8th	75%	72%	85%	63%	50%	64%	50%	64%	13%	29%

Source: Office of Educational Quality and Accountability, Profiles Database

Exhibit 2-15 shows reading scores over a five-year period. From 2012-13 to 2015-16, DPS third and fourth grade students have shown improvement in reading. The sixth and seventh graders' percentages have gone down during that same period. The 2016-17 percentages reflect Oklahoma's higher performance standards adopted in 2017.

Exhibit 2-15
Five-year Data Trend in Reading

Grade	2012-13 Drummond	State	2013-14 Drummond	State	2014-15 Drummond	State	2015-16 Drummond	State	2016-17 Drummond	State
3rd	65%	78%	56%	80%	92%	81%	100%	82%	58%	49%
4th	63%	74%	63%	76%	86%	80%	95%	78%	52%	46%
5th	69%	75%	68%	76%	65%	77%	67%	82%	35%	49%
6th	93%	72%	71%	75%	74%	74%	65%	74%	50%	48%
7th	94%	77%	75%	81%	85%	82%	86%	82%	55%	42%
8th	95%	82%	77%	82%	78%	86%	70%	86%	33%	43%

Source: Office of Educational Quality and Accountability, Profiles Database

Exhibit 2-16 displays results for the 2016-17 tenth grade test scores. In English, history, and math, DPS had the highest score among all comparison entities. In science, DPS scored higher than all but the community group.

Exhibit 2-16
Percentage DPS and Peer District Grade 10 Regular Education,
Full Academic Year Students Scoring Proficient or Above
2016-17

Entity	English	U.S. History	Science	Math
Drummond	**65%**	**93%**	**25%**	**70%**
Robin Hill	DNS	DNS	DNS	DNS
Kremlin-Hillsdale	46%	42%	DNS	31%
Sharon-Mutual	21%	33%	7%	5%
Pioneer	DNS	DNS	DNS	DNS
Union City	27%	58%	15%	33%
Community Group	**44%**	**60%**	**31%**	**37%**
State	**44%**	**58%**	**24%**	**32%**

Source: Office of Educational Quality and Accountability, Profiles Database

Exhibit 2-17 shows that during three out of the past five years DPS' number of high school graduates completing Regents' College-Bound Curriculum was 100 percent. Since 2012-13, DPS' rate has been higher than the rates for the community group and state.

Exhibit 2-17
Percentage of DPS and Peer District Graduates Completing
Regents' College-Bound Curriculum, 2012-13 to 2016-17

Entity	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17
Drummond	**91%**	**100%**	**97%**	**100%**	**100%**
Robin Hill	No HS	No HS	No HS	No HS	No HS
Kremlin-Hillsdale	100%	82%	19%	100%	95%
Sharon-Mutual	100%	83%	80%	82%	100%
Pioneer	No HS	No HS	No HS	No HS	No HS
Union City	85.%	76%	100%	100%	100%
Community Group	**87%**	**84%**	**85%**	**84%**	**89%**
State	**85%**	**84%**	**81%**	**81%**	**80%**

Source: Office of Educational Quality and Accountability, Profiles Database

Exhibit 2-18 compares the trends in the district's ACT composite scores over time. DPS' composite score averaged 20.5 and in 2016-17 was the same as in 2012-13. Both the community group and the state went down while DPS did not change.

Exhibit 2-18
Trend in ACT Composite Scores, 2012-13 to 2016-17

Entity	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	Percentage Change
Drummond	**20.7**	**19.4**	**20.2**	**21.3**	**20.7**	**0.0%** ●
Robin Hill	No HS	No HS	No HS	No HS	No HS	NA
Kremlin-Hillsdale	19.6	20.4	21.0	22.2	20.3	3.6% ▲
Sharon-Mutual	18.6	19.9	18.2	17.7	20.7	11.3% ▲
Pioneer	No HS	No HS	No HS	No HS	No HS	NA
Union City	23.3	18.7	19.1	20.1	19.8	(15.0%) ▼
Community Group	**20.4**	**20.2**	**20.0**	**20.3**	**19.5**	**(4.4%)** ▼
State	**20.9**	**20.8**	**20.7**	**20.6**	**19.5**	**(6.7%)** ▼

Source: Office of Educational Quality and Accountability, Profiles Database

In 2016-17, DPS and Kremlin-Hillsdale had a four-year dropout rate of zero percent. Consequently, along with its peers, DPS had a senior graduation rate of 100 percent. This was higher than the community group and state (**Exhibit 2-19**).

Exhibit 2-19
DPS and Peer District Four-Year Dropout and Senior Graduation Rates
2016-17

Entity	Four-Year Dropout Rate	Senior Graduation Rate
Drummond	**0.0%**	**100%**
Robin Hill	No HS	No HS
Kremlin-Hillsdale	0.0%	100.0%
Sharon-Mutual	5.0%	100.0%
Pioneer	No HS	No HS
Union City	3.8%	100.0%
Community Group	**2.2%**	**98.7%**
State	**9.2%**	**96.8%**

Source: Office of Educational Quality and Accountability, Profiles Database

FINDING 2-8

The district principal seeks to provide instructional leadership to staff in grades Pre-K through grade 12. He works to ensure the educational services and resources are student centered and meet existing student needs. He is visionary and understands the importance of setting high expectations for continuous improvement. He pursues positive two-way communication. He is open in soliciting new ideas for making informed decisions. He sees the value and need for bringing DPS curricular and instructional processes to a higher level. He strives to keep the district on track and moving toward continuous school improvement.

COMMENDATION

The district is commended for the instructional leadership provided by the principal.

FINDING 2-9

The district has no uniform process for analyzing OCCT student performance data. There is no process to assist teachers in breaking down the data and applying it to instructional pacing and adjusting curriculum and instruction. There is no process to use student performance data to vertically align and pace curriculum. There was isolated reporting of teachers using item analysis to find trends and patterns in student learning. Teachers may independently review the data but have limited knowledge and expectations for using those reviews to plan instruction and remediation.

There are no district-wide procedures or software to assist teachers in using OCCT data to inform targeted instruction and form flex groups for targeted remedial instruction. There are no standardized methodologies for disaggregation of data and looking for vertical learning gaps. Random evidence was presented to indicate how student performance data collected at the end of each grading period were used to plan re-teach, remediation, or maintaining mastery. There is no district-wide use of student performance data to close skill gaps or reoccurring curricula redundancies. Across the district, student performance data are not commonly used to plan, adjust, pace, and design instruction and close skill gaps throughout the school year.

One of the longest-standing bodies of research is the "effective schools" research. One of the original correlates of effective schools' research is the "frequent monitoring of student progress." As stated by the University of Oklahoma's research in effective schools:

> "The effective school frequently measures academic student progress through a variety of assessment procedures. Assessment results are used to improve individual student performance and improve instructional delivery. Assessment results will show that alignment must exist between the intended, taught, and tested curriculum."[21]

More recently, effective schools research was conducted by the National Association of Elementary School Principals (NAESP). NAESP published best practices for schools and reported how the use of student achievement data must be included in instructional decision-making. In a white paper, NAESP provided five recommendations to help principals put student achievement data to the best possible use:

- make data part of the ongoing cycle of instructional improvement;

- teach students to examine their own data and set learning goals;

- establish a clear vision for school-wide data use;

- provide supports that foster a data-driven culture within the school; and

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[21] http://ces.ou.edu/7_correlates_effectiveness.html

- develop and maintain a district-wide data system.[22]

RECOMMENDATION

Implement a district-wide process for analyzing student performance data throughout the school year and use the analysis results to adjust curriculum and instruction.

The purpose of teachers analyzing classroom data is to determine what the students have learned, what they need help to learn, and how teachers plan instruction to ensure that they all do learn. The use of student performance data is essential to identify skill gaps in student learning. The learning and skill gaps must be addressed through re-teaching or remediation. The use of data also guides improvements in the rigor, pacing, and vertical articulation of curriculum and instruction. As teachers monitor performance data, patterns of teaching and individual student learning successes and challenges become evident. It is essential for teachers to have ongoing formative data to measure learning at the end of each instructional segment. This allows teachers to make informed, collaborative decisions to address potential problems.

Working with the teachers, the administration should develop a timeline that details which student assessment data are required throughout the school year. Using this timeline, the superintendent and principal should hold PLC meetings for analyzing data. Meetings should focus on determining the strengths and weaknesses of the students and how the results impact the district in pacing instruction. Reviewing formative benchmark test data throughout the school year allows timely feedback on student performance, the effectiveness of teaching strategies, and any needed adjustments and alignment to the curricula.

A helpful resource for administrators and teachers to use is found in an article published in *Educational Leadership*, "*Developing Data Mentors.*" The authors say that "gathering student-assessment data is not enough. Administrators and teachers must learn to analyze the data and apply this information in the classroom."

The district process should examine classroom data and ask key questions;

- Which content standards is the teacher assessing?

- What percent of students demonstrated proficiency?

- What implications does that have for instruction?

- Which students have not demonstrated that they can master content standards?

- What diagnostic information did an examination of student work provide?

- Based on individual student performance, what do teachers need to do next to move the student to proficiency?

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[22] http://www.naesp.org/sites/default/files/Student%20Achievement_blue.pdf

- Based on the class performance, what re-teaching needs to be done?

- After re-assessing, did students demonstrate proficiency?

- Is re-teaching or other interventions resulting in improved student performance?

- When comparing performance by subgroups, are any groups not performing as well as the whole group? If so, what's being done about that?

- Are there students who are not attaining proficiency across standards?

- What diagnostic information do we have about them to inform instruction?

- What interventions have we tried? What interventions do we plan to try next? [23]

The superintendent, principal, and teachers should consider regularly graphing data. A visual depiction of the information often yields additional insights.

Another way for teachers to get a quick visual picture of who needs additional support is to color code the data recorded in the grading process. For example, if three categories are used to define student performance in the grade book (e.g., basic - B, proficient - P, and advanced - A), each could be assigned a different color. This would allow teachers to quickly determine who was progressing and who needed additional support.[24]

Parents as well as students need consistent and clear communication regarding ongoing student performance data. Through use of one-on-one conversation or electronic communication, they can monitor daily assignments, homework, and student test data.

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources. However, if an external consultant is needed there are consultants available to guide teachers through the data analysis process. A short-term consulting engagement would cost approximately $3,000.

FINDING 2-10

The district lacks a tiered intervention process for struggling learners. There are no structures in place to assist teachers in effectively monitoring the frequency and intensity of remedial interventions for students. There are no leveled or tiered interventions to guide teachers in selecting appropriate interventions to sustain student progress or help teachers determine if the interventions are closing learning gaps. There is no scheduled time in the daily schedule to provide targeted remediation for skill-based flex groups or one-on-one remediation. There is no clearly defined early intervention system for at-risk students. Teachers provide interventions, but there is no strategic plan for appropriate remediation strategies, how to differentiate instruction, and determining the level, frequency, and intensity of interventions.

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[23] Nichols, B. W. & Singer K. P. (2000). Developing data mentors. *Educational Leadership*, *57*(5).
[24] http://mdk12.msde.maryland.gov/instruction/progress/using.html

The consulting team noted in focus group and interviews there was no uniform understanding of the implementation of tiered interventions. District administrators and teachers expressed awareness of the need to address targeted interventions and define procedures to more effectively meet the needs of struggling learners.

The district is committed to meeting the needs of all students. However, no comprehensive continuum of prevention/intervention services are in place. At the elementary level, the consulting team learned there was only reference to tiered intervention and flex grouping. Interviews and focus group discussions indicated that several teachers were attempting to provide data-driven interventions. Other teachers were vague and inconsistent in articulating how struggling learners are identified, how intervention strategies and support structures are selected, and how the interventions are evaluated as appropriate and helpful for meeting student need and closing learning gaps.

The district is not implementing the tiered academic and behavioral components of Response to Intervention (RtI) using the Oklahoma Tiered Intervention Support System (OTISS) model. **Exhibit 2-20** illustrates the RtI process.

Exhibit 2-20
Essential RtI Components
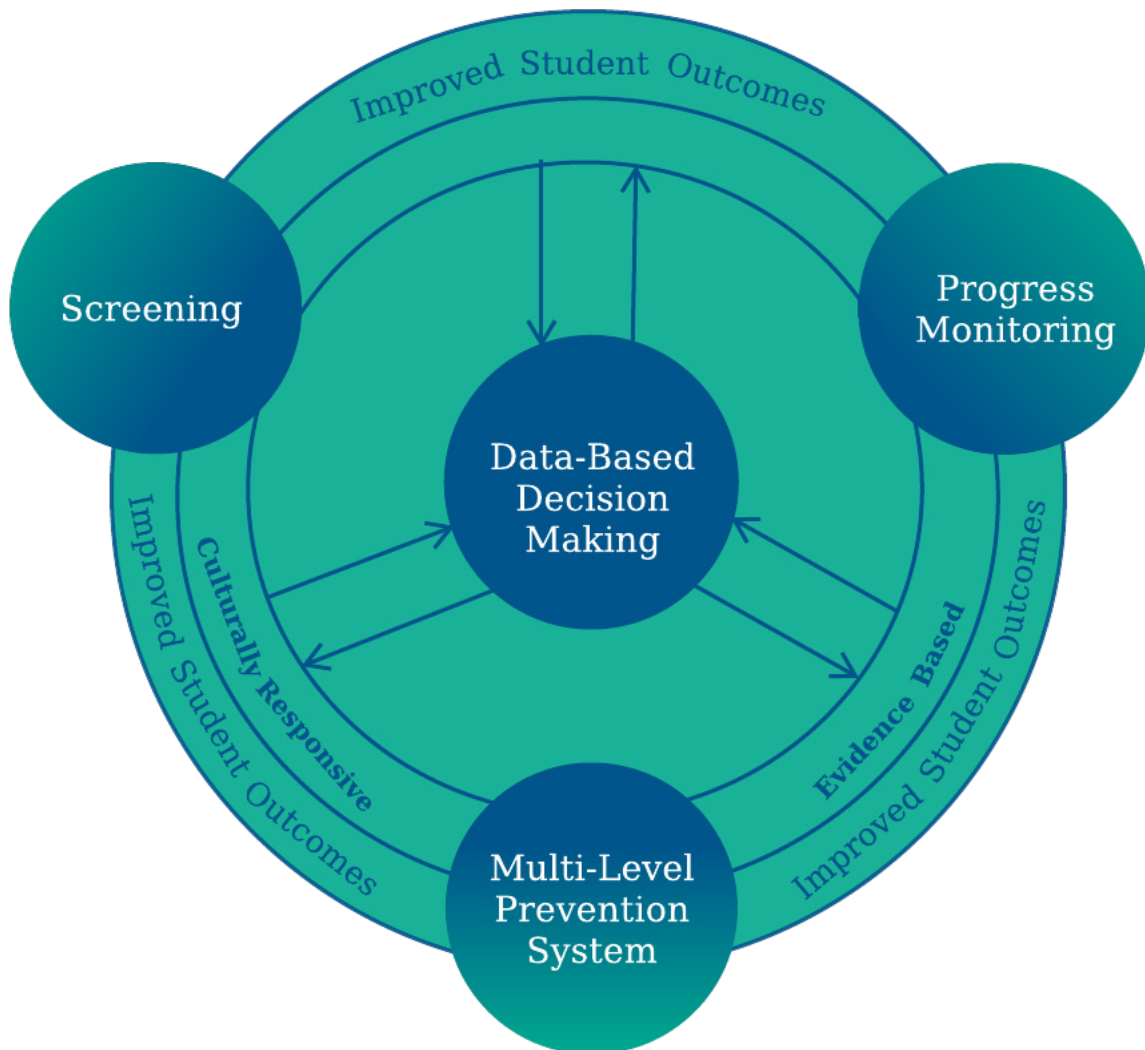
Source: http://www.rti4success.org/essential-components-rti/data-based-decision-making, re-created by Prismatic, March 2016

It is important for teaching and support staff to have a deep understanding of what RtI looks like when successfully implemented across all grade levels. The research behind RtI implementation with school-wide fidelity indicates that staff will see:

- a valid and reliable assessment system in place;

- curriculum that is evidence-based and includes grade level components across tiers;

- instructional practices are evidence-based and follow set parameters;

- staff following clear data-based decision-making rules;

- predetermined fidelity checks are applied routinely;

- integration and sustainability practices are followed, and

- staff regularly communicate using the same vocabulary.[25]

A district implementing RtI successfully has clearly defined procedures, techniques, feedback loops, and decision-making processes within each component. The district's plan will:

- detail responsibilities of specific persons (coaches, teachers, administration);

- create a data system for measuring operations, techniques, and components;

- link fidelity data to improved outcomes data;

- approach instructor observation in a positive manner, emphasizing problem-solving; and

- create accountability measures for noncompliance.[26]

RtI provides structure for lesson planning and instructional delivery. **Exhibit 2-21** summarizes the essential questions teacher teams need to address in lesson planning and planning for delivering instruction.

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[25] http://www.rti4success.org/sites/default/files/FidelityImplementation_10-20-09_FINAL.pdf
[26] Johnson, Mellard, Fuchs, & McKnight, 2006; Pierangelo & Giuliani, 2008

Exhibit 2-21
RtI Lesson Planning and Instruction

Adherence	• How well do you "stick to the plan?" • How well do you stay true to the intervention and not drift from the core elements? • Did you make sure all pieces of the intervention have been implemented as intended?
Duration/Exposure	• How often does a student receive an intervention? • How long does an intervention last? • In elementary schools: Providing 90 minutes of reading instruction five days a week? Progress monitoring a minimum of every two weeks.
Quality of Delivery	• How well was the intervention or instruction delivered? • Were good teaching practices used? • Is teacher enthusiasm evident? • Is there adequate time for student questions and exposure to differentiation? Student groups and transitions effectively managed?
Program Differentiation	• How well do you differentiate one intervention from another? • How well do you avoid inserting pieces from other interventions?
Student Responsiveness	• How engaged and involved are the students in this intervention or activity? • Amount of time students spend on task? • Levels of enthusiasm for activity? • Extent students feel they learned what was expected? • Number of students meditating with their eyes closed and heads on their desks?

Source: http://www.rti4success.org/sites/default/files/FidelityImplementation_10-20-09_FINAL.pdf, March 2016

RECOMMENDATION

Implement a tiered interventions model for remediation.

The superintendent, principal, and select teachers should review the RtI program and then determine to adopt the RtI program or a hybrid approach to tiered intervention for struggling learners. The review process should focus on how to increase the effectiveness of tiered interventions. If needed, external consultants are available to assist in the process.

The guide *Considering Tier 3 Within a Response-to-Intervention Model* can serve as a resource to understand the RtI process.[27] The *RtI Essential Components Integrity Rubric* and the *RtI Essential Components Integrity Worksheet* are useful appraisal tools.[28]

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[27] http://www.rtinetwork.org/essential/tieredinstruction/tier3/consideringtier3
[28] http://www.rti4success.org/resource/essential-components-rti-integrity-rubric-and-worksheet

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing Title I or Special Education resources.

FINDING 2-11

Not all teachers are actively engaged in the Professional Learning Communities (PLC) process. The district does not provide regularly scheduled release time for all teachers to participate in PLC meetings to address curricular and instructional concerns. Across the district, there is random and informal dialogue taking place. There is as yet no comprehensive approach for addressing curricular and instructional issues.

The district has initially implemented PLC. There are common planning times scheduled for select teachers to collaborate and engage in dialogue and discussion regarding curriculum and instruction. Lunch hours have also been used for PLC meetings. The primary agenda or focus for dialogue and discussion is "what's working and what's not working." However, DPS has not implemented standardized PLC. The PLCs have created their own hybrid plan to randomly meet to discuss issues regarding curriculum and instruction. It was learned that these meetings function at varying levels of effectiveness; most are informal, times vary, attendance is random, and there is minimal accountability for rigor and quality of work.

It is the intent of the district to implement PLC based on professional dialogue, best practices, and research. However, the teacher discussions do not have a common district vision, mission, and student-centered outcomes. There are no pre-determined core priorities and daily curricular and instructional practices. Interviews and focus group discussions reported minimal dialogue centering on the shift from a focus on teaching to a focus on student-centered learning. Teachers recognize there is expertise, innovative strategies, and valuable resources among the staff, but no consistent structured time or process to share their work.

The consulting team found that staff meetings are not maximized by consistently focusing on collaborative efforts. All meeting agendas do not routinely share effective interventions and daily remediation practices across grade levels and subject areas. No PLC meetings consistently focus on data analysis, using formative and summative data to design, adjust, and pace curricula and instruction.

There are differing and diverse mindsets about collaborative times. Teachers are functioning at varied proficiency levels, thus affecting the quality of collaborative work. Some recurring issues reported were the degree of teacher buy-in, accountability, monitoring, and the quality of work done during collaborative times.

Research is clear that PLC teacher collaboration has profound implications for schools. As a school moves forward, every educator must engage with colleagues in the ongoing exploration of three crucial questions that drive the work of those within a PLC:

- 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?[29]

Generally, the literature on collaboration and PLCs identifies five organizational competencies:

- supportive and shared leadership;

- collective creativity;

- shared values and vision;

- supportive conditions; and

- shared personal practice.[30]

Establishing PLCs does not occur quickly or spontaneously. It requires dedicated and intentional effort on the part of the instructional leader and the professional staff. Moving to collaborative planning and learning creates organizational change. It takes teachers from teaching in isolation and moves them to corporate thinking and shared expertise. It takes seasoned teachers out of their comfort zone and into shared learning.

Exhibit 2-22 articulates change insights from Fullan's *The Six Secrets of Change* (2008). The implementation dip is expected as change is introduced. However, after recovery, actual performance is better than before the change.

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[29] http://www.ascd.org/publications/educational-leadership/may04/vol61/num08/What-Is-a-Professional-Learning-Community%C2%A2.aspx
[30] http://www.sedl.org/change/issues/issues61.html

Exhibit 2-22
Change Implementation
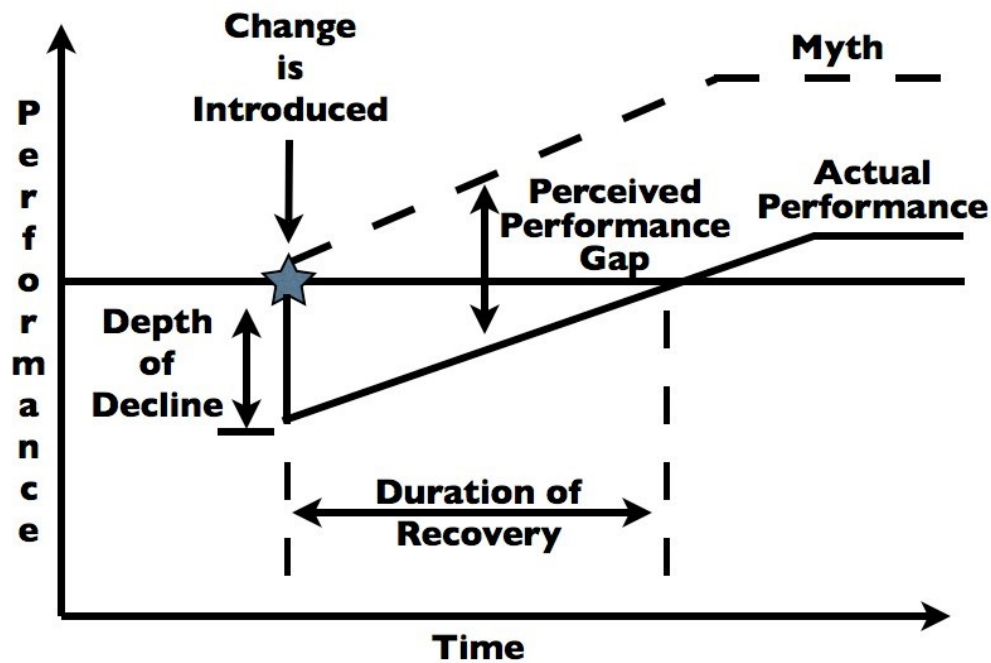
A district seeking to improve must be mindful that capacity building is more important than accountability because the former is the route to the latter. Clearly, one needs both. Finding the right combination and integration of the two is the trick.[31] Being the change agent in successful schools means that growing and learning are ongoing phenomena.[32] **Exhibit 2-23** summarizes Fullan's insights regarding change.

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[31] Fullan, M. (2008). *The six secrets of change*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
[32] http://www.sedl.org/change/issues/issues61.html

Exhibit 2-23
Insights on Change for Continuous Improvement

Change Insights	• The implementation dip is normal • Behaviors change before beliefs • The size and prettiness of the planning document is inversely related to the quantity of action and student learning (Reeves, 2002) • Shared vision or ownership is more of an outcome of a quality process than it is a precondition • Feelings are more influential than thoughts (Kotter, 2008)
Change Savvy Leadership	Change savvy leadership involves: • Careful entry into the new setting • Listening to and learning from those who have been there longer • Engaging in fact finding and joint problem solving • Carefully (rather than rashly) diagnosing the situation • Forthrightly addressing people's concerns • Being enthusiastic, genuine, and sincere about the change circumstances • Obtaining buy-in for what needs fixing • Developing a credible plan for making that fix

Source: http://michaelfullan.ca/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/2008SixSecretsofChangeKeynoteA4.pdf

Learning by Doing: A Handbook for Professional Learning Communities at Work[33] provides a road map to narrow the "knowing-doing gap" regarding PLC. This book outlines the importance of common vocabulary and common understandings of PLC concepts and characteristics. It provides the rationale for implementing PLC that benefit students. DuFour, et al., lays out purposeful steps to guide leaders in assessing perceptual reality in their school. It is a helpful guide to foundational information and the improved capacity for staff to function as a PLC.

McLaughlin and Talbert (1993)[34] suggested that when teachers had opportunities for collaborative inquiry and the learning related to it, they were able to develop and share a body of wisdom gleaned from their experience. Darling-Hammond (1996)[35] cited shared decision-making as a factor in curriculum reform and the transformation of teaching roles in some schools. In such schools, structured time is provided for teachers to work together in planning instruction, observing each other's classrooms, and sharing feedback. These and other attributes characterize PLC.

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[33] DuFour, R., DuFour, R., Eaker, R., Many, T., & Mattos, M. (2006). *Learning by doing: A handbook for professional learning communities at work*. Bloomington, IN: Solution Tree.
[34] McLaughlin, M. W. & Talbert, J. E. (1993). *Contexts that matter for teaching and learning*. Stanford, CA: Center for Research on the Context of Secondary School Teaching, Stanford University.
[35] Darling-Hammond, L. (1996). The quiet revolution: Rethinking teacher development. *Educational Leadership, 53*(6), 4-10.

For teachers to build the kind of trust needed to not only talk candidly but also to observe one another teach is a first step. This takes instructional leadership and teacher empowerment. Expecting teachers to have conversations is an instructional practice that takes instructional leadership. With the evolving trends and patterns of increased rigor for instruction, collaboration between and among teachers, and district leadership becomes vital. Teaching OAS with fidelity can take place more effectively with formalized PLC opportunities for discussion and collaborative planning. Without supportive time structures, teachers continue to work in isolation. Successful implementation of continuous school improvement requires cross-curricular dialogue. Continuous improvement evolves successfully through PLC collaboration, corporate thinking, and shared decision-making. Implementation of new initiatives, such as the student-centered outcomes, along with the day-to-day decisions in schools, is more robust and maximized when districts provide teachers with PLC opportunities.

RECOMMENDATION

Implement a formalized, research-based, district-wide PLC process with regularly scheduled release time, standardized norms, and support structures for teachers to collaborate and focus on continuous school improvement.

DPS administrative staff must understand the need for finding the balance between capacity building and accountability. There is also need for freedom and self-direction that lead to district changes and improvement. Yet teachers need support, direction, and parameters that develop expertise and grow the practice of professional dialogue with fellow teachers. Teachers need to move past blaming the parent or socioeconomic status for deficiencies. All staff must take ownership for reaching the child through effective instruction. Teachers need to talk about and develop curriculum together based on the state standards and skills students must learn. Teachers should no longer be tethered to textbook curriculum. Teachers have a wealth of expertise and options for professional learning next door and across the hall and need time for collaboration.

The superintendent and principal need to review the existing structures, schedules, and levels of teacher expertise in implementing collaborative processes. With select staff, they need to reflect on trends and patterns that have emerged over the last two to three years. They need to assess where the staff is functioning during the initial implementation of PLC. The district needs to develop a profile of their journey to develop, deepen, and sustain the collaborative process. The review process needs input from all instructional staff.

The National College for School Leadership has developed a rubric that DPS principals should use to assess their PLC. A copy is available in **Appendix E**.

The superintendent and principal should determine the process for PLC implementation. Together with teaching staff, they should move to a "systematic process in which we work together, interdependently, to analyze and impact professional practice in order to improve our individual and collective results."[36] **Exhibit 2-24** is a resource for exploring scheduling options for teacher collaboration.

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[36] Eaker, R., DuFour, R., & DuFour, R. (2002). *Getting started: Reculturing schools to become professional learning communities*. Bloomington, IN: Solution Tree Press.

Exhibit 2-24
Examples for Providing Collaboration Time

> **Common Prep Time -** build a master schedule to provide daily common prep time for teachers of the same course or department.
>
> **Parallel Scheduling** - schedule common prep time by assigning elective and special teachers to provide lessons to students across an entire grade level at the same time each day.
>
> **Adjust Start and End Times** - gain collaborative time by starting the workday early or extending the workday one day each week to gain time.
>
> **Shared Classes** - combine students across two different grade levels or courses into one class for instruction.
>
> **Group Activities, Events, and Testing** - teams of teachers and non-teaching staff coordinate activities that require supervision of students rather than instructional expertise.
>
> **Banking Time** - over a period of days, extend the instructional minutes beyond the school day.
>
> **In-Service and Faculty Meeting Time** - schedule extended time for teams to work together on staff development days and during faculty meeting times.

Source: Dufour, R. (2006). Learning by doing: A handbook for professional learning communities at work. Bloomington, IN: Solution Tree.

FISCAL IMPACT

The consulting team was unable to accurately assess the fiscal impact for this recommendation. There was no clear indicator to measure the current level of implementation and determine if the process could be strengthened or if starting over is the better option

If an outsourced vendor is needed to provide training to instructional staff in PLC, the consulting team estimates $5,000 for the 2019-20 school year.

Recommendation	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
Hire a firm to help with PLC training if needed.	($5,000)	$0	$0	$0	$0

C.   *SPECIAL PROGRAMS*

School districts offer educational services to students through a variety of programs, including regular education programs and special programs. Special programs are designed to provide

quality services for student populations such as those in special education and Gifted and Talented education programs.

Special Education

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

- to ensure that all children with disabilities have available to them a free, appropriate, public education that emphasizes special education and related services designed to meet their unique needs and prepare them for employment and independent living;

- to ensure that the rights of children and youth with disabilities and their parents are protected; and

- to assess and ensure the effectiveness of efforts to educate children with disabilities.

Oklahoma statutes require that each school district provide special education and related services for all children with disabilities who reside in that district in accordance with *IDEA*. This duty may be satisfied by:

- directly providing special education for such children;

- joining in a cooperative program with another district or districts to provide special education for such children;

- joining in a written agreement with a private or public institution, licensed residential child care and treatment facility, or day treatment facility within such district to provide special education for children who are deaf or hard-of-hearing, children who are blind or partially blind, or other eligible children with disabilities; or

- transferring eligible children and youth with disabilities to other school districts pursuant to the provisions of the *Education Open Transfer Ac*t.

Districts must develop an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) for each child receiving special education services under *IDEA*. The IEP must include input from the parent and regular education teachers and be aligned with education plans for children in regular education classrooms. *IDEA* requires districts to provide educational services in the "least restrictive environment" and to include students with disabilities in state and district assessment programs. Instructional arrangements for students may include:

- all instruction and related services in a regular classroom in a mainstreamed setting;

- a resource room where the student is removed from the regular classroom less than 50 percent of the day;

- a self-contained classroom where the student is removed from the regular classroom more than 50 percent of the day; or

- a separate "self-contained" classroom for those whose disability is so severe that a satisfactory education cannot take place for any part of the day in a regular classroom.

Under *IDEA*, a school district can only place a student in a more restrictive setting such as a day treatment program or residential treatment placement if the student's needs and educational program cannot be satisfactorily provided in the regular classroom with supplementary aids and services.

The reauthorization of *IDEA* in 2004, which went into effect in 2005, includes provisions significantly changing the way learning-disabled students are identified. One change in the law addresses early intervention services and creating opportunities to determine a student's RtI. This approach was adopted in 2010 by SDE. With RtI, schools identify students at risk for poor learning outcomes; monitor student progress; provide evidence-based interventions; and adjust the intensity and nature of those interventions depending on a student's responsiveness. Based upon the results of these interventions, the district may need a referral for additional testing to determine if there is a specific learning disability.

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

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

- pre-referral or tiered intervention in regular education;

- referral to special education for evaluation;

- comprehensive nondiscriminatory evaluation;

- initial placement through an IEP meeting;

- provision of educational services and supports according to a written IEP;

- annual program review;

- three-year re-evaluation; and

- dismissal from the special education program.

Exhibit 2-25 shows comparison data on the percentage of special education students and the number of full-time equivalent (FTE) teachers in special education for 2016-17. The district had

a special education student-to-teacher ratio that was the second-lowest of the peer districts but higher than the community group and the state. DPS had the highest number of special education teachers/FTEs among peer districts and the community group.

Exhibit 2-25
Students and Teachers in Special Education Programs, 2016-17

Entity	ADM	Special Education Percentage of All Students	Special Education Teachers FTEs	# of Special Education Students per FTE
Drummond	**348**	**24.7%**	**2.3**	**37.4**
Robin Hill	318	13.5%	1.0	42.9
Kremlin-Hillsdale	303	15.4%	1.0	46.7
Sharon-Mutual	290	14.2%	1.0	41.2
Pioneer	387	9.5%	1.0	36.8
Union City	314	15.5%	1.1	44.2
Community Group	**361**	**15.9%**	**1.7**	**33.8**
State	**1,267**	**15.8%**	**8.2**	**24.4**

Source: Office of Educational Quality and Accountability, Profiles Database

Exhibit 2-26 compares district special education revenues expenditures for 2016-17. At 165.5 percent, DPS special education revenues substantially exceeded expenditures. DPS had the highest revenue-expenditure ratio among its peers.

Exhibit 2-26
Comparison of Special Education Revenues and Expenditures, 2016-17

Entity	Total Revenues for Special Education	Total Expenditures for Special Education	Revenues as Percent of Expenditures
Drummond	**$239,030**	**$144,397**	**165.5%**
Robin Hill	$157,956	$112,692	140.2%
Kremlin-Hillsdale	$101,851	$143,560	70.9%
Sharon-Mutual	$135,320	$149,401	90.6%
Pioneer	$171,315	$134,173	127.7%
Union City	$175,047	$131,940	132.7%
Peer Average	**$148,928**	**$134,353**	**110.4%**

Source: OCAS Impact Aid Letters and Prismatic Calculations 2018

FINDING 2-12

The district primarily serves special education students through the resource room. Students receive initial instruction from the classroom teacher and then have the option of transitioning to the resource room for additional help. Even though the transition times appeared orderly, the transition time interrupts instructional learning time. DPS has several students with more

complex needs, but most are categorized with speech and specialized learning disabilities. There are no inclusionary classrooms where general education and special education teachers work together in a co-teaching arrangement.

Through interviews, focus groups, and observations, the consulting team noted a high level of professionalism among special education teachers and classroom teachers. Their informal collaboration and focused intent to effectively serve students with IEPs was apparent. The regular classroom teachers attend IEP meetings and implement the detailed student modifications for learning. The special education teachers and regular classroom teachers work collaboratively at serving the needs of identified students.

Co-teaching instruction works well in school cultures such as DPS. Co-teaching arrangements interface well with students identified with specific learning disabilities. In *What Every Principal Needs to Know to Create Equitable and Excellent Schools,* the writers contend:

> When co-teaching happens, it is most important that all teachers involved utilize their strengths, share roles, and are both seen as leaders in the classroom. Teachers should maximize the benefits of reducing the student-teacher ratio by using co-teaching models, such as parallel instruction, station teaching, and teaming, and minimize the one-teach one-assist model and other like arrangements that place one of the teaching in the role of the assistant.[37]

One of the co-teaching benefits for the teachers is they acquire a greater understanding and increased competence in their colleagues' areas of expertise. Special education teachers expand their content area knowledge when co-teaching, while regular education teachers learn new behavior management techniques and ideas for curriculum adaptation.

In co-teaching classrooms where teachers share the role of circling around the room and assisting whoever needs help, the support for all students is increased. Another benefit is that special education teachers hear the regular education teachers explain content material. Subsequently, when the special education teachers assist IEP students, they can reinforce the vocabulary and instructional expectations required by regular education teachers. When teachers work together to establish equitable roles and duties, all students in a co-taught classroom benefit from the presence of two teachers that can support their learning.

Research and educational literature speak of varying types, models, and approaches to co-teaching. The literature also addresses some specific requirements for successful co-teaching. Across 32 studies, teachers repeatedly stressed the importance of several elements in creating strong co-teaching partnerships (**Exhibit 2-27**).

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[37] Theoharis, G. and Brooks, J. S. (2004), *What every principal needs to know to create equitable and excellent schools (pp. 149)*. New York, NY: Teachers College Press.

Exhibit 2–27
Research-Based Requirements for Successful Co-Teaching

Area	Requirements
Administrative support; particularly support from the school principal	A supportive administrator can ensure that teachers have the resources needed to make co-teaching a success (e.g., classroom space, planning time, and training).
Voluntary participation in co-teaching and a choice of co-teaching partner	If a teacher is forced into co-teaching or paired with someone he or she has no desire to work with, the results can be disastrous.
Compatibility of teachers	Teachers spoke frequently of the importance of personal compatibility between co-teachers as well as similar philosophies toward teaching and students. Compatibility requires more than simply two teachers who are willing to be partnered as co-teachers. They have to share a motivation to make the partnership work and an agreement about how the class will be structured and each person's role in teaching, planning, and behavior management.
Adequate planning time	Teachers consistently reported the lack of enough planning time for co-taught classes. In one study, teachers had about 45 minutes of planning time a week but felt they needed almost three times that amount. Co-teachers also expressed concern that their planning periods often did not match up, requiring them to find moments between classes, at lunch, or after school to plan together.
A minimum level of academic and behavioral skill needed by students in the class	Some study participants who had witnessed or been part of unsuccessful co-teaching arrangements reported that the failure was directly attributable to one or more students who continually disrupted the class and required constant attention.
Training	Teachers reported receiving little training to prepare them for co-teaching. Many of them would have liked training in collaboration, co-teaching models, communication skills, and inclusive practices to help them work together and in each other's areas of expertise (e.g., content area instruction for special educators and information on various disabilities for general educators).

Source: *www.parentcenterhub.org/repository/abstract81*

According to SDE, collaborative implementation for co-teaching includes regular and special education teachers completing the following activities:

- participate in professional development regarding selecting appropriate approaches to co-teaching and applying them to classroom instruction;

- deliver co-taught lessons and assessments incorporating Universal Design for Learning and differentiation strategies;

- ensure instruction and assessments provide access to general education curriculum with appropriate accommodations to meet individual student needs;

- implement data collection procedures for established outcomes;

- address barriers to implementation;

- demonstrate shared accountability for planning, instruction, assessment, and progress of all students that exhibits shared understandings of student instructional needs;

- document shared communications with parents; and

- integrate technology in instruction, progress monitoring, and assessment processes.[38]

RECOMMENDATION

Strengthen services to special education students through implementing more inclusionary classrooms and co-teaching practices.

The superintendent, principal, special education teachers, and select classroom teachers should pursue an in-depth study of the co-teaching process to determine implementation processes and procedures. The following links provide DPS with additional information to assist in determining options for expansion and improvement of their current practices.[39] Time should be spent in observation and visiting schools successfully implementing co-teaching arrangements.

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing special education resources.

FINDING 2-13

The DPS library (**Exhibit 2-28**) is traditional in function and service. There is little collaboration among classroom teachers and library staff.

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[38] http://ok.gov/sde/sites/ok.gov.sde/files/Oklahoma%20Co%20Teaching%20Framework.pdf
[39] www.questar.org/services/rse-tasc-ii/presentations/instruction/Co-Teaching.pdf;
www.ctserc.org/initiatives/teachandlearn/coteach.shtml;
www.asdk12..org/depts/hr/student_teaching/PDF/The_Power_of_2.pdf;
www.schools.utah.gov/sars/DOCS/resources/coteach.aspx

Exhibit 2-28
DPS Library

Source: Prismatic, August 2018

The library is staffed with a part-time certified librarian and full-time library aide. The library uses Follet software for checking out and managing the collection. Students come to the library to take the Accelerated Reading tests. Elementary students frequent the library individually and as a class. From time to time, library staff provide instructional services for elementary students.

Staff and students expressed satisfaction with the library services. However, the library needs improvement in collaborating with teachers and integrating new technologies. DPS, students have few digital learning options facilitated via the library. The library meets statutory requirements.

As noted by SDE, an effective school library:

- offers a wide variety of materials - reference, fiction, and nonfiction - in a broad range of reading levels;

- provides access to current information by integrating new technologies into the curriculum;

- is cost-effective, allowing many readers access to one book; and

- allows the school librarians to team with teachers to create and present lessons.[40]

School libraries launch students into a world of new knowledge by providing instant access to exciting books, online resources, and emerging technologies. They provide equal opportunities to all students for learning. Certified school librarians are an essential part of a school's faculty, partnering with educators to connect 21st Century learners with resources. They empower

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[40] http://sde.ok.gov/sde/library-media

students to be critical thinkers, enthusiastic readers, and ethical users of information and digital technology.

21st Century librarians no longer spend most of their time monitoring the stacks and checking out books to students. Now their role as school librarians includes teaching students how to navigate and consume information online and helping teachers embed those skills into their curriculum. Librarians are becoming instructional partners, innovation leaders, and digital-literacy scholars. They are included in collaborative processes and contribute to innovative instructional strategies. The American Association of School Librarians (AASL) has taken the position that through providing professional development and co-teaching, school librarians today should be "leading the way in digital learning and literacies." Research has shown that when school librarians are involved in instruction, student learning improves.[41]

RECOMMENDATION

Explore options for offering supportive instructional resources, digital learning opportunities, and collaborative learning activities between the library and the regular classroom.

The principal and library staff should seek ways to intentionally connect the library with classroom curricula. The library staff should be included in staff meetings and make teachers aware of digital and hard copy library resources that can be linked to classroom content and OAS. The library staff can use the AASL Framework as an initial resource to look for innovative learning opportunities to share with classroom teachers.[42] A number of websites describe how school libraries interface digital literacy services with classroom content.[43]

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

Gifted and Talented Education

Chapter 8 Article VII, Section 904 of the School Law Book defines Gifted and Talented children as "those children identified at the preschool, elementary, or secondary level as having demonstrated potential abilities of high-performance capabilities and needing differentiated or accelerated educational services." The definition includes students who scored in the top three percent on any national standardized test of intellectual ability or who excel in the areas of creative thinking ability, leadership ability, visual performing arts ability, and specific academic ability.

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[41] Will, M. (2016). As information landscape changes, school librarians take on new roles. *The Changing Face of Literacy, 36*(12), pp. 25-28.

[42] http://sde.ok.gov/sde/sites/ok.gov.sde/files/webform/180205-AASL-frameworks-spreads-libraries.pdf

[43] http://geiendorsed.com/blog/beyond-the-classroom/school-libraries-of-the-future-5-trends-to-watch/; https://www.ebsco.com/blog/article/promoting-school-library-resources-and-services-with-todays-digital-tools; https://www.edutopia.org/blog/21st-century-libraries-learning-commons-beth-holland

School Law Book Section 910 requires each school district to provide Gifted and Talented educational programs and to serve those identified students who reside within the school district boundaries. The local school board is required to submit a plan for Gifted and Talented to the State Board of Education and to provide annual program reports to the SDE.

The required components for Gifted and Talented education programs includes:

- a written policy statement which specifies a consistent process for assessment and selection of children for placement in Gifted and Talented programs in grades one through 12;

- a description of curriculum for the Gifted and Talented educational program, demonstrating that the curriculum is differentiated from the normal curriculum in pace and/or depth, and that it has scope and sequence;

- criteria for evaluation of the gifted child educational program;

- evidence of participation by the local advisory committee on education for Gifted and Talented children in planning, child identification, and program evaluation;

- required competencies and duties of Gifted and Talented educational program staff; and

- a budget for the district's Gifted and Talented educational programs.

Exhibit 2-29 shows that DPS had a gifted and talented identification rate that was lower than its peers, the community group, and the state for 2014-15 through 2016-17. No federal agency collects data on the number of gifted and talented students identified; however, the National Association for Gifted Children notes that between five and seven percent of students should be identified. In 2016-17, DPS was the closest of the peers to this standard.

Exhibit 2-29
Trend in Percentage of Gifted and Talented Education Students

Entity	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17
Drummond	**12.7%**	**9.9%**	**8.9%**	**5.5%**	**6.7%**
Robin Hill	10.2%	10.1%	10.4%	12.6%	15.7%
Kremlin-Hillsdale	16.1%	14.0%	12.2%	10.1%	12.1%
Sharon-Mutual	8.4%	7.9%	9.5%	9.7%	9.7%
Pioneer	8.5%	8.9%	9.6%	10.4%	8.7%
Union City	18.2%	13.6%	20.0%	20.3%	20.2%
Community Group	**12.4%**	**12.0%**	**11.8%**	**11.1%**	**11.4%**
State	**14.8%**	**14.2%**	**14.2%**	**14.2%**	**14.5%**

Source: Office of Educational Quality and Accountability, Profiles Database

FINDING 2-14

The DPS gifted program has made improvements in recent years. A coordinator has been assigned to the program. She is making focused efforts to better serve the needs of gifted

students. Student files have been reviewed and updated. Parent and community involvement have been reinstated. Currently, the identification process is being reviewed, and the overall gifted and talented plan is being revised and updated. In the past year, identified students participated in field trips, outdoor classrooms, and special events. The students are scheduled to attend several fine arts events in the 2018-19 school year.

School districts must provide additional support for students who are already high achieving and those with the potential for high achievement. In planning for educational opportunities, school leaders must communicate a clear purpose and common goal that is endorsed by classroom teachers, gifted coordinators, counselors, and other district staff. Gifted education strategies, when employed, not only increase the achievement of identified gifted students, but have been shown to increase achievement levels of all students, making their use well worth the investment.

COMMENDATION

The district is commended for initiating improvements to the gifted education program.

FINDING 2-15

The gifted program has improved in the past two years. However, the consulting team found that gifted students are primarily served in the regular classroom and regular classroom teachers often assume students know the material or will learn it themselves. It was observed that regular classroom teachers need to be intentional when meeting the needs of their gifted students. There was little evidence to indicate DPS classroom teachers are routinely enriching and challenging gifted students.

Often, acceleration and enrichment are confused. Gifted students may be asked to read more, answer more questions, and complete longer assignments; these are not enrichment. **Exhibit 2-30** illustrates the differences.

Exhibit 2-30
Differentiating Between Acceleration and Enrichment

Acceleration	Enrichment
• Acceleration is about the destination and moving through curriculum. • Pacing of content and instruction is sped up to match learner needs. • The goal is to accelerate content mastery. • When acceleration is the goal, students are moving faster through content or skill development.	• Enrichment is about the journey and extending the experience with depth and complexity. • Effort is made to allow students to explore topics of interest. • The goal is to enhance and investigate. • When enrichment is the goal, connections are made to units of study with integration of real world applications.

Source: https://hwlearninglinks.wordpress.com/2015/08/03/enrichment-for-gifted-learners-in-a-general-education-classroom/

RECOMMENDATION

Continue to strengthen the gifted and talented program thorough enriched instruction in the regular classroom.

The superintendent, principal, and gifted coordinator should periodically share websites and resources with the regular classroom teachers.[44] The SDE also has resources to assist in teaching gifted students. Staff and PLC meetings can also be used to focus on effectively serving and modifying instruction for gifted students.

The SDE provides options for classroom curricular modifications. The modifications must be challenging and enriching to the student. The district should consider how it might incorporate one or more of these options (**Exhibit 2-31**).

Exhibit 2-31
Enrichment Options

- **Enrichment in the Regular Classroom**: Experiences provided in regular classrooms that are supplemental to the established curriculum and which are purposefully planned with the needs, interests, and capabilities of students in mind. Appropriate enrichment experiences are NOT a repetition of material.
- **Seminars/Convocations**: Special short-term sessions where students focus on one area of study.
- **Mentorships**: A program which pairs individual students with someone who has advanced skills and experiences in a discipline and can serve as a guide, advisor, counselor, and role model.
- **Summer Enrichment Programs**: Enrichment classes or courses offered during the summer months.
- **Saturday Enrichment Programs**: Enrichment classes or courses offered on Saturday.
- **Creative/Academic Competitions**: Organized opportunities for students to enter local, regional, state, or national contests in a variety of areas.
- **Differentiated Curriculum**: Curriculum designed to meet the needs of high ability students and differentiated according to content, process, and product.
- **Learning Centers**: A designated area or portable center designed to enrich and/or accelerate students' interests in a given content area.
- **"Great Books" and "Junior Great Books"**: Discussions of great literature led by an adult discussion leader using a prepared question guide.

Source: http://ok.gov/sde/gifted-and-talented-education-programming-options

There are multiple resources with insights for teachers to use to support learning to identified gifted students.[45]

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[44] https://docs.google.com/presentation/d/1lKiJPSr9d8FAjSN2sVC8dZbTwMXXhs9bDz_b6vib1Ps/edit#slide=id.p
[45] https://bloomboard.com/users/joelytle/collections/opening-the-gift-differentiating-for-gifted-students-in-the-classroom-grade-2-5/d9bfd4e5-5a4f-402c-9f36-cf; https://rossieronline.usc.edu/blog/teaching-gifted-students-in-full-inclusion-classrooms/; http://www.hoagiesgifted.org/eric/e513.htm

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented using existing resources.

D.   STUDENT SERVICES

Student services are comprised of counseling, health services, and social services in most Oklahoma districts. Services provided include:

- college and career counseling;

- health education and services;

- substance abuse and psychological counseling;

- social services; and

- graduate follow-up.

Student services are evolving into a more powerful tool to assist students. They are becoming increasingly more valuable in providing needed support and guidance for students' college questions, career options, and individual needs.

Guidance and Counseling

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

- The counseling staff, parents, administrators, and others shall provide guidance and counseling program direction through involvement in assessment and identification of student needs.

- The school shall develop a written description of a guidance and counseling program with special provisions for at-risk students. The program shall address assessed needs of all students, including those who are identified as at-risk and shall establish program goals, objectives, and evaluation.

- Each school shall provide an organized program of guidance and counseling services that include: counseling services available to students; a planned sequential program of guidance activities that enhance students' development; appropriate referrals to other specialized persons, clinics, or agencies in the community; and coordinated services.

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

The SDE publishes *The School Counselor's Guide: Developing a Comprehensive School Counseling Program Using Accreditation Standard VI.* This publication is designed to assist school districts in strengthening existing programs or developing new ones. The major components of the defined guidance curriculum include Guidance Curriculum Domains

(Academic Development, Career Development, and Personal/Social Development); Student Competencies; and Guidance Curriculum Delivery.

> The American School Counselor Association (ASCA) states: "School counseling programs are collaborative efforts benefiting students, parents, teachers, administrators, and the overall community. School counseling programs should be an integral part of students' daily educational environment and school counselors should be partners in student achievement."[46]

ASCA recommends that school counselors divide time between four components:

- Guidance Curriculum – The guidance curriculum is structured with developmental lessons designed to assist students. The guidance curriculum is infused throughout the school's overall curriculum and presented systematically through K-12 classrooms.

- Individual Student Planning – School counselors coordinate ongoing activities designed to assist students individually in planning.

- Responsive Services – Responsive services are activities meeting individual students' immediate needs that may require counseling.

- Systems Support – School counseling programs require administration and management.

Time allocated for each program component should depend on the developmental and special needs of the students served. While each district determines time allotments, ASCA recommends that school counselors spend 80 percent of their time in direct contact with students. Oklahoma high schools and middle schools are required to have one full-time counselor for every 450 students. At the elementary level a counseling and guidance program is required, but does not have to be delivered by a certified counselor.

Exhibit 2-32 provides the trend in counselor staffing over time. DPS' counselor staffing was the highest of all comparison entities in 2016-17. Moreover, DPS has increased its counselor staffing over the last five years, while most of the comparison entities have not.

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[46] http://www.ascanationalmodel.org/

Exhibit 2-32
Trend in Counselor Staffing Over Time

Entity	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	Percent Change
Drummond	**1.0**	**1.0**	**0.0**	**0.3**	**1.1**	**10.0%**▲
Robin Hill	1.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	(100.0%)▼
Kremlin-Hillsdale	0.8	1.0	0.6	0.6	0.4	(50.0%) ▼
Sharon-Mutual	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	0.0%●
Pioneer	0.1	0.2	0.2	0.2	1.0	900.0%▲
Union City	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0%●
Community Group	**0.8**	**0.8**	**0.8**	**0.8**	**0.7**	**(12.5%)**▼
State	**3.0**	**3.1**	**3.1**	**3.1**	**2.9**	**(3.3%)**▼

Source: Office of Educational Quality and Accountability, Profiles Database

FINDING 2-16

The district employs a full-time, certified counselor. The counselor has regularly scheduled character education sessions in each elementary classroom. There are one-on-one counseling services available to middle and high school students. The counselor keeps middle school, freshman, and sophomore students informed of the Oklahoma Promise program and assists students with the needed paperwork to apply for the program. The counselor serves as registrar and works closely with the principal on preparing the school schedule.

Effective school counseling programs are a collaborative effort between the school counselor, teaching staff, families, and community stakeholders. Counselors work with other educators to create an environment resulting in a positive impact on student achievement. School counselors value and respond to the diversity and individual differences in their student population and community. They are culturally sensitive and responsive to student needs. Comprehensive school counseling programs become an integral part of the school setting. Counselors ensure equitable access to opportunities and rigorous curriculum for all students to participate fully in the educational process.[47]

COMMENDATION

The district is commended for employing a full-time counselor.

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[47] https://www.schoolcounselor.org/asca/media/asca/PositionStatements/PS_ComprehensivePrograms.pdf

Chapter 3:

Business Operations

Business Operations

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

    A. Planning and Budgeting
    B. Financial Processes
    C. Asset and Risk Management
    D. Activity Funds
    E. Auditing and Internal Controls

Financial, asset, and risk management in school districts require thoughtful planning and decision-making. Public school districts must meet or exceed increasingly rigorous academic standards without exceeding their budgetary resources. The superintendent and board of education must ensure that the district receives all available revenue from local, state, and federal sources and expends those funds in accordance with all applicable laws, rules, regulations, and policies so that the district can best meet or exceed the established academic standards.

Background

Oklahoma law entrusts a school district's board of education with specific responsibilities, including the oversight of investments and funds. The school board is allowed to contract with the county treasurer for the management of its accounts, or it may choose to appoint a treasurer.

The DPS superintendent oversees business services and is assisted by one employee who performs various business operations and treasurer duties. Business operation duties include processing payrolls and encumbrances, as well as child nutrition funds. Treasurer duties involve preparing monthly financial reports, reconciling the district's bank accounts, and completing financial transactions pertaining to the district's activity funds. Throughout this chapter this employee will be referred to as "financial secretary." **Exhibit 3-1** shows the organization of DPS' business operations.

Exhibit 3-1
DPS Business Operations Organization
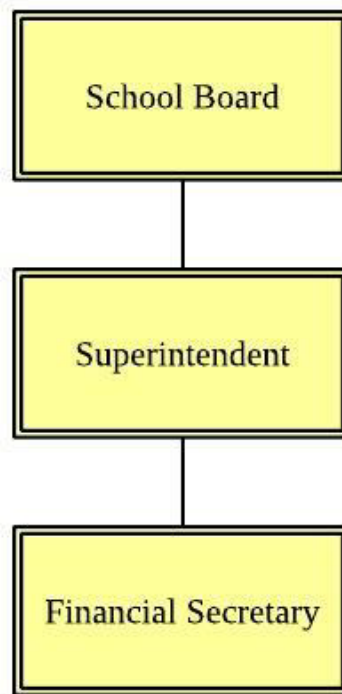
Source: Created by Prismatic, August 2018

Financial Statements

Financial statements for DPS are prepared based upon Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP) that require funds to be combined by fund type, and for the financial statements to be prepared based on these combined funds. The accounts of the district are organized based on funds, each of which is a separate entity. The operations of each fund are accounted for by providing a separate set of self-balancing accounts that comprise its assets, liabilities, fund balances, revenues, and expenditures.

The district's financial statements are prepared on a prescribed procedure of accounting that demonstrates compliance with the cash basis and budget laws of the State of Oklahoma. Revenues are recorded as received in cash, except for revenues susceptible to accrual and material revenues that are not received at the standard time of receipt. Expenditures are recorded in the accounting period in which the fund liability is incurred and encumbered. DPS prepares financial statements that include the fund types illustrated in **Exhibit 3-2**.

Exhibit 3-2
Funds Contained in the 2017 DPS Annual Financial Report

Type	Purpose
General Fund	To account for all revenue and expenditures applicable to the general operations of the district.
Special Revenue Funds	To account for the financial activity of the building and child nutrition funds.
Debt Service Fund	To account for the revenue received from ad valorem taxes dedicated to the repayment of bonds and the subsequent payment of debt service.
Bond or Capital Projects Fund	To account for monies received from the sale of bonds for specific capital projects that span several years.
Agency Fund	To account for the activities of various student groups.

Source: DPS Annual Financial Report, June 30, 2017

Oklahoma Cost Accounting System

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

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

Revenue Sources

General fund revenues from state sources for current operations are governed primarily by the State Aid Formula under the provisions of *Title 70, Article XVIII. B. Section 200* of the School Law Book. The Oklahoma State Board of Education administers the allocation of state funding to school districts based upon state aid factors, the weighted average district membership, and several categories of prior year revenues.

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

- no less than five mills of a total of 15 mills levied for county, municipal, and school district purposes;

- 15 mills levied specifically for school district purposes;

- an emergency levy of five mills; and

- ten mills levied for local support.

A mill is the equivalent of $1 per $1,000 or (1/10 of a penny) of net asset valuation.

Assessment ratios for real and personal property are determined locally by each individual county assessor within guidelines established by the State Board of Equalization and the Oklahoma Tax Commission. Property within DPS district boundary had a net valuation of $13,220,868 in 2017 and $13,102,374 in 2016. The mileage rate levied was 98.86 in 2017 and 94.55 in 2016.

State funds and ad valorem taxes are accounted for in the general fund of the district, which is authorized pursuant to *Title 70, Section 1-117*, Oklahoma Statutes *2001*, as amended pursuant to *Article X, Section 9*, of the Oklahoma Constitution. The purpose of the general fund is to pay for operations. School districts are not authorized to use these revenues for capital expenditures as defined in the statutes.

Ad valorem taxes for bond issues are required by statute to be collected by the county treasurer and remitted to the school district for deposit into the sinking fund. The total debt service requirements may be reduced by any surplus from the prior fiscal year or any direct contributions made into the sinking fund.

Ad valorem tax rates for sinking fund purposes are determined by ascertaining the actual dollars of revenues required for payment of principal and interest on indebtedness, fees, and judicial judgments. A reserve for delinquent taxes, in an amount of not less than five percent and not more than 20 percent of the net required tax collections, is added to the required debt service collections.

The revenue requirements for both debt service and general fund are then divided by the total assessed valuation of all taxable property within the district. Multiplying the resulting quotient by 100 results in the tax rate expressed as a percent; multiplying the resulting quotient by 1,000 results in the tax rate expressed in mills.

Over the past five years, the average assessed property value per student for DPS has increased by 0.7 percent. All comparison groups but Robin Hill and Sharon-Mutual also saw increases in average assessed property value per student (**Exhibit 3-3**).

Exhibit 3-3
Trend in Assessed Property Value per Student
2012-13 through 2016-17

Entity	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	Percent Change
Drummond	**$37,728**	**$35,285**	**$41,575**	**$42,485**	**$37,991**	0.7%▲
Robin Hill	$26,209	$26,481	$25,481	$24,818	$23,297	(11.1%) ▼
Kremlin-Hillsdale	$78,703	$101,208	$121,712	$100,554	$105,070	33.5%▲
Sharon-Mutual	$134,586	$137,198	$141,311	$121,316	$128,554	(4.5%)▼
Pioneer	$18,336	$18,576	$29,853	$26,648	$26,905	46.7%▲
Union City	$52,949	$50,333	$52,424	$59,689	$56,103	6.0%▲
State	**$43,631**	**$45,248**	**$47,329**	**$49,623**	**$49,471**	**13.4%▲**

Source: Office of Educational Quality and Accountability, Profiles Database

Exhibit 3-4 shows the percentages of district and county, state, and federal revenues for DPS and its peers. The district's revenue percentage from district sources was in the middle of its peers, lower than the community group, and higher than the state. The district revenue percentage from federal sources was the second-highest among its peers, but lower than the state.

Exhibit 3-4
Breakdown of Revenues by Source, All Funds, 2016-17

Entity	District Revenue	County Revenue	State Dedicated	State Appropriated	Federal Revenue
Drummond	**41.8%**	**2.3%**	**7.0%**	**40.0%**	**8.8%**
Robin Hill	34.8%	3.0%	3.2%	53.0%	6.0%
Kremlin-Hillsdale	76.5%	1.8%	5.8%	11.5%	4.4%
Sharon-Mutual	76.3%	2.4%	6.5%	11.5%	3.3%
Pioneer	23.7%	3.5%	4.7%	58.3%	9.8%
Union City	45.9%	2.8%	9.7%	34.4%	7.1%
Community Group	**48.3%**	**3.1%**	**11.7%**	**28.7%**	**8.1%**
State	**40.5%**	**2.7%**	**7.3%**	**38.2%**	**11.3%**

Source: Office of Educational Quality and Accountability, Profiles Database

Exhibit 3-5 shows the percent of revenue received from 2012-13 to 2016-17 for DPS, the community group, and state. The district's district and county revenue percentage was consistently lower than the community group, but near or higher than the state. The percentage of revenue from state sources was higher than both the community group and the state. The percentage of federal funding was higher than the community group, and lower than the state each year.

Exhibit 3-5
Sources of Revenue as a Percentage of Total Revenue, All Funds
Drummond, Community Group, and State

Source of Revenue	Entity	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17
District and County	**Drummond**	**39.1%**	**43.1%**	**43.5%**	**42.3%**	**44.1%**
	Community Group	44.1%	43.8%	46.5%	51.7%	51.4%
	State	39.6%	40.3%	40.8%	42.1%	43.2%
State Dedicated and Appropriated	**Drummond**	**50.4%**	**47.9%**	**47.8%**	**48.7%**	**47.0%**
	Community Group	46.8%	47.6%	45.5%	39.9%	40.4%
	State	48.0%	48.0%	47.7%	46.3%	45.5%
Federal	**Drummond**	**10.5%**	**9.1%**	**8.7%**	**9.1%**	**8.8%**
	Community Group	9.0%	8.5%	8.0%	8.5%	8.1%
	State	12.5%	11.7%	11.6%	11.6%	11.3%

Source: Office of Educational Quality and Accountability, Profiles Database

Expenditures

Exhibit 3-6 compares 2016-17 expenditures as a percentage of total expenditures as shown:

- DPS was the lowest of all comparison groups in instructional expenditures.

- The percentage that DPS spent for student support was the highest among all comparison groups.

- DPS was tied with Union City for instructional support, and was the second lowest of any comparison group.

- The percentage that DPS spent for district administration was the third lowest of its peer districts but tied with the community group and higher than the state.

- The percentage that DPS spent for school administration was in the middle of its peers and lower than the community group and the state.

- The percentage that DPS spent for district support was in the middle of its peers and higher than the community group and the state.

Exhibit 3-6
Percentage Breakdown of 2016-17 Expenditures by Type, All Funds

Entity	Instruction[1]	Student Support[2]	Instruction Support[3]	District Admin.[4]	School Admin.[5]	District Support[6]	Other
Drummond	**47.4%**	**11.2%**	**2.0%**	**5.1%**	**3.4%**	**20.7%**	**10.1%**
Robin Hill	55.4%	3.2%	2.2%	4.0%	2.2%	25.6%	7.4%
Kremlin-Hillsdale	49.4%	3.6%	1.9%	5.7%	7.0%	22.5%	9.9%
Sharon-Mutual	48.1%	4.9%	3.6%	6.7%	6.8%	17.5%	12.4%
Pioneer	60.6%	6.8%	3.3%	4.2%	1.9%	13.3%	9.9%
Union City	49.9%	6.8%	2.0%	8.5%	7.3%	17.0%	8.6%
Community Group	**52.2%**	**6.5%**	**2.1%**	**5.1%**	**5.5%**	**18.2%**	**10.5%**
State	**53.6%**	**7.0%**	**3.7%**	**3.0%**	**5.8%**	**17.6%**	**9.3%**

Source: Office of Educational Quality and Accountability, Profiles Database

Exhibit 3-7 shows the trend in DPS expenditures per student and overall for the past ten years. Both the total district expenditures and the expenditures per student have fluctuated over that period. The highest total district expenditures occurred in 2014-15, when the district spent slightly more than $2.8 million. The highest expenditure per student occurred in 2015-16, when the district spent $8,864 per student.

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[1] Instruction – Activities dealing directly with the interaction between teachers and students

[2] Student Support – Activities designed to assess and improve the well-being of students and to supplement the teaching process

[3] Instruction Support – Activities associated with assisting the instructional staff with the content and process of providing learning experiences to students

[4] District Administration – Activities involving the establishment and administration policy in connection with operating the entire school district

[5] School Administration – Activities concerned with overall administrative responsibility for a single school or a group of schools

[6] District Support – Consists of central services (activities that support other administrative and instructional functions, fiscal services, human resources, planning, and administrative information technology), operation and maintenance of plant services (activities concerned with keeping the physical plant open, comfortable, and safe for use, and keeping the grounds, buildings, and equipment in an effective working condition and state of repair), and student transportation services (activities concerned with the conveyance of student to and from school as provided by state law)

Exhibit 3-7
Trend in DPS Expenditures per Student, All Funds
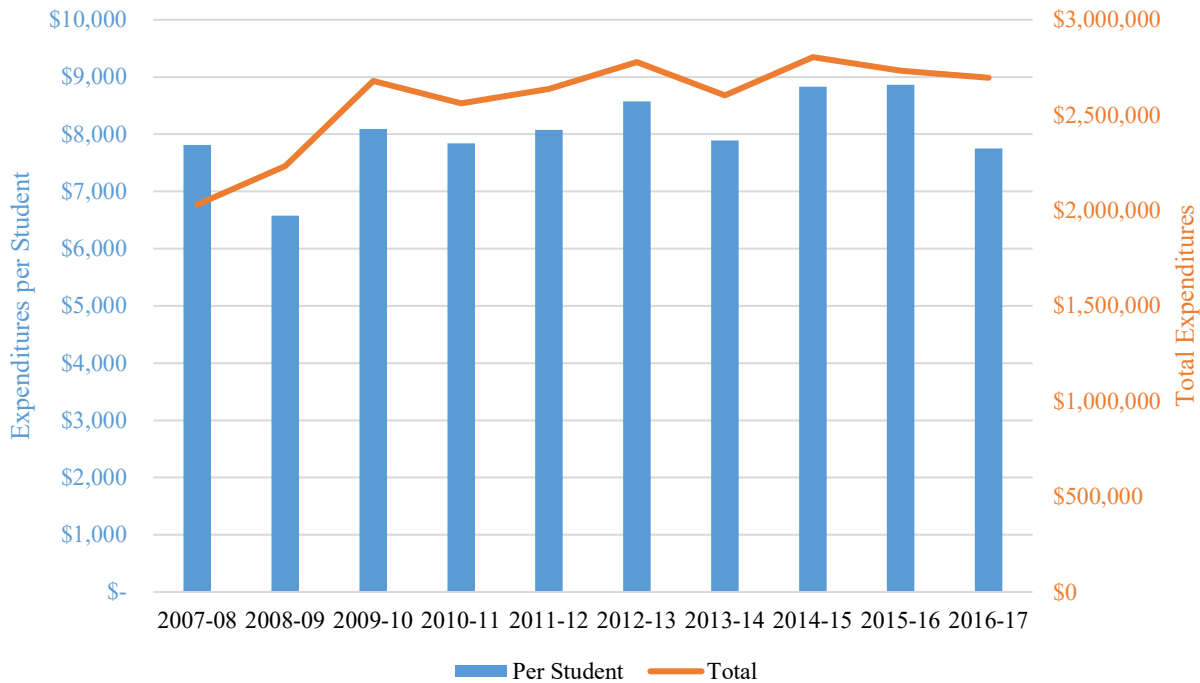
Source: Office of Educational Quality and Accountability, Profiles Database, and Prismatic calculations

Exhibit 3-8 shows DPS expenditures for the past three fiscal years, disaggregated by function code. **Exhibit 3-9** provides the same data graphically. The function code is a dimension used to describe the service or commodity obtained as a result of the expenditure. As the exhibit shows, total expenditures decreased by 12.3 percent over the three years. Spending on each classification has decreased except for district support which increased by 18 percent.

Exhibit 3-8
Trend in DPS Expenditures per Student, All Funds
2014-15 through 2016-17

Expenditure Classification	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	Percent Change
Instruction	$4,533	$4,831	$3,675	(18.9%)▼
Student Support	$1,085	$983	$867	(20.1%)▼
Instructional Support	$280	$201	$159	(43.2%)▼
District Administration	$470	$485	$398	(15.3%)▼
School Administration	$272	$307	$260	(4.4%)▼
District Support	$1,359	$1,335	$1,604	18.0%▲
Other	$833	$723	$786	(5.6%)▼
Total	**$8,832**	**$8,865**	**$7,749**	**(12.3%)▼**

Source: Office of Educational Quality and Accountability, Profiles Database, and Prismatic calculations

Exhibit 3-9
DPS Expenditures per Student, All Funds/
2014-15 through 2016-17
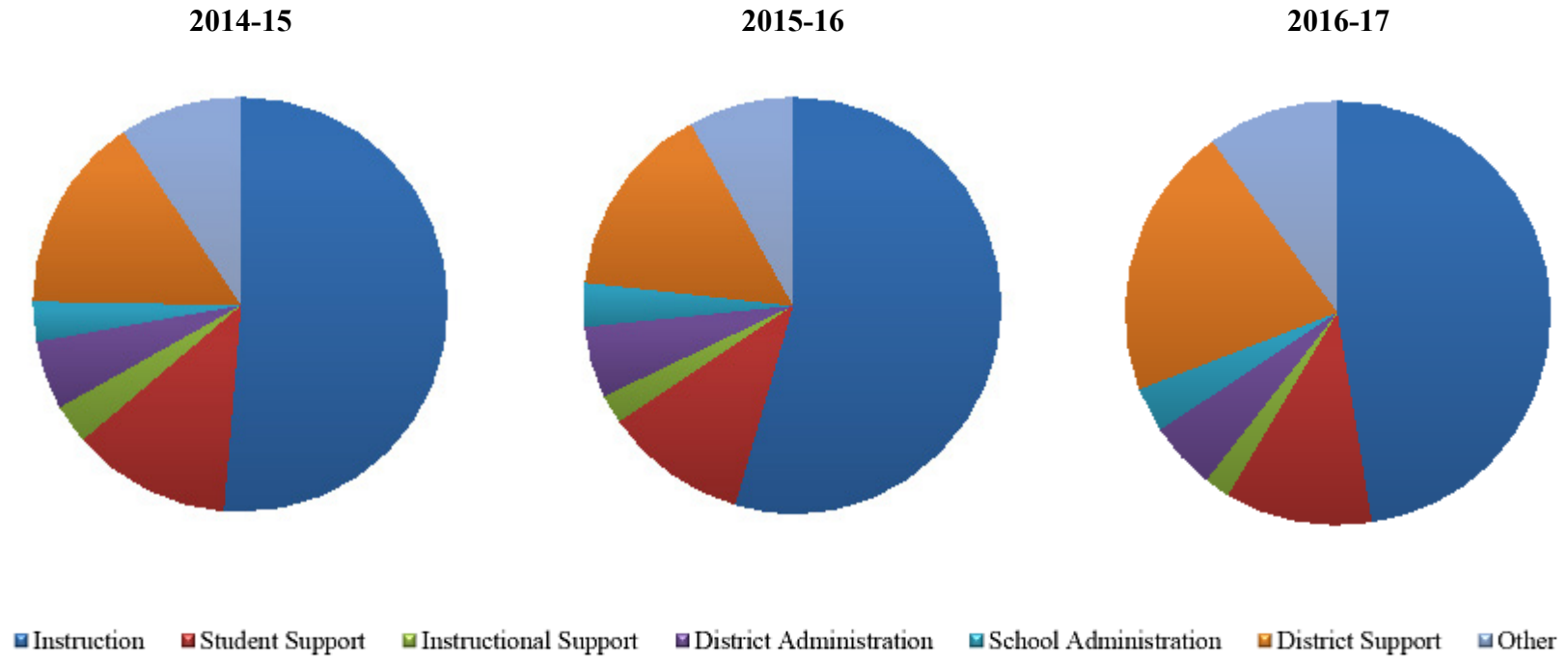
2014-15	2015-16	2016-17

Instruction ▪ Student Support ▪ Instructional Support ▪ District Administration ▪ School Administration ▪ District Support ▪ Other

Source: Office of Educational Quality and Accountability, Profiles Database, and Prismatic calculations

Fund Balance

The fund balance, often referred to as "carryover," is defined as the excess of assets over liabilities and is used in future years to offset any revenue shortfalls or negative midyear adjustments that may occur. Fund balance is the amount of cash that is not obligated by purchase orders, contracts, outstanding warrants, or other committments. A healthy fund balance can be beneficial to a school district by permitting longer investment terms and bridging periods of low cash flow during the year. Perhaps more importantly, it helps the district maintain cash flow to get through the first part of the new school year until state aid distribution can catch up with the district's obligations.

A school district's fund balance policy can provide guidance for the development and implementation of an annual budget. Oklahoma public school laws provide guidance regarding the allowable year-end balances. *Title 70, Section 18* of Oklahoma Statutes provides the maximum amount, as a percentage of total general fund collections, that a school district can maintain as a fund balance. **Exhibit 3-10** shows the table of maximum allowable balances expressed as a percentage of their general fund collections.

Exhibit 3-10
Maximum Allowable Balances at Year End

General Fund Collections	Maximum Allowable Balances
less than $1,000,000	40%
$1,000,000 - $2,999,999	35%
$3,000,000 - $3,999,999	30%
$4,000,000 - $4,999,999	25%
$5,000,000 - $5,999,999	20%
$6,000,000 - $7,999,999	18%
$8,000,000 - $9,999,999	16%
$10,000,000 or more	14%

Source: SDE Technical Assistant Document, July 2009

Based upon general fund collections of $2,195,903 or more for 2016-17, DPS would be able to reserve up to 35 percent as a fund balance. *Title 70, Section 18* of Oklahoma Statutes allows a school district to exceed the allowable percentage of carryover for two consecutive years before a general fund balance penalty is assessed. *Title 70, Section 18* also allows districts to exclude federal revenues received in a year from the total fund balance when calculating if a general fund balance penalty is assessed. **Exhibit 3-11** provides the DPS fund balances for the last three years. From 2014-15 to 2016-17, the fund balance has increased by 52.6 percent.

Exhibit 3-11
DPS General Fund Balances

	2014-15 Actual	2015-16 Actual	2016-17 Actual
General Fund Collections	$2,274,318	$2,173,773	$2,195,903
Fund Balance	$292,455	$294,407	$446,368
Percentage of General Fund Collections	12.8%	13.5%	20.3%
Fund Balance Year-Over-Year Change		0.7%▲	51.6%▲
Fund Balance Three-Year Change			52.6%▲

Source: DPS Annual Audit Reports, 2014-15 through 2016-17, and Prismatic calculations

Bonds

Article X, Section 26 of the Oklahoma Constitution prohibits school districts from issuing debt without approval of "60 percent plus one" of the district's voters. A district's outstanding debt is limited to ten percent of its assessed valuation. The issued debt may be used for acquiring or improving school sites, constructing, repairing, remodeling, equipping buildings, or acquiring school furniture, fixtures, or equipment. **Exhibit 3-12** compares the district's average daily membership (ADM), assessed property value, and bonding capacity for the last five years. ADM, property value, and bonding capacity have all increased.

Exhibit 3-12
DPS Trends in ADM, Assessed Values, and Bonding Capacity

School Year	ADM	Assessed Property Value	Bonding Capacity
2012-13	324.1	$12,227,645	$1,222,764
2013-14	330.0	$11,644,050	$1,164,405
2014-15	317.5	$13,200,063	$1,302,006
2015-16	308.4	$13,102,374	$1,310,237
2016-17	348.0	$13,220,868	$1,322,087
Percent Change	**7.4%▲**	**8.1%▲**	

Source: Office of Educational Quality and Accountability, Profiles Database, and Prismatic calculations

The debt service expenditures per student are based upon the amount of outstanding debt and number of students a district has during a particular school year. Districts must balance facility and equipment needs with the amount of tax money requested of district taxpayers. In 2016-17, the district had one of the lowest debt service expenditure per student of all comparison groups (**Exhibit 3-13**). Sharon-Mutual was the district with the highest debt service expenditure per student.

Exhibit 3-13
Debt Service Expenditures per Student
2016-17

Entity	Debt Service per Student
Drummond	**$773**
Robin Hill	$617
Kremlin-Hillsdale	$2,858
Sharon-Mutual	$5,592
Pioneer	$1,483
Union City	$1,266
Community Group	**$950**
State	**$947**

Source: Office of Educational Quality and Accountability, Profiles Database

A.   PLANNING AND BUDGETING

An organization's budget development and management establishes the foundation for all other financial operations. The budget process should be strategic in nature and consist of activities that encompass the development, implementation, and evaluation of a comprehensive plan for student success.

The National Advisory Council on State and Local Budgeting (NACSLB) has identified four essential principles of effective budgeting. The specific principles include the following tasks:

1. Set broad goals to guide decisions.

2. Develop strategies and financial policies.

3. Design a budget supportive of strategies and goals.

4. Focus on the necessity of continually evaluating goal achievement.

FINDING 3-1

DPS has no formal general fund balance policy. With a formal policy, the school board could provide additional guidance to district management pertaining specifically to what the district's fund balance goal should be and what steps should be taken to reach and maintain that goal within the statutory maximum limits.

The districts fund balance is 20 percent of total General Fund revenues as of the end of 2016-17. Pursuant to Oklahoma statue *70 O.S. 18-200.1* school districts with a general fund revenue between $1,000,000 and $2,999,999 cannot have a fund balance greater than 35 percent; however, state statute does not establish a minimum or ideal fund balance level.

The district is monitoring the budget on a regular basis to increase the fund balance. The financial secretary is analyzing the budget to make sure payroll expenditures stay around 85 percent of the total expenditures for the district. To help accomplish meeting this percentage, the district has hired retirees or part-time employees to keep from paying retirement and health insurance benefits.

Based on discussions with the principal and financial secretary the district is making efforts to make repairs and maintenance to equipment and facilities themselves before calling an outside vendor. The district is also buying items in bulk, which allows the district to take advantage of discounts offered on larger purchases. These changes in business practices, while minor, is allowing the district to save money and increase the fund balance.

Exhibit 3-14 shows the results of staff surveys that indicate the district does not have adequate staff to carry out its operations. Some 54 percent do not feel the district has adequate staffing.

Exhibit 3-14
Staff Survey Responses Regarding the School Board and District

Survey Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
The district has an adequate number of staff to carry out its operations.	15%	27%	4%	42%	12%

Source: Prismatic Survey Results, August 2018

As shown in previous exhibits, DPS was the lowest of all comparison groups in instructional expenditures and tied for second to lowest for instructional support expenditures. While it is good practice to keep expenditures low, discussion with the principal indicated that the district would like to add additional instructional staff to meet district needs, and upgrades to facilities would improve building aesthetics.

Good financial management requires the accumulation of a general fund balance, which the district has accomplished, that is large enough to cover cash needs early in the school year and to provide funds for unexpected changes in revenues and expenditures. Good management also requires that statutory limits are not exceeded, which could cause penalties to be assessed.

A district's general fund balance policy should outline what the board considers to be an adequate balance to maintain efficient cash flow, cover emergency expenditures, adjust for revenue shortfalls, and avoid excess balance penalties or paying interest on non-payable warrants. The fund balance is a measure of the financial stability of a district and is an integral part of the budgeting process. Fund balance policies are also needed to provide guidance as to how to achieve and maintain a minimum fund balance. Districts that are fortunate enough to achieve a substantial fund balance should also include policy guidance as to what priority needs should be funded.

While the district is still 15 percent or $300,000 from the allowable fund balance maximum, the district has current needs (facility upgrades, increase in teachers, and increase in custodial staff) that could be addressed with the use of some of the fund balance.

District leadership should analyze the needs from an instructional perspective and facility needs to best determine how district funds should be spent. Consider including board members or a parent representative during the analysis of district needs to allow for different ideas to be looked at.

The GFOA has developed standards for fund balance and recommends that:

- Governmental agencies establish a fund balance policy setting forth unreserved balances.

- The level of these recommended unreserved balances are based on unique characteristics and needs.

- Unreserved balances are no less than five percent of general operating revenues or no less than one or two months of regular general fund operating expenditures.

- Accountability measures consider long-term forecasting.

RECOMMENDATION

Develop a formal policy for the district's general fund balance that establishes a fund balance target range, provides guidance on how to maintain the minimum balance, and requires reports for fund balance status to the school board.

The school board should provide guidance through the fund balance policy that establishes a fund balance target range, how to maintain the balance, and the use of the district's fund balance that exceeds the target amount. This should help ensure that the funds are only used for critical priority items and the district is not assessed an excess balance penalty. Reports to the school board will help the members to monitor the fund balance and have an understanding of the impact of actions that effect the balance.

The consulting team suggests that DPS aims to meet a standard of maintaining at least two months of regular general fund operating expenditures as recommended by the GFOA. In 2016-17, general fund expenditures totaled $2,044,485, so the district should aim to maintain a balance of at least $340,748, which is approximately two months (or one-sixth) of the total expenditures.

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING 3-2

The DPS principal is actively applying for competitive state and federal grants. This allows the district to acquire funding and resources that would otherwise not be available. For example, the district has received six grants from the National Rifle Association Foundation totaling $43,000 since 2009. These funds have allowed the Future Farmers of America club to expand their program.

Exhibit 3-15 shows the results of staff surveys that indicate the district actively applies for competitive state and federal grants. Some 68 percent either *strongly agree* or *agree* with zero percent *disagreeing*.

Exhibit 3-15
Staff Survey Responses Regarding the School Board and District

Survey Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
The district actively applies for competitive state and federal grants.	20%	48%	32%	0%	0%

Source: Prismatic Survey Results, August 2018

Actively applying for competitive state and federal grants allows DPS to receive funding to do things they currently do not have the capacity to do. It also encourages partners that can come in with resources and collaborate among employees who are involved in the grant writing.

COMMENDATION

DPS is commended for actively applying for competitive state and federal grants.

FINDING 3-3

There is limited public and staff involvement in the budget development process. The public is not provided any means to be involved in the budget development process and meetings are not held to obtain internal stakeholder involvement. A budget calendar is not produced for the budget development process.

The DPS budget is developed by the superintendent, financial secretary, and principal. These staff members use the previous year's revenues and expenditures and the Estimate of Needs to determine the budget for the current school year. The budget is based on staffing, curriculum, child nutrition, facility, and transportation needs as well as other projected expenditures.

Staff survey results indicate that 85 percent feel the school board understands the needs of the district (**Exhibit 3-16**). They also *strongly agree* or *agree* that the district wisely manages its revenues and expenditures (65 percent). However, fewer staff agree that district stakeholders provide input into the budget process or that they understand the budget process (**Exhibit 3-17**).

Exhibit 3-16
Staff Survey Responses Regarding the School Board and District

Survey Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
The school board understands the needs of the district.	33%	52%	15%	0%	0%
The district wisely manages its revenues and expenditures.	23%	42%	35%	0%	0%

Source: Prismatic Survey Results, August 2018

Exhibit 3-17
Staff Survey Responses Regarding District Budget Process

Survey Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
District stakeholders provide input into the budgetary process.	8%	27%	62%	4%	0%

Source: Prismatic Survey Results, August 2018

Though districts are not required to follow the *School District Budget Act* (*Title 70 O.S. § 5-155*) it does, "make available to the public and investors sufficient information as to the financial conditions, requirements, and expectations of the school district." *OAC 210:35-3-166(a)* states:

> The principal shall be responsible for planning and administering the school site budget as approved by the local board of education. The principal shall involve the staff in the preliminary development of the budget, in establishing expenditure allocations, and setting priorities within the budget.

The Government Finance Officers Association (GFOA) recommends that the budget be developed using a results and outcomes approach. Using this approach, the budget should be developed to address the highest priorities of the district that could be achieved with the available resources. For example, if the district identified a need for additional staff members, the budget would be developed to incorporate this need, and, subsequently, be communicated clearly to all stakeholders.

Many districts have a budget committee comprised of community members, business leaders, and district employees who provide input to the board of education and superintendent on the priorities that should be addressed. Some Oklahoma public school districts use a budget committee that provides regular input to the superintendent and treasurer during the budget process. Other districts publish their budget materials and related information on their websites to ensure that all stakeholders are informed of budget processes and decisions that are being made.

Clinton Public Schools has a transparent budget development process that has a commendable level of public input. The normal process for budget development in Clinton involves these steps:

1. Preliminary Budget: Prior to the end of the current fiscal year, the superintendent and other key administrators prioritize items for the following fiscal year. Many contributions for this process come from school employees and the public.

2. Preparation of Proposed Budget: After the school board approves the estimate of needs, proposed budgets are devised within the approved revenues and expenditures for the budget year.

3. Receipt of Public Comments: The school board conducts a public hearing to take all comments on financial matters, both past and future, in the district.

4. Adoption of a Final Budget: This includes any revisions due to public comments and potential program allocations received prior to this date.

5. Amending of Final Budget: Changes are made throughout the year to ensure that all expenditures have an appropriate amount of budgeted funds available and to adapt the current budget to reflect midterm allocation changes.

RECOMMENDATION

Include a variety of stakeholders in the budgetary process.

As a best practice, districts should include a variety of stakeholders in the budgetary process. These stakeholders should include the principal and cafeteria manager. A teacher and parent representative could also be included in the process. The net result should result in more transparency, communication, and input regarding the process.

The superintendent and school board should adopt and publish an annual budget calendar and create a budget advisory committee. The budgetary process and timeline should be communicated throughout the district in order to foster transparency. Budget discussions for the upcoming school year should begin early in the spring semester at the latest. Budget discussions should include opportunities for input from district and community stakeholders.

Posting the budgetary process, timeline, and documents in public places and online will facilitate better communication, understanding, and support of the adopted budget. A sample budget calendar is provided in **Exhibit 3-18**. Each year, the district adjusts these dates by one or two days to match the new work calendar, but the process typically follows this schedule.

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

Exhibit 3-18
Sample Budget Calendar

Date	Budget Activity
October 3	Introduction of budget process to principals and administrative staff
October 16	Submission of budget calendar to school board (regular meeting)
	Establishment of December date for public hearing on budget
October 20	Preliminary administrative staff budget committee meeting #1
	Review of budget process assignments and calendar
October 30	Administrative budget committee meeting #2
	Establish preliminary overall budget priorities
October 31	Submission of budget requests by principals and administrative staff
November 20	Public reminder concerning December date for public hearing on budget
November 27	Administrative budget committee meeting #3
	Analysis of budget requests and review of preliminary priorities
	Preliminary report on market analysis of cohort school districts
November 29	Advertise for December public hearing
December 4	Advertise for December public hearing
December 4	Annual school board legislative work session
December 8	Administrative budget committee meeting #4
	Refinement and alignment of projected expenditures
December 11	Public hearing on proposed budget (regular meeting)
	Report to school board on preliminary budget priorities (regular meeting)
	Invitation for school board member input on preliminary budget priorities
December 18	Administrative budget committee meeting #5
January 8	Analysis of preliminary budget priorities
	Review of projected state revenues based on the state proposed budget
January 11	Administrative budget committee meeting #6
	Refinement of budget priorities based on school board work session
January 22	Presentation of projected state revenues based on state proposed budget
	Invitation for further school board member input on budget
January 25	Administrative budget committee meeting #7
	Refinement of budget priorities based on public hearing and board member input
February 5	Presentation of first formal draft of budget
February 7	Administrative budget committee meeting #8
	Refinement of budget priorities
February 19	Presentation of second formal draft of budget (regular meeting)
	Update on projected state revenues
March 8	Administrative budget committee meeting #9
March 19	Target date for school board approval of budget (regular meeting)
May TBD	Called meeting for school board certification of final budget April 25-May 4
May 7	Target date for issuance of professional personnel contracts
May 21	Target date for issuance of classified personnel contracts

Source: Created by Prismatic, based on records from an Oklahoma school district, November 2015

B.   FINANCIAL PROCESSES

Day-to-day financial processes should be efficient and effective. They should also be documented, transparent, and rational. Accounting and payroll are among the most important business functions performed by a school district. Although regulations such as the OCAS and other accounting standards exist, actual practices can vary widely among Oklahoma school districts.

A sound accounting and payroll system can provide numerous benefits including:

- providing internal controls and safeguards;
- providing timely reporting on the status of funds; and
- allowing systematic disbursements to maximize available funds.

FINDING 3-4

The community supports the district through bond passages, raising funds to support district needs, and helping with repairs and maintenance of the district facilities. Local electricians, plumbers, and contractors are used on a as need basis when issues arise and do not overcharge the district for the work.

Throughout the review, it was noted that the community supports the district, and is willing to help when needed. The district is preparing plans for a $2.7 million bond for numerous capital projects. It was also noted that a local energy company serviced air condition units and replaced filters for free during July 2018.

Having community support ensures the district will have adequate funds to meet the needs of the students. The community is one of the most important resources in helping the district go above and beyond, resulting in improved outcomes and overall district performance.

COMMENDATION

DPS is commended for getting the community behind their efforts and keeping them involved.

Moving forward, it is recommended that the district build the support of the community. The superintendent can develop an advisory council and invite community members to a short meeting to present a state of the district speech. This should be done once or twice a year.

FINDING 3-5

Currently, all hourly DPS employees record their hours worked on a paper timesheet. Using a manual method for recording time could lead to timesheet fraud and opens the district up to paying for time not worked. Having a time clock would also help to track comp time.

Hourly employees record their hours worked manually on paper and then submit it to the financial secretary for processing. While no instances of dishonesty have been documented, this

process does not protect the district against timesheet fraud. Over time, timesheet fraud could cost the district a significant amount of money.

The district already uses the Municipal Accounting System (MAS) for student information purposes. MAS has an automated timekeeping module. Implementing a more automated timekeeping process would reduce the possibility of timesheet fraud and reduce the time the financial secretary spends on weekly and monthly payroll processes. This will allow the financial secretary more time to devote to other areas of the job.

RECOMMENDATION

Purchase a time clock system or use the timekeeping system that MAS has available.

The superintendent and treasurer should work with MAS, a current vendor, to use timekeeping software available through them. This will allow both the timekeeping system and financial software to interact and make payroll more automated for hourly employee's time.

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

C.   *ASSET AND RISK MANAGEMENT*

Asset management involves managing the district's cash resources and physical assets in a cost effective and efficient manner. Effective cash and investment management involves forecasting cash requirements timely and accurately so that funds are made available when needed. Effective asset management involves the safeguarding of property from loss, damage, theft, and obsolescence. Proper safeguarding of district assets requires an effective system of accountability and a culture of adherence to established policies and procedures.

FINDING 3-6

The district is not currently maximizing the potential for earning interest on its idle cash. This results in a lower rate of return on investments and lower interest earnings by the district.

Based on review of the districts balance sheet and bank statements, it appears idle cash is only being held in the district checking account. While this ensures that cash is readily available should it be needed, the district is potentially losing out on additional interest that could be earned. The superintendent and financial secretary monitor the cash available, but are not investing in accounts as permitted under Oklahoma Statues: *Title 70-5-115.* The district should review the statue and consider investment options that are available under the law. The district has a written policy in the policy manual addressing the option to invest and that the treasurer shall place primary emphasis on safety and liquidity of principal and earnings.

DPS is not currently using sweep accounts. Sweep accounts are arrangements where excess funds are automatically moved into overnight investments, which typically earn a higher rate of return than that paid on regular checking accounts. The use of higher-yielding overnight

investment mechanisms for unused balances also make it easier for the district and bank personnel to maintain and monitor collateral needed to secure bank balances on deposit.

Tipton Public Schools utilizes this type of banking service at the First National Bank of Altus, which includes a sweep account where amounts more than $25,000 are automatically moved from the district's regular checking accounts into an overnight investment account. While the district earns interest on its regular checking accounts, the rate earned on the overnight sweep account is at a higher rate.

RECOMMENDATION

Adopt an investment policy to earn interest on idle cash and research possible investment options that are permitted by Oklahoma state law and Federal regulations that could yield a higher interest rate, thus earning the district additional revenue.

Though school districts are limited on their investment options by law (*Title 70 O.S. § 5-115*), maximizing the rates of return can assist districts in generating revenue. By researching investment options and investing wisely, the district could generate additional revenue. The superintendent should work with the district's financial secretary and school board to implement this recommendation.

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources. Revenue generated will be determined by the investment options available

FINDING 3-7

The district provides an inventory listing to each staff member that is kept on a flash drive. The listing is updated each year, but staff members are taking inventory count of everything in their assigned workspace. Moreover, there appears to be no reconciliation of room inventories from year to year nor from room to room.

The district does not have an adequate system to track its investments in fixed assets. It attempts to track items by requiring teachers to complete a room inventory each year, and maintains the listing on a flash drive. Once the inventory is completed and flash drives are turned in the reconciliation process takes place.

Fixed asset transactions are not identified and tracked during the year. DPS does not have a complete listing of its fixed assets where additions and deletions are made as they occur, or a policy on assets to be capitalized. Without a comprehensive listing and physical inventories, the district has no way to know if items are stolen or lost. This leaves the district without recourse if an employee loses costly equipment or if a theft were to occur.

Policies normally address many issues pertaining to an entity's investment in fixed assets. Policies cover all fixed assets and regularly address the following:

- responsibility for accounting for the district's investment in fixed assets and the system that is used for that accounting;

- responsibility for accountability for the property and equipment owned;

- a requirement for annual physical inventories;

- capitalization thresholds for property, equipment, land and infrastructure;

- depreciation methods, salvage value, and a schedule of estimated useful lives;

- capitalized improvements versus maintenance expenses;

- reporting junked, stolen or missing property, and what approvals are required to delete these items from inventory;

- receiving donated property; and

- transferring assets between department.

To protect its investment in fixed assets, school districts track their assets and have policies that provide direction on how the assets are to be managed. As items are acquired, they are immediately added to the listing. When the district disposes of an item through normal processes it is taken off the listing. When an item cannot be found, the situation is reviewed, and appropriate action is taken. Normally, the school board is required to approve all deletions.

RECOMMENDATION

Develop and adopt fixed asset policies and procedures, such as capitalization thresholds, surplus procedures, and lost asset recovery; then, inventory fixed assets using a consolidated inventory listing.

The district should use google spreadsheets for inventory listing instead of flash drives and create a fixed asset inventory policy of only inventorying items worth $5,000 or more. The OCAS procedures manual establishes a capitalization threshold at $5,000. Therefore, the district should consider adopting a threshold of $5,000 to remain in compliance with the OCAS requirements. Once the school board approves the policy, the superintendent should communicate the new policy to staff and begin implementation. This will reduce the total inventory listing and may allow for one staff member to complete the inventory count on a yearly basis.

Fixed assets policies and procedures along with a system to track fixed assets should help ensure that the district's investments are being managed as desired by the school board. The system should protect investments by documenting asset possession and holding staff accountable for the proper care and protection of district assets.

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING 3-8

Child nutrition money is being collected by an administrative assistant and child nutrition employees. Money is then deposited into the bank and shown in the activity fund before it is transferred to the Child Nutrition fund.

Money for child nutrition paid meals is being collected by the DPS administrative assistant and child nutrition cashier. Money is being deposited into the activity fund before it is transferred to the Child Nutrition fund.

The DPS external audit as of June 30, 2017 reported a finding regarding the activity fund lunch clearing sub-account having a balance on hand at June 30, 2017. It was recommended to transfer these funds into the district level revenues to be in compliance with DPS policy.

RECOMMENDATION

Improve handling of child nutrition money, by transferring money collected on a more regular basis.

Child nutrition money should be collected by a child nutrition employee and deposited immediately. The money appears to be sitting in the activity fund accounts before it is transferred to the Child Nutrition fund. The district should transfer child nutrition money monthly. The Oklahoma Cost Accounting System (OCAS) states money should at least be transferred annually.

A monthly analysis of activity fund accounts will facilitate the process of transferring money out of the activity fund account to the Child Nutrition fund. This will ensure compliance with policy and OCAS procedures.

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

D. ACTIVITY FUNDS

Activity funds are defined as funds that consist of resources received and held by the school as trustee to be expended or invested in accordance with conditions of the trust. Specifically, they are funds accumulated by district-affiliated organizations from various fundraising activities, membership fees, commissions, interest income, and donations. These funds are to be used to promote the general welfare of the school and the educational development and morale of students.

Oklahoma Statute *Title 70 O.S. § 5-129* outlines the procedures to be used to account for activity funds. Specifically, the statute requires that the board of education of each school district exercise control over all funds and revenues on hand, received or collected from revenue-generating sources such as student organizations or extracurricular activities that are conducted on school campuses. The statute further defines that deposits are to be made daily or when the

cash on hand exceeds $100. Under the law, the school board is required to approve all school activity sub-accounts, all fundraising activities, and all purposes for which monies collected in each subaccount may be expended.

FINDING 3-9

The district does not use a night deposit at the bank for gate receipts and after-school activities. Instead, money is brought to the office, and put in a safe. It is then counted the next working day. Putting money in a night deposit would reduce the risk of theft or funds getting lost.

DPS has excellent procedures for timely handling and deposit of gate receipts. The financial secretary provides a money log for all athletic events/school activities that reconciles the ticket count to the collections. One individual signs off on gate money and two individuals sign off on concession money, which is then provided to the principal to be placed in the safe at night. The financial secretary counts the money the next morning, and takes the money to the bank for deposit. It is considered a best practice to deposit funds in a night deposit box the day of the event.

Oklahoma school law requires that activity funds be deposited by the end of the next business day after they are collected, if the funds exceed $100. Also, deposits should be made at least once a week even if the collections do not exceed $100.[7] The National Center for Education Statistics recommends that activity funds be deposited daily.[8]

RECOMMENDATION

Adjust gate receipt procedures by placing two people in charge of gate money to count the gate receipts after the event, complete a receipt of money along with a deposit slip, and make a night deposit at the bank.

The financial secretary should work with the bank to establish a night deposit drop. Once the night deposit is set up, the financial secretary can meet with all parties responsible for after-school activities and go over procedures.

The financial secretary would be responsible for collecting the night deposit keys and ticket sales report from the ticket taker the following morning. The bank should be responsible for verifying that the funds reported on the deposit slip and the night deposit agree. If errors are noted they should contact the school to research.

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

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[7] http://sde.ok.gov/sde/sites/ok.gov.sde/files/OCAS-Coded12.pdf
[8] https://nces.ed.gov/pubs2004/h2r2/ch_8.asp

E.   *AUDITING AND INTERNAL CONTROLS*

Internal and external audits provide a review of the district's compliance with established standards and practices. External audits are required of all Oklahoma school districts and are performed by state-approved public accounting firms. The external audit provides:

- an annual financial and compliance report;

- an examination of the expenditure of federal funds (as applicable); and

- a report to management on internal accounting controls (as applicable).

- The internal audit function supplements the work of the external auditor. The internal audit function examines specific areas to determine:

- the adequacy of internal controls;

- compliance with adopted policies and procedures and adherence to applicable law and regulation; and

- efficiency and effectiveness of operations.

FINDING 3-10

The DPS financial secretary prepares listing of all purchase orders and checks for the month. The Drummond School Board uses the listing of all purchase orders and list of checks each month to review and approve.

Prior to the board reviewing the listings, the financial secretary encumbers all purchase requisitions completed by the superintendent or the principal. To complete the purchase request, the board approves a listing of purchase orders based upon review of board meeting minutes. The check listing is completed after invoice is received and matched against purchase order. The check listing is provided for information purposes and does not require approval.

Having the board approve all purchase orders adds another layer of security for district assets, since the district accounting staff is so small. The listing of checks helps the board to look for unusual payments or unrecognized vendors who are being paid, thus reducing the chances for fraud.

COMMENDATION

The superintendent and financial secretary are commended for providing the school board a listing of all purchase orders for approval and a listing of checks for review monthly.

FINDING 3-11

The DPS administrative assistant is collecting money. Her daily duties as administrative assistant take her away from the desk often, as a result, any money collected is left vulnerable to theft.

Currently the DPS administrative assistant will collect lunch payments, club fees, and any other miscellaneous cash transactions that students or parents bring in. In additional to collecting the money she is answering the phone, greeting visitors as they enter the school, and performing other duties assigned by the principal. The office area is busy, and the administrative assistant is taken away from the desk on a regular basis. If she has money and leaves without securing the cash or checks, theft could occur.

The OCAS states that the board of education of each school district shall exercise control over all funds and revenues on hand, received, or collected. Deposits must be made in a timely manner, and the board of education must designate a custodian of the school activity funds.

RECOMMENDATION

Allow only teachers, the financial secretary, and cafeteria staff to collect money.

The board should designate that all money should be collected by only teachers, the financial secretary, and cafeteria staff. If money is brought to the office the financial secretary should be responsible for collecting and having another employee verify the amount collect since the financial secretary is making the deposit. By having someone count the money collected with the financial secretary, the district reduces the risk for fraud to occur.

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

Chapter 4:

Facilities Use and Management

Facilities Use and Management

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

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

Facilities use and management includes the planning, construction, and maintenance of buildings, the safety of students and staff using those buildings, and the security of facilities before, during, and after school hours. More specifically, this area includes the following:

- planning and designing facilities to meet educational standards and to provide a physical framework that enhances learning conditions;

- properly maintaining and cleaning facilities so that teaching and learning can take place in a healthy and clean environment;

- ensuring that the facilities are safe when students and teachers are present;

- creating proper safeguards to ensure the security of the facilities during and after school hours; and

- having safety plans in the event of a crisis or natural disaster so that students and staff members are protected.

Background

Founded in 1901, Drummond is a small town in Garfield County. Enid is the county seat. Drummond is located approximately 15 miles by car from Enid west on Highway 412, then south on Highway 132 to Drummond (**Exhibit 4-1**).[1] Drummond's estimated population was 466 as of July 1st, 2018.

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[1] http://www.howtogetfrom.com/route-from-drummond-ok-to-enid-ok

Exhibit 4-1
Drummond's Location in Garfield County
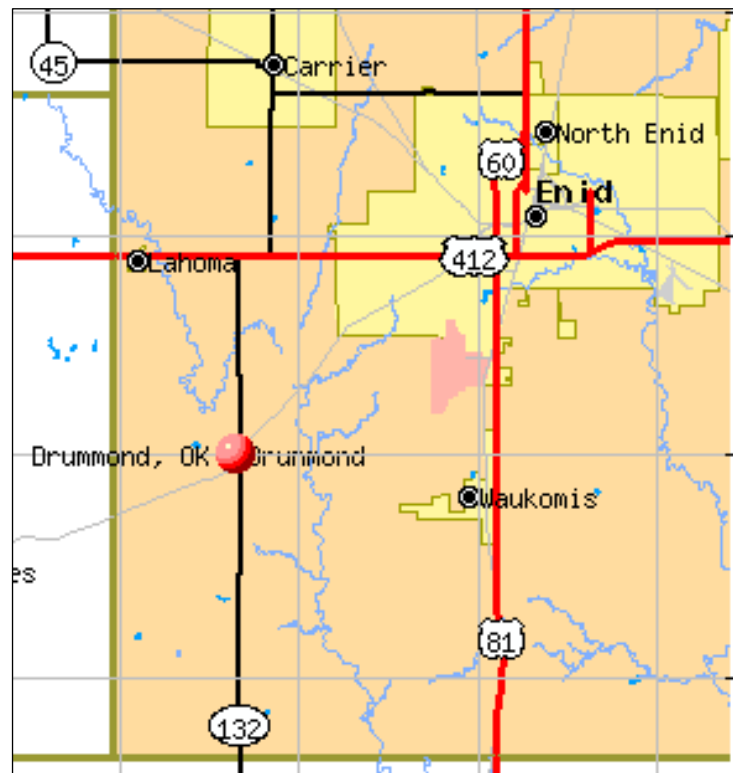
DPS consists of three major structures housing a Pre-K-8 elementary school and a secondary school (grades 9-12) in one structure, an agriculture building in a second facility, and a recently constructed dome as the third (**Exhibit 4-2**). These buildings encompass a total estimated floor area of about 83,300 square feet. Other ancillary outbuildings – bus garages and miscellaneous athletic support structures – are not counted in the floor area total. The large structure houses the elementary and secondary schools, and the adjacent round structure is the dome. Across Highway 132, at the red marker labeled "A", is the agriculture building. The large white structure across the highway to the south of the agriculture building is the local volunteer fire department. Two athletic fields, for softball and baseball, are located westernmost on the school district property.

Exhibit 4-2
Aerial View of Drummond and DPS

Source: Google Earth, September 2018

Exhibit 4-3 provides an inventory of DPS facilities, including the address, the year built, the year of renovations, and the square footage. In total, the district has approximately 83,300 square feet of facilities in the inventory.[2]

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[2] These floor area figures are estimates by Prismatic based on scale measurements of drawings furnished by the district, and verified by Easley Associates Architects, Enid, OK. The verified scale of the drawings is 1" = 30 ft.

Exhibit 4-3
DPS Facilities Inventory

Facility	Address	Year Built	Year Renovated	Sq. Ft.
Drummond Pre-K-12	610 Kansas Ave	1966	1993 library and gym addition, miscellaneous renovations at other times	65,000
Dome	610 Kansas Ave	2016	No renovations	11,300
Agriculture Building	610 Kansas Ave	2014	No renovations	7,000
Total				**83,300**

Source: Prismatic estimates from scaled drawings by Easley Associates Architects, Enid, OK and DPS insurance carrier's certificate of coverage dated 4/06/2017

A.   FACILITIES PLANNING AND CONSTRUCTION

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

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

Having a long-range facilities master plan will ensure that building projects are prioritized, begun, and completed following a studied, developed, and logical process. As administrators, faculty, staff, and school board members change, having a long-range facilities master plan will add stability and cohesiveness to the district's construction, use, and management of facilities.

A school district's long-range facilities master plan is a compilation of district policies and statistical data that provide a basis for providing educational facilities to meet the changing needs of a community. A valuable resource in developing a quality long-range facilities master plan can be obtained from the Association for Learning Environments (A4LE), formerly CEFPI.[3] Effective long-range school facilities master planning incorporates the following elements:

- **Facility Capacity**: Districts establish the capacity of each school facility by setting standards that govern student/teacher ratios and the amount of square feet required per student in a classroom. These standards deal with the minimum size of core facilities, such as classrooms,

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[3] Council of Educational Facility Planners International. (2004). *Creating connections: The CEFPI guide for educational facility planning*. Can be purchased at http://creatingconnections.a4le.org/

gyms, cafeterias, and libraries, so that schools do not overload these facilities or overuse portable classrooms.

In 2008, the Oklahoma State Department of Education (SDE) published the second edition of *Planning for Education: Space Guidelines for Planning Educational Facilities.*[4] The guidelines were developed to assist local school boards, school administrators, architects, engineers, and planners in planning and designing educational facilities. The guidelines arrange space information by the major activities of instructional spaces, auxiliary spaces, and service and structure spaces for the various grade ranges. They also provide suggested methods of calculating preliminary net and gross square footage for school buildings by grade and major activity. Another excellent resource for facility construction is *An Administrator's Guide to School Construction Projects*, also published by SDE. [5]

- **Facility Inventory**: An accurate facility inventory is an essential tool in managing the use of school facilities. The inventory identifies the use and size of each room, which enables planners to accurately set the capacity of each school. Modifications to schools are noted in the inventory so it can be kept up to date.[6]

- **Enrollment Projections**: Effective planning requires accurate enrollment projections at least five years into the future.[7] Accurate projections require planners to examine district demographics and track any new construction activity in the district. Many school planners work in coordination with county and city planners to track growth patterns.

- **Capital improvement program**: Effective planning requires the district to anticipate its future needs and balance these against expected resources. A capital improvement program charts future improvements to school facilities and identifies funding sources for them. An effective planning process involves the community at large, identifies district goals and objectives, and prioritizes projects based upon those goals and objectives.[8]

- **Facilities Maintenance Plan**: School facility planning necessitates identifying links between facilities maintenance and facilities construction and renovation. Capital outlay for school construction is generally a more palatable proposition for taxpayers and public officials when a school system demonstrates that existing facilities receive appropriate care and maintenance. Good plans include short- and long-term objectives, budgets, and timelines – all of which demonstrate organizational commitment to facilities maintenance.[9]

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[4] http://digitalprairie.ok.gov/cdm/singleitem/collection/stgovpub/id/9456/rec/4
[5] http://sde.ok.gov/sde/sites/ok.gov.sde/files/CI-AdministratorsGuide.pdf
[6] Floor area figures were not available directly from DPS; they were estimated by Prismatic from floor plans.
[7] No official enrollment projections are available from any sources for DPS.
[8] A series bond issue represents a capital improvement plan for DPS.
[9] No official facilities maintenance plan is available from DPS.

FINDING 4-1

As a small district, facility planning, design, and construction services are outsourced. In such cases, the client is typically represented by a school official with limited knowledge and understanding of what best practices in this arena should be.

After working with a design firm and a contractor to complete the dome structure in 2016, DPS has formed a new relationship with an architectural firm from nearby Enid, Easley Associates, with the aim of a long-term relationship. That firm has similar extended relationships with more than 20 other Oklahoma school districts. So far, the firm has prepared conceptual drawings for possible improvements to Drummond school facilities. These improvements emphasize safety, energy, and capacity issues. The concepts serve as planning priorities and capital projects for a series bond issue being readied for a referendum in early 2019. A cost estimate (**Exhibit 4-4**), also prepared by Easley Associates, is intended to inform the district's future bond issue.

Exhibit 4-4
Cost Estimate of Planned Facility Upgrades
to be Funded by Future Series Bond Issue

Item Summary	Quantity	Value	Cost
General Conditions and Project Costs	12 months	$5,000	$60,000
New Fascia and Soffits	5,000 square feet	$20	$100,000
Replace Exterior Windows/Doors	42 longitudinal sections	$2,500	$105,000
North Parking Lot New Paving	30,000 square feet	$8.00	$240,000
Parking Lot Repair – East 8' Paving Strip	3,200 square feet	$9.00	$28,800
Gymnasium HVAC	30 tons	$3,300	$99,000
Multizone Unit Replacement	1 longitudinal section	$220,000	$220,000
Classroom Building Addition	5,600 square feet	$110	$616,000
Enclosed Walk – Library Hall to Gym	800 square feet	$165	$132,000
Secure Entry and Lobby Renovations	2,550 square feet	$75	$191,250
Baseball Field Improvements			$75,000
Baseball Field Bleachers (3 sections)	3 each	$15,000	$45,000
Baseball Field Bleacher Cover (1 section)	1 each	$6,000	$6,000
Baseball Field Concessions/Rest Rooms/Meeting Room Building	1 each	$199,000	$199,000
Softball Field Improvements			$100,000
Softball Field Bleachers (2 sections)	2 each	$15,000	$30,000
Agriculture Show Building			
Enclosed Space	6,000 square feet	$85	$510,000
Roof Only Space	6,000 square feet	$33	$198,000
Subtotal			**$2,955,050**
Contractor Overhead & Fee	10%		$295,505
Architect/Engineer Fees	7%		$227,539
Bonds and Insurance	3%		$97,517
Fire Marshal Permitting Fee			$5,500
Bid Documents Printing			$3,000
Contingency	10%		$325,055
Total			**$3,909,166**

Source: DPS and Easley Associates Architects, 2018

Between 2012-13 and 2016-17, the average assessed property value per student for Drummond increased by 0.7 percent (**Exhibit 4-5**). This was among the lowest increases of the peers.

Exhibit 4-5
Trend in Assessed Property Value per Student
2012-13 through 2016-17

Entity	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	Percent Change
Drummond	**$37,728**	**$35,285**	**$41,575**	**$42,485**	**$37,991**	**0.7%▲**
Robin Hill	$26,209	$26,481	$25,481	$24,818	$23,297	(11.1%)▼
Kremlin-Hillsdale	$78,703	$101,208	$121,712	$100,554	$105,070	33.5%▲
Sharon-Mutual	$134,586	$137,198	$141,311	$121,316	$128,554	(4.5%)▼
Pioneer	$18,336	$18,576	$29,853	$26,648	$26,905	46.7%▲
Union City	$52,949	$50,333	$52,424	$59,689	$56,103	6.0%▲
State	**$43,631**	**$45,248**	**$47,329**	**$49,623**	**$49,471**	**13.4%▲**

Source: Office of Educational Quality and Accountability, Profiles Database

The debt service expenditures per student are based upon the amount of outstanding debt and number of students a district has during a given school year. Districts must balance facility and equipment needs with the amount of tax money requested of district taxpayers. In 2016-17, the district had the second lowest debt service expenditure per student than that of all comparison groups (**Exhibit 4-6**).

Exhibit 4-6
Debt Service Expenditures per Student
2016-17

Entity	Debt Service per Student
Drummond	**$773**
Robin Hill	$617
Kremlin-Hillsdale	$2,858
Sharon-Mutual	$5,592
Pioneer	$1,483
Union City	$1,266
Community Group	**$950**
State	**$947**

Source: Office of Educational Quality and Accountability, Profiles Database

As the district's bonding capacity is limited by state statute to 10 percent of the assessed property valuation (currently, approximately $13 million), Drummond has used series bonds with various maturity dates through 2025 to plan and develop a list of projects larger than the one-time borrowing capacity of the district. According to the two independent audits furnished by the district (for 2013-14 and 2016-17) the district's debt service for five bond issues have varied from $100,000 to $600,000 (**Exhibit 4-7**).

Exhibit 4-7
Recent History of DPS Bonds

Year of Bond	Bond Amount
2011	$380,000
2012	$100,000
2014	$500,000
2015	$600,000
2016	$175,000

Source: DPS Audits, 2013-14 and 2016-17

Based on further information furnished by district administrators, a new series bond referendum will be placed on the ballot in January 2019. It will be a series bond paid off over ten years. The bond amount is planned to be $3.6 million. The payout usable for capital projects enumerated would be $2.4 million. The ten percent of ad valorem taxes rule will be followed.

COMMENDATION

DPS is commended for its diligent and precise management of the series bonding process, and its establishment of a long-term facilities planning and construction relationship with an experienced Pre-K-12 school design firm with offices in Enid, only 15 miles away.

FINDING 4-2

Historically, the district has had limited internal knowledge of facilities planning and construction. The district has had to rely on the expertise of external experts, which has not always had the best results.

As a case in point, the most recent dome construction appears to exhibit a serious and nagging echo – possibly a flutter echo. It is loud and disrupts human speech to the point of unintelligibility. As a result, the music program, which planned to occupy the new dome, has instead remained in its original location. The characteristically quiet, low-noise Pre-Kindergarten program has been housed in the dome's spaces originally intended for the band/music program (**Exhibit 4-8**). Even though the ceiling has been treated with suspended, acoustically absorptive panels, and the round interior has been broken up with partitions housing utility closets, classroom space, a small kitchen, storage and the like, the disturbing and disruptive echo persists (**Exhibits 4-9** and **4-10**).

Exhibit 4-8
Pre-K Program in Dome Classroom

Exhibit 4-9
Dome Exterior

Source: Prismatic, August 2018

Source: Prismatic, August 2018

Exhibit 4-10
Dome Basketball Court Interior
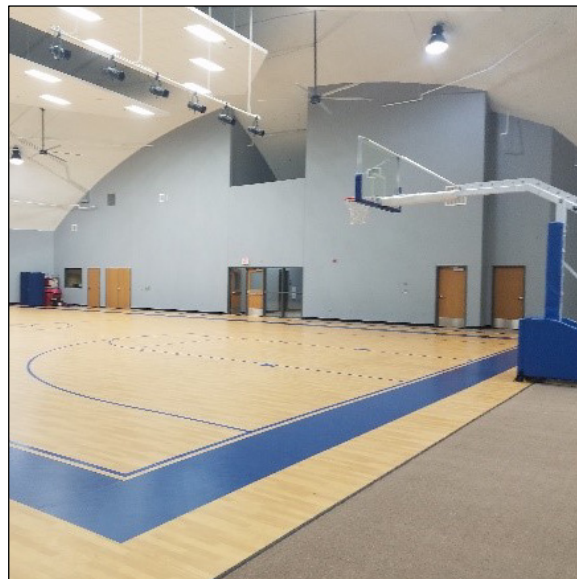
Source: Prismatic, August 2018

Other concerns include questions about the demonstrable resistance of the dome structure to high velocity winds, as well as the types of materials and construction methods that were used. Finally, excessive heat dissipation at the intersection between vertical base wall and the dome is evident in the infrared photos of that location (**Exhibit 4-11**).

Exhibit 4-11
Infrared Photo of Intersection Between Base Wall and Dome

Source: Prismatic, August 2018
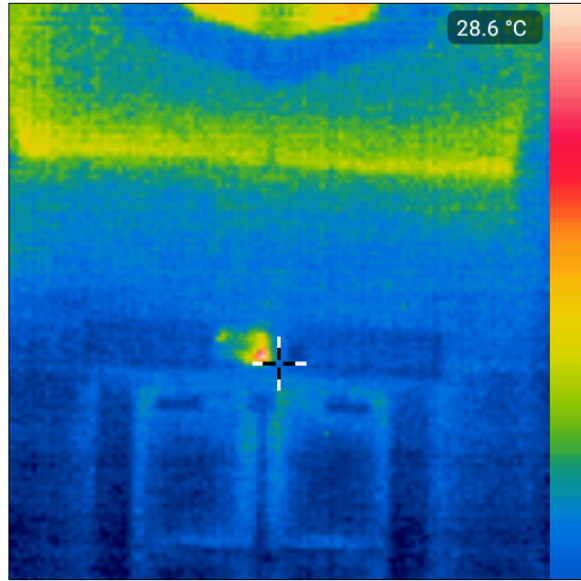
Source: Prismatic, August 2018

Source: Prismatic, August 2018
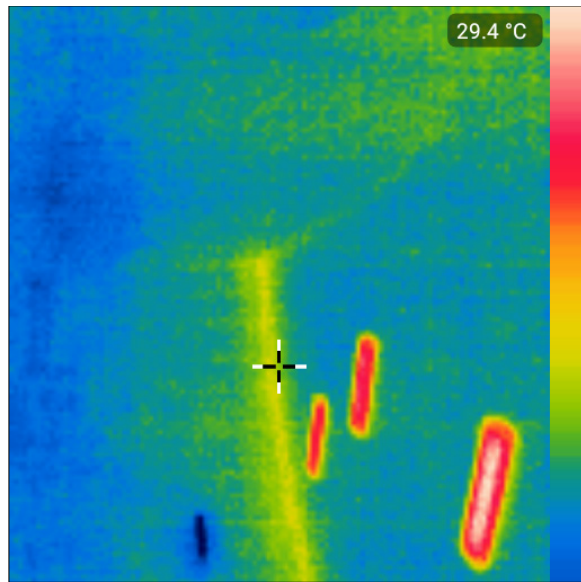
Source: Prismatic, August 2018

The shortcomings of the dome building are at least partially the result of the district not having internal staff with design and construction expertise. Thus, DPS leaders are vulnerable to persuasion because they cannot evaluate what they are told critically and sufficiently. What appears to have happened with the dome is persuasion and salesmanship winning over the lack of sufficient expertise. In hindsight, the district might have benefitted from an evaluation of the dome proposal by an expert third party prior to construction.

While the district appears to have few alternatives to address the deficiencies of the already-completed dome, it has taken steps to develop a long-term relationship with a trustworthy

architectural firm that is experienced in designing facilities to meet the needs of educational clients. The initial design ideas of the new firm are encouraging. However, they could be further improved to better meet DPS' needs. Review and editing of design ideas is a normal part of the design process.

Small school districts have fewer resources to hire a cadre of in-house experts on a full-time basis. The answer to this problem is careful outsourcing. This can range from hiring mechanical contractors to maintain the HVAC system, to hiring an architect for facilities planning and design services. Once a relationship of trust has been established, it is advisable to maintain the outsourcing relationship.

RECOMMENDATION

Review and revise the current conceptual plans.

The consulting team recommends that DPS and Easley Associates make these changes:

- The concept for a secure front entrance needs to specify additional features for complete perimeter security, including a solid fence and secured entrances at all locations at the perimeter of the main school building and the dome.[10] Provisions for ADA compliance at all exterior doors should be included.

- Repurpose the dome as the school kitchen and cafeteria. With additional sound dampening and perhaps the installation of noise-canceling technology, the dome could be an ideal space for this purpose and could also become an effective large group meeting space. With movable tables, the dome could still serve as additional basketball/game space in the afternoons, though spectator seating will be minimal. The dome should also continue its function as a storm shelter.

- Repurposing the dome frees up space for two or more new classrooms in the former cafeteria and kitchen space. For now, the construction of these two additional classrooms should suffice for growth planning but plans should include possible locations for additional classrooms, as enrollment growth warrants.

- Convert the existing exterior spaces to interior space. This reduces several security concerns and adds to the useful floor area of the existing school facility. **Exhibit 4-12** shows the areas.

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[10] Although regulations always require the dome entrance to be open to assure access to the public in an emergency, the district has arranged for the building to be locked for security, and keys made available by emergency responders and district officials.

Exhibit 4-12
Exterior Open Areas to be Filled-in
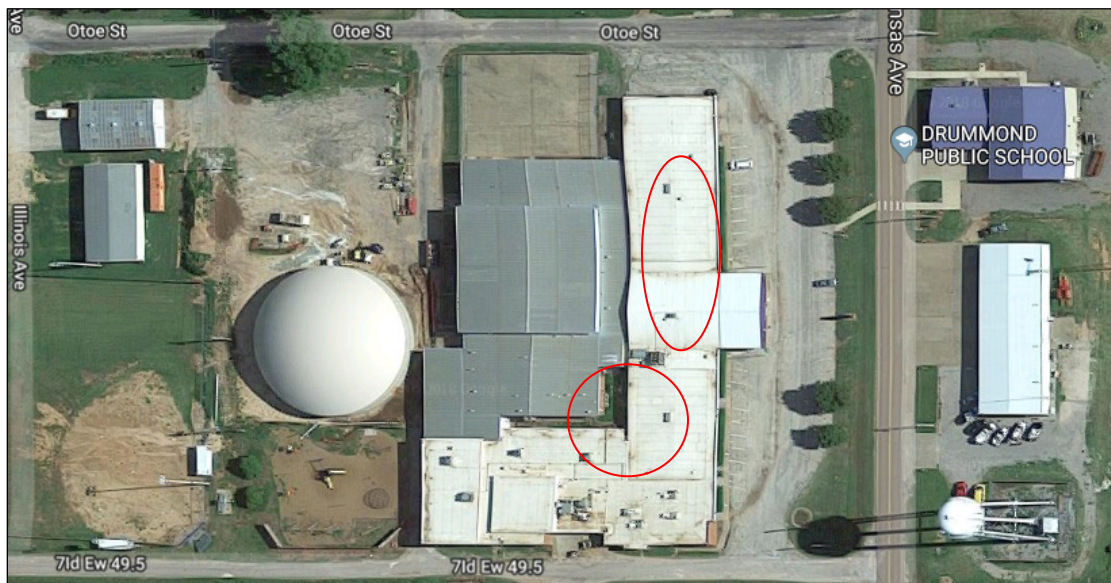
Source: Prismatic, August 2018

Presumably, these spaces were created by default when the 1993 library and gymnasium addition was built. The long, narrow separation between the older and newer buildings is especially problematic in its current condition (**Exhibit 4-13**). It is a hiding place for illicit activities and gives cover to persons seeking to break into the main school building. In addition, it provides a rainwater catch-all because of the current roof slopes on either side. The larger open space could be used as an improved outdoor garden, but it is probably suited better as an indoor area serving learning community and/or study nook purposes (**Exhibit 4-14**).

Exhibit 4-13
Narrow Alley Space Between Buildings

Exhibit 4-14
Insular Open Space

Source: DPS, September 2018

Source: DPS, August 2018

The current concept for an enclosed link to the dome secures the dome access and should be retained. Other items already included in the bond planning should be re-examined and prioritized.

The superintendent and principal should meet with Easley Associates to discuss these items. The district should ask Easley Associates to revise the initial conceptual drawings and include any ancillary ideas they have on these issues. They should then revise the cost estimates to include the added costs of relocating the kitchen and cafeteria by postponing or eliminating the classroom building addition. The result should be a bottom-line figure within the contemplated bond issue.

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

B.   *MAINTENANCE AND CUSTODIAL OPERATIONS*

The objective in maintaining and cleaning school facilities is to provide safe and cost-effective buildings, a sound educational environment, increased longevity of buildings and equipment, and the protection of school property. The maintenance and cleaning of the facilities must be accomplished in an efficient and effective manner in order to provide a safe and secure environment that supports the educational program and reflects proper stewardship for district resources.

Efficiencies and economies of maintenance and cleaning are critical to ensure that resources for direct instruction are maximized. However, extreme actions to reduce the cost of maintenance

and cleaning can result in higher than acceptable costs of repair and replacement in the years to come. Consequently, a balance must be achieved between reasonable economies and unreasonable cost-cutting.

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, as well as occupant safety, all impact how students and staff members can 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. They maintain a record of the performance of equipment and the costs of regular maintenance to measure the effectiveness of these programs.

The district's operations and maintenance expenditures over the past five years as compared to the peer districts are shown in **Exhibit 4-15**. The decrease in DPS expenditures from 2012-13 through 2016-17 was 47.6 percent, which was the highest decrease among the peers.

Exhibit 4-15
Trend in Maintenance and Operations Expenditures

Entity	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	Percent Change
Drummond	**$505,344**	**$196,306**	**$248,322**	**$214,858**	**$264,856**	**(47.6%)**▼
Robin Hill	$144,141	$248,392	$172,552	$208,228	$405,961	181.6%▲
Kremlin-Hillsdale	$198,106	$258,243	$302,214	$270,121	$363,900	83.7%▲
Sharon-Mutual	$254,490	$295,541	$350,822	$382,241	$279,026	9.6%▲
Pioneer	$269,656	$313,262	$250,988	$194,534	$199,295	(26.1%)▼
Union City	$268,898	$389,715	$292,804	$261,677	$235,612	(12.4%)▼
Peer Average	**$227,058**	**$301,031**	**$273,876**	**$263,360**	**$296,759**	**30.7%**▲

Source: SDE, School District Expenditure Reports 2012-2017, and Prismatic calculations

On a per-student basis, DPS expenditures for maintenance and operations decreased by 50.6 percent; this was the highest decrease among peers (**Exhibit 4-16**). DPS' expenditures per student were less than the peer average in every year of the five-year period except for 2012-13 where it was the highest of all.

Exhibit 4-16
Trend in Maintenance and Operations Expenditures per Student

Entity	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	Percent Change
Drummond	**$1,559**	**$595**	**$782**	**$697**	**$770**	**(50.6%)**▼
Robin Hill	$569	$963	$617	$693	$1,273	123.7%▲
Kremlin-Hillsdale	$609	$830	$1,027	$860	$1,189	95.2%▲
Sharon-Mutual	$830	$981	$1,155	$1,244	$965	16.3%▲
Pioneer	$716	$795	$642	$508	$511	(28.6%)▼
Union City	$934	$1,314	$990	$888	$743	(20.4)%▼
Peer Average	**$732**	**$977**	**$886**	**$839**	**$936**	**28.0%**▲

Source: SDE, School District Expenditure Reports 2012-2017, and Prismatic calculations

DPS' maintenance and operations expenditures by category are shown in **Exhibit 4-17** and graphically in **Exhibit 4-18**. In the most recent year, most of the budget was spent on purchased services.

Exhibit 4-17
Trend in DPS Maintenance and Operations Expenditures, All Funds

Expenditure by Category	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	Percent Change
Salaries	$25,708	$30,283	$27,387	$28,913	$28,872	12.3%▲
Benefits	$7,632	$7,612	$9,521	$10,480	$17,523	129.6%▲
Purchased Services	$69,235	$91,359	$99,736	$116,404	$136,823	97.6%▲
Supplies	$49,818	$38,279	$88,079	$43,983	$50,035	0.4%▲
Property	$7,244	$24,572	$23,087	$1,972	$8,014	10.6%▲
Other	$11,871	$375	$513	$328	$325	(97.3%)▼
Total	**$171,509**	**$192,482**	**$248,322**	**$202,080**	**$241,593**	**40.9%**▲

Source: SDE, School District Expenditure Reports 2012-2017, and Prismatic calculations

Exhibit 4-18
Trend in DPS Maintenance and Operations Expenditures
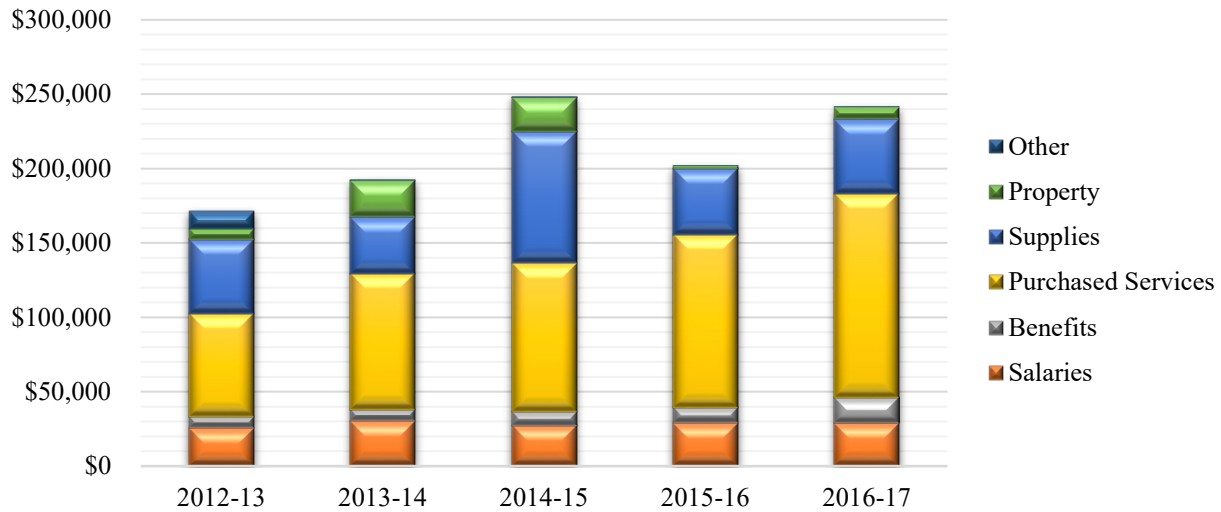
Source: SDE, School District Expenditure Reports 2012-2017, and Prismatic calculations

Exhibit 4-19 shows DPS maintenance and operations expenditure amounts by fund over time. As shown, expenditures in each fund increased over the five years.

Exhibit 4-19
DPS Trend in Maintenance and Operations Expenditures by Fund

Fund	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	Percent Change
General Fund	$108,861	$135,830	$130,092	$90,672	$125,695	15.5%▲
Building Fund	$62,648	$56,652	$118,230	$72,480	$108,083	72.5%▲
School Activity Fund	$0	$0	$0	$38,928	$7,815	NA
All Funds	**$171,509**	**$192,482**	**$248,322**	**$202,080**	**$241,593**	**40.9%▲**

Note: Column sums may not match the total shown due to rounding.
Source: SDE, School District Expenditure Reports 2012-2017, and Prismatic calculations

The Drummond maintenance organization is shown in **Exhibit 4-20.** The head custodian, a 0.75 FTE part-time employee, reports directly to the principal. A 0.25 FTE custodian working in the late afternoons rounds out the custodial labor to one full FTE. A part-time maintenance/repair technician, who works only on weekends and is responsible for intermittent building and bus maintenance, also reports directly to the principal. In addition, a cadre of outside contractors also reports to the principal. According to the 2016-17 DPS Expenditure Report, $125,695 was paid for outsourcing the services of operations and maintenance contractors.[11] A list of the informal local businesses favoring

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[11] According to some sources in the leadership of DPS, the sums spent for "outsourcing" were for local businesses who treat DPS on a preferential pricing basis because owners have children in the school. The relationship with local maintenance and repair contractors has been characterized as "non-contractual." However, a contract does appear to exist with Pioneer Fire from Ponca City, hired by DPS to conduct fire safety equipment inspections.

DPS is shown in **Exhibit 4-21.**

Exhibit 4-20
Drummond Maintenance Organizational Structure
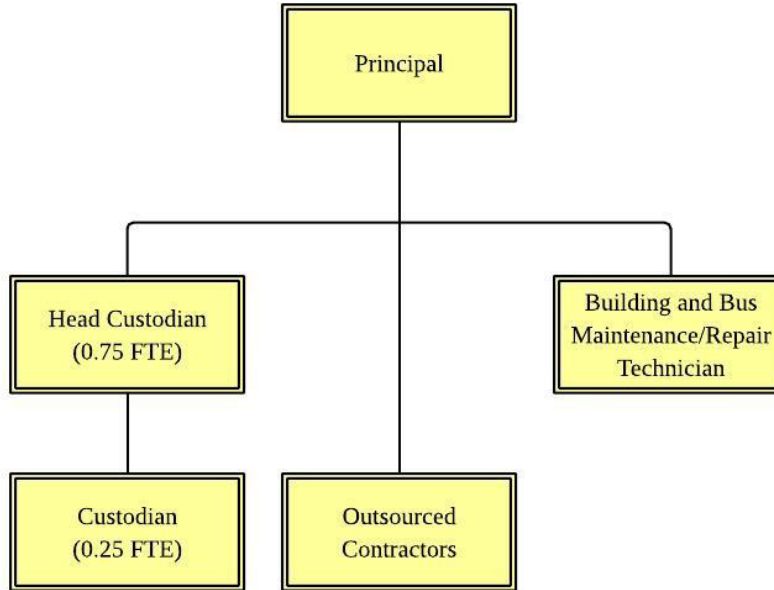
Source: Created by Prismatic, August 2018

Exhibit 4-21
List of Outside O+M Firms

Company	Service Area(s)	Location
Pioneer Fire	Fire Safety Equipment Inspections	Ponca City
Allterrain Electric	Minor Electrical Projects and Repairs	Drummond
Bynum Electrical	Minor Electrical Projects and Repairs	Drummond
Hobbs Plumbing	Minor Electrical Projects and Repairs	Drummond
Mid-West Refrigeration	Mechanical and HVAC Projects/Repairs	Enid

Source: DPS, 2018

FINDING 4-3

The district performs little to no preventive maintenance (PM). Without a PM program, it is impossible to schedule maintenance activities to prevent equipment breakdowns.

In addition to the weekend repair person employed as needed, the district maintains a loose corps of local handypersons and/or business owners who are typically parents of current students. According to district officials, DPS has a reservoir of goodwill in the local community, especially business owners. Typically, most are willing to help save the district money by performing repairs at cost. Members of this group are asked to provide repair services as needed. They do not appear to have been asked to perform routine PM tasks.

Filter replacements and fire safety equipment inspections appear to be the only scheduled preventive maintenance activities in the district. The lion's share of maintenance and repair work is reactive (i.e., in response to unexpected malfunctions, breakdowns, and other equipment failures). As a rule, waiting until a piece of equipment fails and must be replaced, will cost significantly more than prolonging the service life of the equipment via PM, and then scheduling a replacement when the equipment has become obsolete or has outlived its life-expectancy.

The part-time maintenance technician repairs items in need on weekends and is also responsible for bus maintenance. With rare exceptions, this job focuses on reactive maintenance only: to repair or replace what has been found inoperative or broken.

This, along with staff cuts, is saving DPS approximately $240,500 annually. Over the long term, best practice experience with maintenance funding shows this "savings" is likely both mythical and unsustainable. Deferred maintenance will increase, if the current emphasis on reactive maintenance and insufficient staffing is continued.

A complete maintenance program involves the following elements:

- a PM program to keep equipment running at peak efficiencies, to avoid equipment breakdowns, and prevent minor problems from escalating into major ones;

- timely attention to emergency and corrective maintenance conditions. Emergency and corrective maintenance occur when equipment fails, typically requiring more time and resources to correct than PM; and

- a long-range plan to address HVAC, mechanical, electrical, plumbing, and low voltage systems and/or component replacements required at the end of their expected useful life. The plan will typically indicate the current age of the components, what year to expect replacements to be needed, and anticipated costs using a Consumer Price Index multiplier or estimated inflation rate.

As noted in *The Real Cost of Deferred Maintenance:*

> Facilities problems in rural schools that aren't addressed may seem to disappear, but they don't go away—like molds and mildew they just multiply out of sight. Poor conditions can affect the health and safety of everyone who uses the facility, damage the morale of students and teachers, and impair their ability to teach and learn, and threaten the facility itself.

> Proper maintenance of rural schools is vital not only because facilities are often old, and have suffered deferred maintenance for years or even decades, but because the consequences of improper and inadequate maintenance are so serious. If a leak in the roof isn't repaired, it can – like the leak in the fabled dike in Holland – wash away the entire structure. If the district doesn't allocate funds to fix such leaks, or do other necessary preventive work and if state policies are predisposed to new construction, deferring

maintenance may force the closure of a good rural school. Therefore, a thorough program of preventive maintenance with regularly scheduled inspections is critical.[12]

As an example, Spring Independent School District (SISD) in Texas developed a comprehensive PM program that includes the schedule shown in **Exhibit 422**.

Exhibit 4-22
SISD Preventive Maintenance Program Schedule

Preventive Maintenance Activity	Activity Frequency
Clean A/C unit filters	Bi-monthly
Change A/C unit filters	3 to 12 week intervals
Clean chiller condenser coils	Bi-annually
Clean fan coil and air handler evaporator coils	Annually
Clean ice machine condenser coils	Every 4 months
Inspect and capacity test chillers	Annually
Change chiller compressor oil and cores	Every 2 years
Check chemical levels in closed loop chilled and hot water piping	Monthly
Clean grease traps	Every 3 months
Inspect and test boilers	Annually
Check roofs, downspouts, and gutters	Monthly, repair as needed – 20-year roof warranty
Inspect exterior lighting	Semi-annually
Inspect elementary play gym lighting	Annually
Inspect and clean gym gas heaters	Annually
Inspect playground equipment	Monthly, repair as needed
Clean fire alarm system smoke detectors	Semi-annually
Inspect all interior and exterior bleachers	Annually, repair as needed
Clean, tighten, and lubricate roll out bleachers	Annually
Check exterior building and concrete caulking	Annually – 8-year replacement
Stripe exterior parking lots	Annually
Check condition of asphalt parking lots	Annually – 12-year replacement
Check carpet	15-year replacement
Check vinyl composition tile floors	20-year replacement
Spray wash exterior soffits and building	Every 2 years or as needed
Replace glass and Plexiglas	As needed
Paint interior of facilities	Every 5 years
Paint exterior of facilities	Every 8 years
Perform general facility inspections	Annually

Source: SISD Facilities Department, November 2010

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[12] Lawrence, B. K. (2003). *Save a penny, lose a school: The real cost of deferred maintenance.* The Rural School and Community Trust. Downloaded November 2016 from http://www.ruraledu.org/user_uploads/file/Save_a_Penny_Lose_a.pdf

RECOMMENDATION

Schedule preventive maintenance.

A strong PM program is essential to the smooth operation of any facility. DPS should develop and adhere to a schedule of PM. The best practice is to establish a software-based computerized maintenance management system (CMMS) that sets up PM tasks and tracks all work orders. Many such software systems are available. Alternatively, the district could setup a fairly robust tracking system in Excel that might meet its needs. Either system should be used to record vital information on all building and maintenance components, such as equipment type, manufacturer and location, PM requirements and frequencies, and other details.

In the system, staff should also account for life safety equipment, with location of device and required tests and maintenance as stipulated by the state fire marshal and local authority having jurisdiction. Finally, specific PM work orders should be prepared and scheduled. These work tasks should specify not only work procedures, but also required skill levels and certifications, as well as basic parts and materials needed for routine PM service. The district should work with its existing corps of local handypersons and/or business owners who are typically parents of current students to complete the PM work orders.

FISCAL IMPACT

The consulting team has worked with one CMMS vendor, SchoolDude, for pricing in several Oklahoma school districts. Based upon a quotation from SchoolDude for school districts of the size of DPS, after the first-year setup cost of $4,415, continuation of the maintenance management and preventive maintenance modules would cost approximately $3,320 per year.

Recommendation	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
SchoolDude Maintenance Essential Pro[13]	($3,320)	($3,320)	($3,320)	($3,320)	($3,320)
Quick Start Cost	($1,915)	$0	$0	$0	$0
PM Scheduling/ Tasking	($2,500)	$0	$0	$0	$0
Total	**($7,735)**	**($3,320)**	**($3,320)**	**($3,320)**	**($3,320)**

FINDING 4-4

The current staffing for maintenance and repairs at DPS is insufficient. One skilled but un-credentialed maintenance technician, serving only on weekends, on an as-needed basis, in a reactive mode, is contrary to best practices. This same person also performs rudimentary bus maintenance on weekends. This results in the principal serving also as *de facto* maintenance director of the part-time facilities and bus maintenance "staff."

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[13] Includes maintenance management and preventive maintenance modules.

DPS has recently cut its funding for operations and maintenance in half. This has resulted, in part, in the hiring of the maintenance and repair technician to work on weekends. It is not possible to meet all of the district's routine building and bus maintenance needs on a weekend-only basis. The current situation is contrary to best practice and is not sustainable.

The APPA standard for maintenance is one FTE for approximately 45,000 square feet of facilities. With about 83,000 square feet of facilities to maintain, the district should have approximately 2.0 FTE maintenance staff. Since the dome and the agriculture building are relatively new buildings, the need for maintenance might be less than the standard, although both facilities still require PM. In addition, if the outsourced contractors hired by DPS were to be given increased PM work orders, perhaps one full FTE mechanic might suffice.

Clearly, maintenance in a school is not merely replacing equipment when it quits working. There are various types of maintenance that should be performed to ensure the continued safe and efficient operation of equipment and systems, as well as reducing replacement costs. Becker (2011) wrote that maintenance can be depicted using a Venn diagram (**Exhibit 4-23**).

Exhibit 4-23
Overlap and Interrelationships in Types of Maintenance
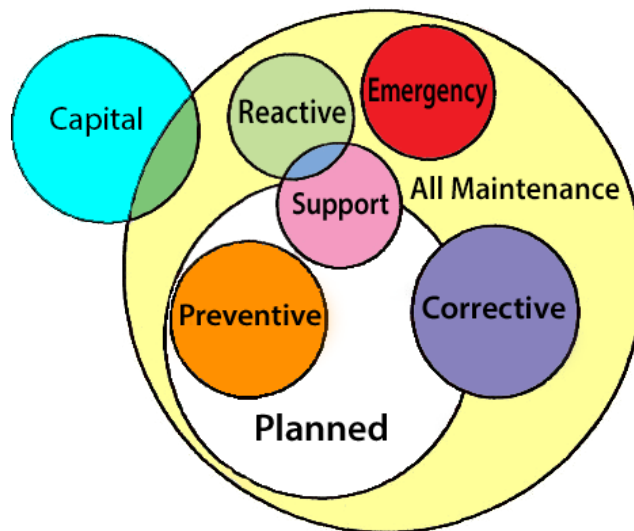
Source: APPA Operational Guidelines for Educational Facilities: Maintenance, February 2011

As Becker stated:

> The large circle represents all maintenance activities that the operations and maintenance staff may perform in a year. The next smaller circle, entirely within maintenance, is planned work. These include preventive or predictive maintenance and some corrective work – those tasks that customers request that have some time requirements associated

with them and are not fully within the facilities operation's control to schedule. Finally, hanging off to the side and trying to be part of maintenance, is capital work.[14]

The older a building, the more corrective maintenance it will require and all buildings, regardless of age, require regular PM.

RECOMMENDATION

Hire one full-time maintenance and repair technician.

DPS should hire one full-time maintenance and repair technician, which will likely be sufficient staffing, as along as the district continues to receive additional maintenance work from local companies. The person hired should have basic credentials in a skill area (e.g., plumbing, electrical, mechanical, or other maintenance skills), or be capable of pursuing such credentials.

FISCAL IMPACT

The average salary for a maintenance technician in Oklahoma is $15.13 per hour.[15] In other school districts, the consulting team has found $30,000 per year, with benefits, to be a typical salary.

Recommendation	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
Hire one maintenance technician.	($30,000)	($30,000)	($30,000)	($30,000)	($30,000)

FINDING 4-5

The district's main school has a number of equipment and building deficiencies. By not maintaining facilities, the district is faced with increased expenditures in later years as the facilities continue to deteriorate and equipment continues to fail.

By relying on one part-time, weekend-only maintenance technician, who is also responsible for bus maintenance, attention to even mostly reactive maintenance repair needs necessarily loses ground to the build-up of deferred maintenance. The staffing cutbacks in maintenance and repairs are relatively recent in the district. As a result, few serious maintenance deficiencies are yet in evidence. **Exhibits 4-24** through **4-34** display the deficiencies identified during the preliminary visit in April, and the site visit by the full consulting team in August 2018.

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[14] https://www.indeed.com/salaries/Maintenance-Technician-Salaries,-Oklahoma
[15] https://www.indeed.com/salaries/Maintenance-Technician-Salaries,-Oklahoma

Exhibit 4-24
Chemistry Lab Storage

Source: Prismatic, August 2018

Exhibit 4-25
Example of Clutter in District
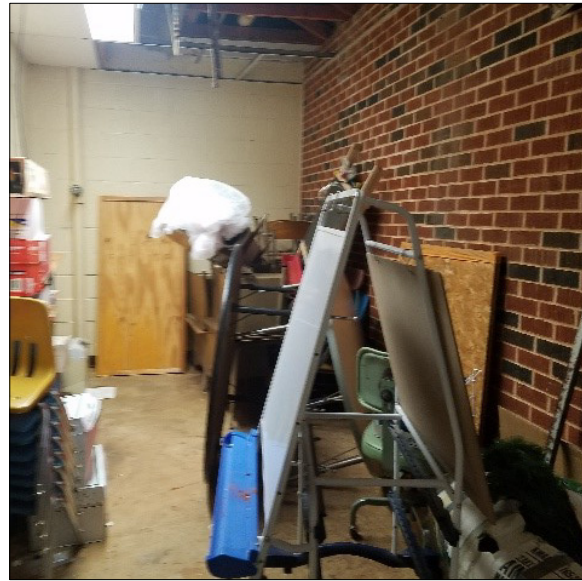
Source: Prismatic, August 2018

Exhibit 4-26
Dirty Ceiling Tile Near Air Diffusers Indicates
Poor HVAC Maintenance

Source: Prismatic, August 2018

Exhibit 4-27
Ceiling Tile Missing,
Broken and Stained

Source: Prismatic, August 2018

Exhibit 4-28
Improperly Barricaded Malfunctioning Exit Door

Source: Prismatic, August 2018

Exhibit 4-29
Obstructed Exit

Source: Prismatic, August 2018

Exhibit 4-30
Minor Electrical Neglect
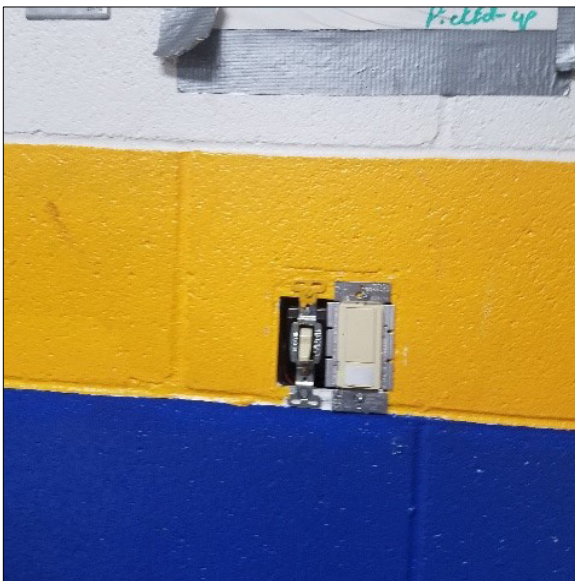
Source: Prismatic, August 2018

Exhibit 4-31
Obstructed Electrical Panel

Source: Prismatic, August 2018

Exhibit 4-32
Outdated Multizone HVAC Control Panel

Source: Prismatic, August 2018

Exhibit 4-33
Askew Barrier to Accessibility

Source: Prismatic, August 2018

Exhibit 4-34
Hazardous "Wrinkled" Carpet
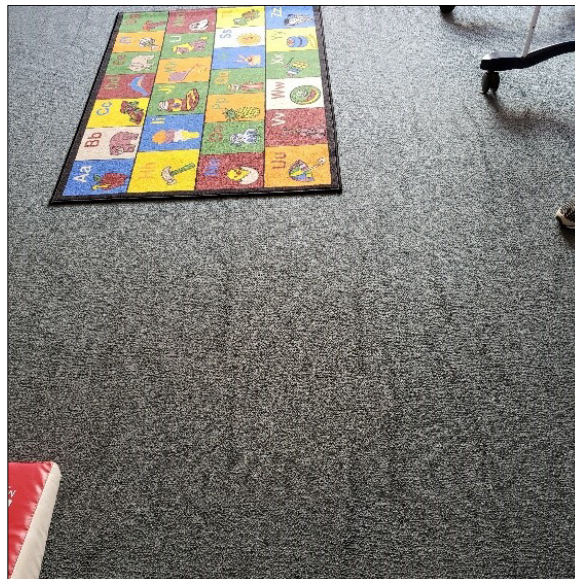
Source: Prismatic, August 2018

Best practice for acceptable levels of deferred maintenance are five percent or less of the current replacement value of a facility. The current insured value (CRV) of all facilities at DPS is $14,638,064. This value is often used as the accepted CRV. Consequently, deferred maintenance levels of $731,900 or below would be acceptable. Unfortunately, a full and recent building condition assessment has not been performed, and thus the extent and magnitude of deferred

maintenance is not known. However, the estimated deferred maintenance-related capital projects for the bond issue total approximately $425,000, for new fascia, window/door replacement, and multizone HVAC replacement. This leaves only $307,000 in other deferred maintenance to be above the five percent threshold.

RECOMMENDATION

Conduct an inspection of all facilities, document all deficiencies, and correct them.

Considering the limited facilities expertise of DPS leadership (as well as their limited time), the consulting team recommends hiring an outside firm to complete an initial building condition assessment, with planned updates every five years. The firm should identify all areas and items of deferred maintenance and advise DPS on the prioritization of capital improvement projects to be included in future bond issues. The firm should also identify when the district should schedule replacements or overhauls of major building components, including mechanical systems (HVAC), roofs, and floors.[16]

Each problem should be prioritized in this fashion:

- 1 – life safety;

- 2 – general safety;

- 3 – facility urgent; and

- 4 – facility routine.

Problems should then be categorized as:

- 1 – in-house capable;

- 2 – contractor assist; and

- 3 – bond funding required.

Once all problems have been prioritized and categorized, work should begin on correcting deficiencies, with life safety – in-house capable and contractor assist coming first, followed by general safety – in-house capable and contractor assist coming second. The safety of building occupants must always be the first concern.

FISCAL IMPACT

The consulting team estimates that hiring an outside firm to conduct an initial building assessment would have an initial cost of approximately $5,000. Should the district partner with the firm for planned updates every five years, a separate fee would need to be negotiated.

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[16] Easley Associates has already begun this work in preparation for the bond issue.

Recommendation	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
Hire an outside firm to complete an initial building condition assessment	($5,000)	$0	$0	$0	$0

Custodial Operations

Safe, clean, and sanitary facilities are essential elements of the education environment. School systems across the United States use different means to address these elements. Typically, school boards either contract out (outsource) custodial services or organize a comprehensive in-house program with staff to provide custodial services. Personnel will be employed by either the outsourced company or the school board.

Management responsibility, if the program is in-house, may reside partially or wholly with the central office, the individual school, or maintenance department. Determining the desired structure usually involves several criteria, including minimizing costs to the school district, improving services to schools, and reducing (or increasing) the span of control of district or school-based administrators.

Studies conducted by APPA demonstrate that one custodian should be capable of cleaning between 20,000 and 30,000 square feet of school facilities to achieve a level 2 or level 3 standard of cleanliness, respectively. The levels of cleanliness in the APPA standard are shown in **Exhibit 4-35**.

Exhibit 4-35
Appearance Factors and the Five Levels of Clean

Level 1— Orderly Spotlessness

- Floors and base moldings shine and/or are bright and clean; colors are fresh. There is no buildup in corners or along walls.
- All vertical and horizontal surfaces have a freshly cleaned or polished appearance and have no accumulation of dust, dirt, marks, streaks, smudges, or fingerprints.
- Lights all work and fixtures are clean.
- Washroom and shower fixtures and tile gleam and are odor-free. Supplies are adequate.
- Trash containers and pencil sharpeners hold only daily waste, are clean, and odor-free.

Level 2 — Ordinary Tidiness

- Floors and base moldings shine and/or are bright and clean. There is no buildup in corners or along walls, but there can be up to two days' worth of dust, dirt, stains, or streaks.
- All vertical and horizontal surfaces are clean, but marks, dust, smudges, and fingerprints are noticeable upon close observation. Lights all work and fixtures are clean.
- Washroom and shower fixtures and tile gleam and are odor-free. Supplies are adequate.
- Trash containers and pencil sharpeners hold only daily waste, are clean, and odor-free.

Level 3 — Casual Inattention

- Floors are swept or vacuumed clean, but upon close observation there can be stains. A buildup of dirt and/or floor finish in corners and along walls can be seen.
- There are dull spots and/or matted carpet in walking lanes. There are streaks or splashes on base molding.
- All vertical and horizontal surfaces have obvious dust, dirt, marks, smudges, and fingerprints. Lamps all work and fixtures are clean.
- Trash containers and pencil sharpeners hold only daily waste, are clean, and odor-free.

Level 4 — Moderate Dinginess

- Floors are swept or vacuumed clean, but are dull, dingy, and stained. There is an obvious buildup of dirt and/or floor finish in corners and along walls.
- There is a dull path and/or obviously matted carpet in the walking lanes. Base molding is dull and dingy with streaks or splashes.
- All vertical and horizontal surfaces have conspicuous dust, dirt, smudges, fingerprints, and marks.
- Lamp fixtures are dirty and some (up to 5 percent) lamps are burned out.
- Trash containers and pencil sharpeners have old trash and shavings. They are stained and marked.
- Trash containers smell sour.

Level 5 — Unkempt Neglect

- Floors and carpets are dull, dirty, dingy, scuffed, and/or matted. There is a conspicuous buildup of old dirt and/or floor finish in corners and along walls. Base molding is dirty, stained, and streaked. Gum, stains, dirt, dust balls, and trash are broadcast.
- All vertical and horizontal surfaces have major accumulations of dust, dirt, smudges, and fingerprints, all of which will be difficult to remove. Lack of attention is obvious.
- Light fixtures are dirty with dust balls and flies. Many lamps (more than 5 percent) are burned out.
- Trash containers and pencil sharpeners overflow. They are stained and marked. Trash containers smell sour.

Source: Fichter, G., (2011). Maintenance of buildings, operational guidelines for educational facilities: Custodial. APPA, third edition, pp. 72-73.

FINDING 4-6

Custodial staffing at DPS consists of the head custodian (0.75 FTE) and a second custodian, working in the late afternoon at 0.25 FTE. This level of staffing is below recommended best practices.

In an effort to reduce custodial responsibilities, DPS teachers have been given the responsibility of cleaning their own classrooms. The total school floor area at DPS is over 83,000 square feet. Without classrooms, the remaining floor area is in the 55,000 to 60,000 square foot range.

APPA best practice standards state that one FTE custodian should be able to clean between 20,000 and 30,000 square feet of floor area in one day, to at least Level 3, with some areas at Level 2. At over 83,000 square feet, the DPS inventory would require four custodians. Without classrooms (cleaned by teachers), the APPA standard would require two full-time custodians.

The consulting team found that the current custodial staffing is not sufficient to maintain a uniform Level 3 cleanliness. Level 2, desired for lavatories, was only rarely in evidence in the district. Serious neglect, at Levels 4 and 5, from a combination of insufficient maintenance and custodial attention, was found in locker room areas. **Exhibits 4-36** and **4-37** show maintenance and custodial neglect in locker rooms.

<table>
<tr><td align="center">**Exhibit 4-36**
Locker Room Showers</td><td align="center">**Exhibit 4-37**
Locker Room</td></tr>
</table>
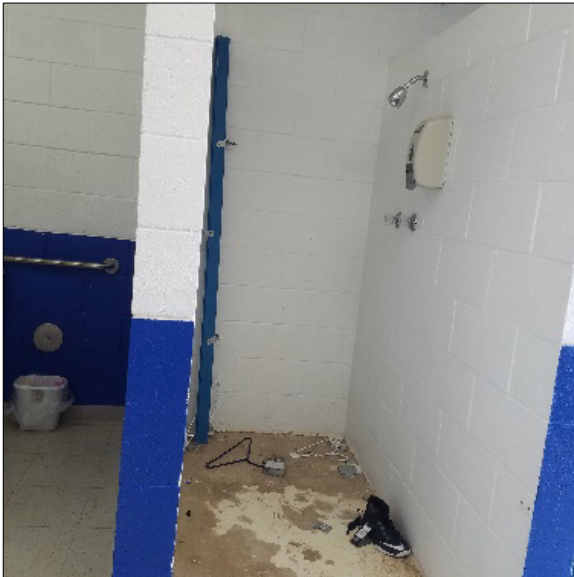
<table>
<tr><td align="center">*Source: Prismatic, August 2018*</td><td align="center">*Source: Prismatic, August 2018*</td></tr>
</table>

RECOMMENDATION

Hire two additional 0.5 FTE custodians.

Having two individuals at half-time each would allow greater flexibility in scheduling custodial work and would save the district from having to pay employment benefits. The candidates

should be interviewed by the principal and head custodian. Training should be conducted by the head custodian. Schedules should be decided jointly by the principal and head custodian.

FISCAL IMPACT

The consulting team estimates that a part-time custodian could be hired at a rate of $10.62 per hour. Thus, each half-time hire would cost DPS $7,750 per school year, for an annual total of $15,500.

Recommendation	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
Hire two half-time custodians.	($15,500)	($15,500)	($15,500)	($15,500)	($15,500)

C.   ENERGY MANAGEMENT

General energy consumption can be one of the most expensive operational areas for a school district. Due to the large infrastructure required for education, schools use large quantities of electricity, water, oil, and natural gas. Implementing an energy management program can assist in reducing a school district's operational costs associated with otherwise excessive utility use.

Energy management programs can be implemented in a wide variety of ways, from hiring full-time energy managers to sending out simple shut-down reminders before school dismissal or before a break. One of the most beneficial practices of energy management is the recording of monthly utility bills and the communication of usage and costs to the general staff. Tracking utility use can give a bird's eye view of how much each school is spending on its utilities compared to other schools. The energy manager can then target the most expensive utilities and work to reduce consumption. This communication helps foster awareness of the expenses of running a school and brings attention to energy conservation measures by both students and staff.

The American Society for Hospital Engineers (ASHE) has developed a list of ten components necessary for a successful energy management program. Although this list was originally intended for hospital organizations, they are applicable to all energy management programs. As recommended by ASHE, the items to consider are:

1. Measure/benchmark current energy consumption.

2. Develop an energy use profile.

3. Complete a greenhouse gas emissions inventory.

4. Build teams, get leadership support, and assign dedicated resources.

5. Set targets/goals.

6. Develop strategic action plans for improvement.

7. Consider adopting a strategic energy management plan.

8. Implement projects.

9. Track, measure, and report.

10. Train, educate, and celebrate.

The Association of School Business Officials (ASBO), in their publication *Planning Guide for Maintaining School Facilities*,[17] suggests that the following guidelines will help a school system accomplish more efficient energy management:

1. Establish an energy policy with specific goals and objectives.

2. Assign someone to be responsible for the district's energy management program and give this energy manager access to top-level administrators.

3. Monitor each building's energy use.

4. Conduct energy audits in all buildings to identify energy inefficient units.

5. Institute performance contracting (i.e., contracts requiring desired results rather than simply a list of needed products) when replacing older, energy inefficient equipment.

6. Reward employees of schools or buildings that decrease their energy use.

7. Install energy efficient equipment including power factor correction units, electronic ballasts, high-efficiency lamps, set-back thermostats, and variable-speed drives for large motors and pumps.

8. Install motion detectors that turn lights on when a room is occupied and off when the room is unoccupied.

Additional information about energy management can be found through the National Clearinghouse for Educational Facilities' Energy Page[18] which provides a list of links, books, and journal articles on various methods of heating, cooling, and maintaining new and retrofitted K-12 school buildings and grounds.

Drummond receives electricity from OG&E, natural gas from CenterPoint Energy, and water from the Town of Drummond. The district's consumption of utilities, for the periods for which data were available, are shown in **Exhibits 4-38** through **4-40**.

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[17] http://nces.ed.gov/pubs2003/2003347.pdf
[18] http://www.ncef.org/search/node/energy%20management

Exhibit 4-38
DPS Electricity Consumption in Kilowatt Hours
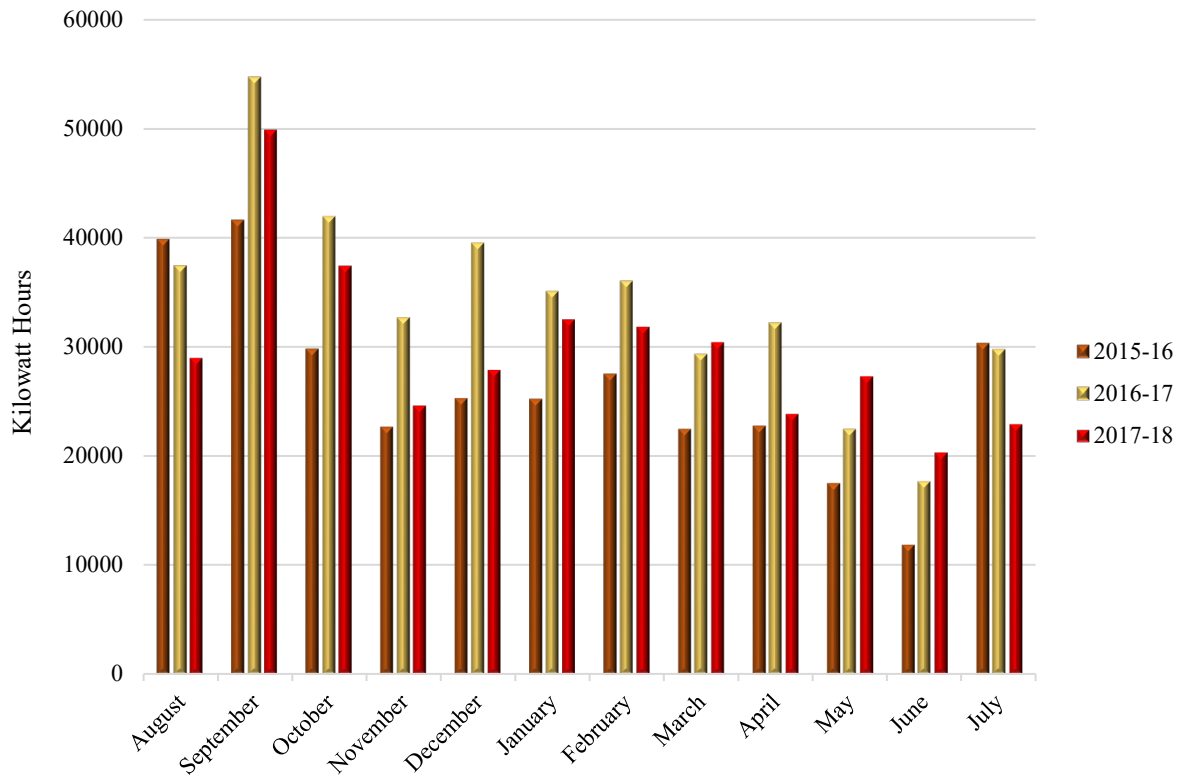
Source: DPS and Prismatic calculations

Exhibit 4-39
DPS Gas Consumption in Cubic Feet

Month	School Year	Usage	Cost
July	2017-18	26	$124
June	2017-18	24	$121
May	2017-18	63	$158
April	2017-18	1,159	$845
March	2017-18	1,067	$905
February	2017-18	3,591	$2,559
January	2017-18	4,103	$2,902
December	2017-18	2,853	$2,074
November	2017-18	835	$744
October	2017-18	124	$208
September	2017-18	63	$136
August	2017-18	51	$126
July	2017-18	56	$130
June	2016-17	63	$136
May	2016-17	95	$163
April	2016-17	299	$306
March	2016-17	472	$424
February	2016-17	1,738	$1,238

Source: DPS Invoices from CenterPoint Energy and Prismatic calculations

Exhibit 4-40
DPS Water Consumption in Gallons
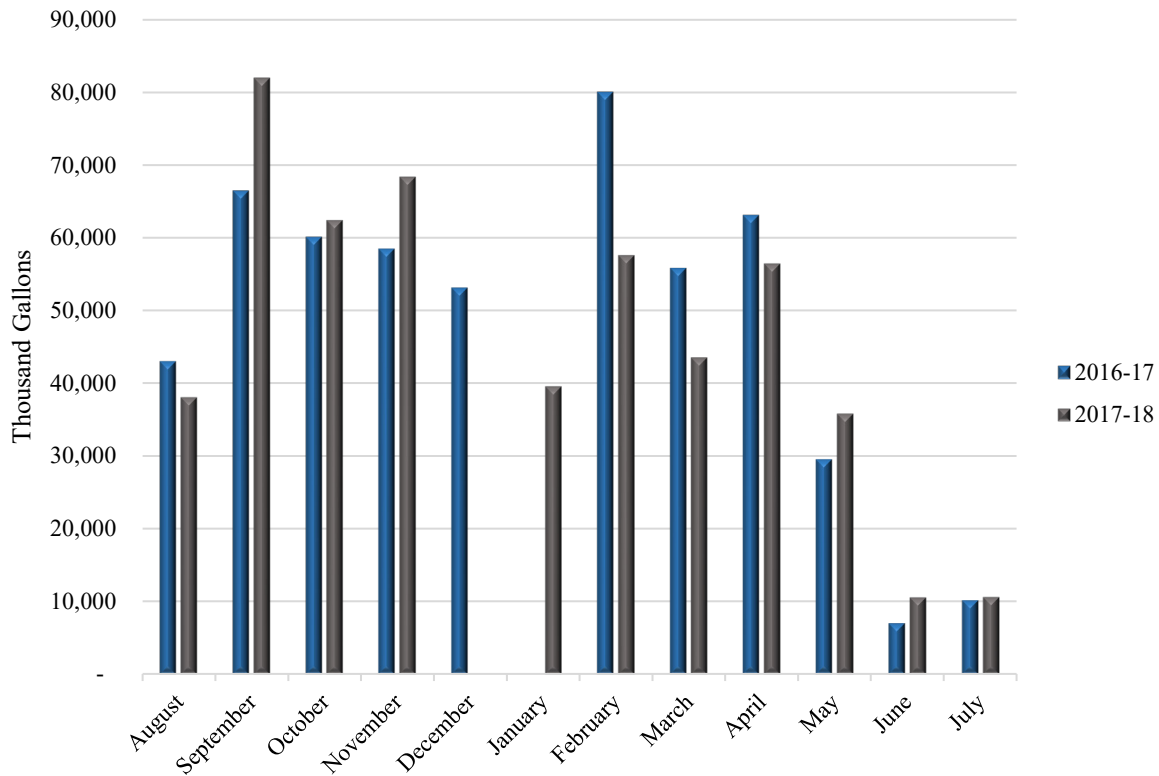
Source: DPS Invoices from the Town of Drummond Utilities and Prismatic calculations

FINDING 4-7

The district operates a wind farm which generates supplemental electricity. DPS essentially sells the excess electricity back to the utility company and receives a billing credit. This reduces the district's overall electricity spending.

Rather than the large-paddled windmill style, this wind farm has small propellers attached to equally small generators. The propellers create noise and run typically at a high speed, reminiscent of propeller airplanes. **Exhibit 4-41** shows the current wind farm installation, located between the agriculture building and the volunteer fire department.

Exhibit 4-41
The Wind Farm Installation at DPS

Source: Prismatic Services, August 2018

Based on data from the utilities company, the electricity credits in 2017-18 ranged from four percent to 44 percent of the total monthly kilowatt hours used by the district (**Exhibit 4-42**). Over the course of a year, the district saves approximately 22 percent in electricity.

Exhibit 4-42
Electricity Credits Earned from the Wind Farm, 2017-18

Month	Usage Billed to the District (KWh)	Wind Farm Excess Credited to the District (KWh)	Effective Billing Reduction Due to Wind Farm
August	29,000	(2,194)	(8%)
September	49,831	(2,102)	(4%)
October	37,413	(6,495)	(17%)
November	24,655	(6,043)	(25%)
December	27,906	(8,242)	(30%)
January	32,511	(7,335)	(23%)
February	31,844	(11,056)	(35%)
March	30,426	(8,556)	(28%)
April	23,905	(10,581)	(44%)
May	27,321	(8,296)	(30%)
June	20,383	(6,639)	(33%)
July	22,964	(3,140)	(14%)
Total	**358,159**	**(80,679)**	**(22%)**

Source: OGE Energy Corporation and Prismatic calculations, October 2018

Employing energy sources that are not provided in metered fashion by a utility company (e.g., solar, wind, or hydro) is almost always a best practice. It is cost-effective and efficient.

COMMENDATION

DPS is commended for its efforts to save money by its innovative use of an alternative source and form of electric energy.

FINDING 4-8

DPS faces a range of energy conservation issues. These include energy losses through the building envelope, needs for improved HVAC installations, and other energy conservation measures. Only one key action has been implemented by DPS: the installation of Light Emitting Diode (LED) lamps.

The district's facilities exhibit areas of significant energy loss. With the exception of the LED lamp installation, other areas of energy loss have not yet been addressed. Infrared photography reveals substantial areas of inferior or completely lacking insulation in many building areas, including the newest structure – the dome.

The district has included the replacement of its existing poorly insulated windows and doors with well-insulated, state-of-the-art products in its current plans for the next bond issue. Replacement of the old multimodal HVAC system is also included. Other energy-saving projects, such as improved insulation, vapor barrier installations, and an expansion of the wind farm could also be considered.

Best practices in energy conservation include the consideration of performance contracting, as well as a full spectrum of plausible and feasible energy conservation actions. Performance contracts use energy savings as the collateral for loans to finance energy-saving projects. They are guaranteed to have a net-zero cost to the district. Energy conservation measures are most effective if employed in the context of the fullest and most complete array of all feasible conservation actions.

According to the U.S. Department of Energy, an Energy Services Company (ESCO) "develops, designs, builds, and funds projects that save energy, reduce energy costs, and decrease operations and maintenance costs at their customers' facilities."[19] Under a performance contracting arrangement, the ESCO finds financing for energy conservation projects, collateralized by the energy savings that result from these projects. Consequently, the money borrowed by the school district is a net-zero cost to the district: the district will never pay more than the energy savings it realizes. Should the savings ever lag at any time, the ESCO guarantees to make up the difference. This is the essence of performance contracting. A 2010 White Paper authored by Shan Bates of Schneider Electric, *The Performance Contracting Advantage: Using Energy Savings to Fund Energy Infrastructure Improvements in Schools, Universities and Municipalities,* provides an excellent and more detailed overview.[20]

RECOMMENDATION

Conduct a feasibility assessment and initiate a performance contract.

The consulting team recommends that the district request information from a minimum of three experienced ESCOs. The superintendent and principal should meet with Easley Associates to develop a Request for Qualifications (RFQ) to interest qualified ESCOs in submitting their performance contract analyses. After examining and rating these analysis packages, the three top-ranked ESCOs should be invited for presentations and discussions before the school board and the community. Subsequently, one ESCO should be selected and a performance contract signed between DPS and the ESCO.

The items from the bond estimates that should be considered for inclusion in the performance contract are shown in **Exhibit 4-43**. Other items that should be considered in the performance contract include:

- wind farm expansion; and

- building envelope insulation/vapor barrier.

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[19] https://www.energy.gov/eere/femp/energy-service-companies-0
[20] http://www2.schneider-electric.com/documents/buildings/the_performance_contracting_advantage.pdf

Exhibit 4-43
Items for Performance Contract Considerations

Updates for Consideration	Cost
Exterior Window and Door Replacement	$105,000
Gymnasium HVAC	$99,000
Multizone Unit HVAC Replacement	$220,000
New Fascia and Soffits	$100,000
Total Removed from Bond Issue	**$524,000**

Source: Prismatic Calculations, August 2018

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources. The net cost of the performance contract to DPS will be zero. Energy savings will be realized fully by DPS after the performance contract has been satisfied. In addition, an estimated $524,000 will be removed from the bond projects. This will permit other capital projects to be included instead.

FINDING 4-9

DPS does not have an active energy awareness program to influence the energy use behavior of students, teachers, staff, administrators, and other building users. Energy use can be lowered significantly through energy-conscious behavior.

Energy-conscious behavior is not being encouraged or managed actively at DPS at this time. Day-to-day energy savings can be achieved via behavioral encouragements and reminders.

An active energy awareness program is a best practice for school districts. A number of school districts around the country use several techniques to keep energy costs down. The following are some examples of these conservation efforts:

- entering monthly energy bill data into a spreadsheet to maintain a history of expenditures and to use in detecting problems;

- performing building checks to see if lights are turned off, doors are closed, water faucets are not dripping, etc.;

- leaving notes reminding teachers or staff of the proper procedure, such as those shown in **Exhibit 4-44**, if problems are found during building checks;

- establishing set points for thermostats at 76 degrees in the summer and 69 degrees in the winter;

- purchasing set-back thermostats and programming them to turn down cooling or heating in advance of daily adjournment and over the weekends; and

- setting water heaters or boilers at a maximum temperature of 140 degrees, except in areas requiring higher temperatures for sanitation purposes, such as kitchens.

Exhibit 4-44
Examples of Energy Saving Reminder Stickers
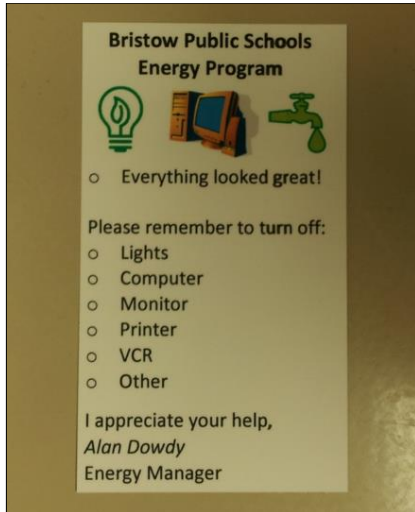
Source: Prismatic Archives, April 2012   *Source: BusinessHelpZone.com, December 2015*
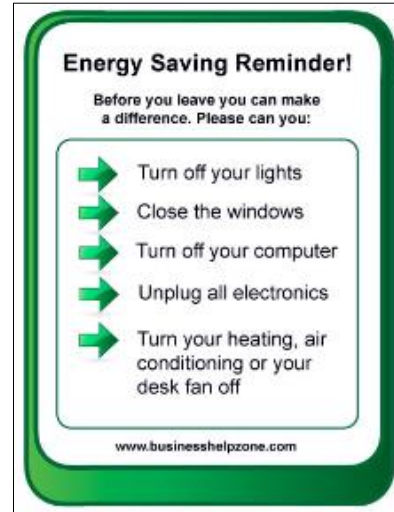
RECOMMENDATION

Establish an energy conservation awareness program at DPS.

Over the summer months, the maintenance technician and head custodian should inspect each space within each building and generate a list of energy deficiencies which can then be integrated into a master maintenance list. Goals for an energy management program, as with any program, should be specific, realistic, and achievable:

- reducing energy consumption in each school facility by at least (a specified percentage) at the end of the (specific) school year and maintaining or lowering the achieved level of consumption for five years after attainment;

- establishing energy awareness training for all school employees to support stated objectives;

- developing an "energy conservation project list" in conjunction with planned capital projects; and

- obtaining and making available energy education materials, such as those offered by the U.S. Department of Energy,[21] for all teachers, for incorporation into their subject matter.

Other things to consider in developing the energy awareness plan are as follows:

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[21] http://www1.eere.energy.gov/education/lessonplans/

- developing a means to evaluate the success of the overall program;

- developing a means for recognition of success in the program both internally and externally;

- informing the community that the energy awareness program exists, what has been accomplished, and how they can reduce their own energy bills; and

- regularly updating the program to reflect changing conditions, successes, and/or failures.

Typical areas on which DPS can concentrate include:

- Determine whether personal electrical devices (refrigerators, coffee makers, microwaves ovens, portable heaters, etc.) are appropriate in the district and either charge staff an appropriate fee for using the district's electrical power or ask staff to remove personal electrical devices. All electrical devices, particularly refrigerators, add to the heat load within a space, thus requiring additional cooling in the warmer months. However, they supplement heating during the cold months.

- Replace deteriorated insulation on water heater piping or install on hot water piping where none currently exists.

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

D.   SAFETY AND SECURITY

School districts are expected to provide a safe and secure environment for their students and staff. While districts are largely insulated from violent crime, incidents of violence at schools draw national attention. School districts must take proactive measures in safety and security even in incident-free schools. Students, teachers, and other district employees deserve a safe school environment in which to work and learn.

In 2003, Homeland Security Presidential Directive-5 (HSPD-5) initiated the development of a National Incident Management System (NIMS) and requires its use by public sector agencies, including school districts. The intent of this system is to provide a common template and language for responding organizations to work together in preventing, preparing for, responding to, and recovering from incidents. As noted by FEMA, NIMS represents "a core set of doctrine, concepts, principles, terminology, and organizational processes that enables effective, efficient, and collaborative incident management."

NIMS emphasizes that true preparedness requires a commitment to continuous review and improvement. Most districts understand the continuous nature of emergency management as well as the four phases that comprise the process circle (**Exhibit 4-45**).

Exhibit 4-45
Continuous Process of Emergency Management
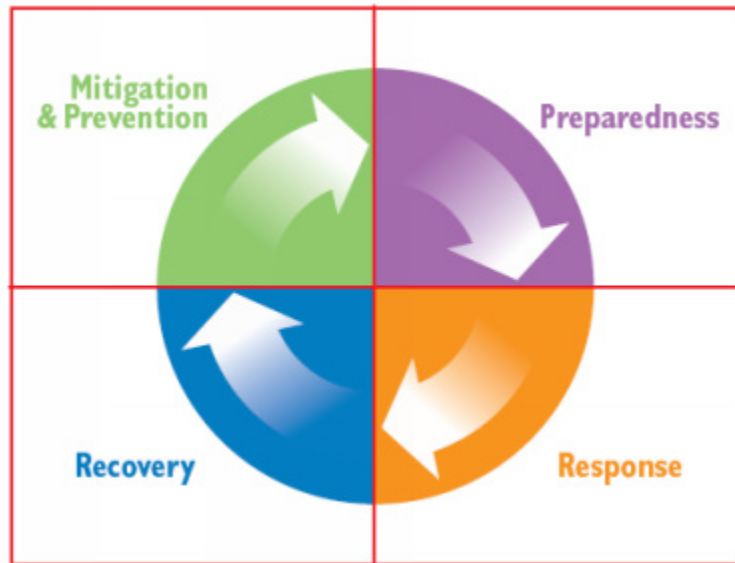
Source: The Office of Safe and Drug Free Schools' Practical information on
Crisis Planning: A Guide for Schools and Communities, January 2007

The Oklahoma Commission on School Safety, which was created in response to the Newtown tragedy, submitted several recommendations to the Oklahoma Legislature. Based upon the commission's recommendations, the Legislature passed four new laws. Among other things, the laws require schools to update their safety plans every year and have frequent "intruder drills," with students taking cover while the doors are locked and the windows are covered. The state also created a new Oklahoma School Security Institute to help schools keep their policies up to date.

The Oklahoma Department of Emergency Management (ODEM) reports that the state has had an increased number of earthquakes in recent years. In 2017, there were 304 earthquakes across the state with a magnitude of three or higher. Actions that the district can take regarding earthquakes, and teach to students, staff, and visitors are provided on the ODEM website.[22]

Since 1955, there have also been at least 72 tornadoes of varying strengths that have touched down in or tracked across Garfield County (**Exhibit 4-46**). The numbers indicate severity on the Fujita Scale.

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[22] https://www.ok.gov/OEM/Programs_&_Services/Preparedness/Preparedness_-_Earthquakes.html

Exhibit 4-46
Tornado Tracks Through and Around DPS Since 1955
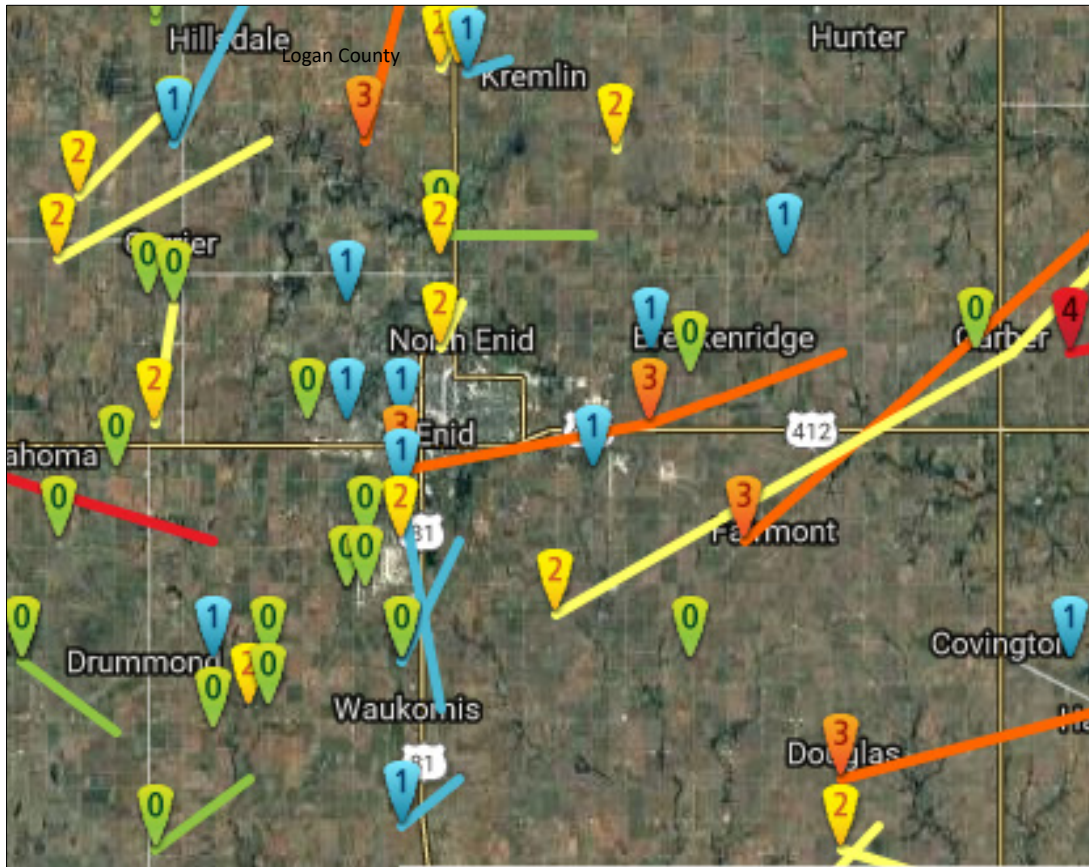
Source: Tornado History Project, August 2018

As reported in surveys conducted by the consulting team, students and parents generally agree that facilities are secure from unwanted visitors and that the children feel safe. However, 70 percent of staff interviewed *disagreed* that the district's facilities are secure from unwanted visitors (**Exhibit 4-47**). The staff feeling was corroborated by the consulting team, which observed that buildings in the district lack sufficient security checks for visitors entering the buildings.

Exhibit 4-47
DPS Survey Responses Regarding Safety in the Schools

Survey Group	Survey Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Parents	My child feels safe and secure at school.	44%	44%	6%	0%	6%
Parents	The school buildings and grounds are safe and secure.	18%	47%	6%	12%	18%
Students	I feel safe and secure at school.	26%	44%	14%	10%	6%
Students	The school buildings and grounds are safe and secure.	20%	48%	22%	7%	3%
Staff	The district's facilities are secure from unwanted visitors.	12%	8%	12%	35%	35%

Source: Prismatic Survey Results, August 2018

The district has an anti-bullying policy, contained in the district policy manual titled "Student Bullying." The policy cites the *School Safety and Bullying Prevention Act*, 70 OKLA. STAT. § 24-100.2 et seq., with a positive statement that "the district intends to comply with the act and expects students to refrain from bullying."

As reported in surveys conducted by the consulting team (**Exhibit 4-48**), 18 percent of parents and 40 percent of students *strongly agree* or *agree* that bullying is a problem in the district. Eight comments, one on the parent survey and seven on the student survey, specifically referred to bullying in the district.

Exhibit 4-48
DPS Survey Responses Regarding Bullying

Survey Group	Survey Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Parents	Bullying is a problem in this district.	12%	6%	35%	29%	18%
Students	Bullying is a problem in this district.	12%	28%	22%	24%	14%

Source: Prismatic Survey Results, August 2018

FINDING 4-10

In a recent effort based on a report by the Oklahoma School Security Institute (OSSI) on the district's security vulnerabilities, DPS has installed classroom doors that are lockable from the inside and electronic door locks at all major entrances. The current bond plan includes a secure main entrance and additional surveillance cameras.

Given the fiscal limits DPS faces, the decision by district leaders to implement these key security measures is commendable. It is furthermore encouraging that future bond projects also include further security measures. It is a best practice to be circumspect about possible threats to school security, even in bucolic areas such as Drummond.

COMMENDATION

DPS is commended for its awareness of security needs to protect the people of the school district, and its swift response to the OSSI report with recommended security measures the district could implement in short order.

FINDING 4-11

The district recently received a report from the OSSI that noted numerous safety and security deficiencies. It was the result of an onsite security assessment. To date, the district has not yet developed an implementation plan.

OSSI made 17 major recommendations to improve security in the district. Nine are in the priority category; eight are more general in nature. OSSI recommended an improved emergency management plan (EMP) as a top priority. The priority recommendations of the OSSI report are shown in **Exhibit 4-49** and the general recommendations in **Exhibit 4-50.**

Exhibit 4-49
Priority Recommendations from OSSI Drummond Report

OSSI RISK AND VULNERABILITY ASSESSMENT   FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY

Priority Recommendations:

1. Creation of an all-hazards emergency operation plan based on recommendations from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) or the Readiness and Emergency Management for Schools (REMS) is the highest priority. This is a low cost but highly critical component that must be addressed as soon as possible. All other policies, procedures, environmental designs and expectations are based on this plan. Your Student Handbook can be used to inform parents of the expectations and basic emergency response protocols. Certain student policies may be initiated to improve the security environment and are mentioned within this report. The current plan is lacking in attention to some critical components that are high risk or long-term recovery issues.

2. In the event funding should become available, the highest environmental priority is to improve the main entry points to the main building and to the Dome so that oversight and effective monitoring can be achieved while providing protection for students and employees. No person should have the opportunity to directly access employees or students without first being vetted. Any electronic devices or entry hardening remodels can improve the chances of attaining that goal. Minimizing the number of accessible doors, providing employee oversight to particular points during critical times of entry/exit and the installation of communication devices are all recommended steps to increasing security.

3. Lock and secure all open and unattended classrooms where employee personal property would be subject to theft. Unoccupied classrooms should be locked to prevent unauthorized use and loss of personal items. They also prevent cover or concealment to intruders or students determined to commit anti-social or even criminal acts.

4. Lock and secure all custodial, mechanical and storage closets at all times.

5. Improve the current surveillance camera system by including more cameras at recommended points and to develop a program for long-term sustainability.

6. Bollards should be considered at points identified within this report.

7. Fence the perimeter of the property, especially to prevent students from running off property to the highway, the railroad or to the open fields.

8. Secure the buses so that they are not left unlocked and unsecured while unattended.

9. A limited intrusion alarm system would be of significant protection even if it is an unmonitored system. Any investment to prevent burglaries would be recommended.

Page **54** of **64**

Source: OSSI Report

Exhibit 4-50
General Recommendations from OSSI Drummond Report

OSSI RISK AND VULNERABILITY ASSESSMENT   FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY

General Recommendations:

1. Signage can be improved although current signage is impressive:
   - On non-entry doors to notify visitors that the door is NOT a point of entry and the expectation to register at the front desk and its location on the east side of the building.
   - Signage can help control the drop off/pick up process. This may require orange traffic cones to prohibit persons from passing while cars or buses are present to load/unload and to prevent parking in prohibited locations. Cones would be particularly helpful in keeping student drivers at a distance from loading/unloading buses on the west side of the property. Signs could proclaim the area is for buses only.
   - Designated visitor parking in specific pre-determined locations can help discern intent of persons who intentionally ignore reserved and signed parking spaces for visitors.
   - Improve signage at entry/exits for the driveways. Consider installation of pipe gates that can help control egress/ingress in an emergency and prevent unauthorized access during off school hours.

2. Include the installation of Knox boxes in concert with the local responding fire agency so that emergency accessibility is available to responders when all doors are locked. Locked doors may be a challenge in the event of an emergency lockdown. We do not want employees leaving their secure positions and expose themselves to danger in order to open a door for responders.

3. Include a provision that makes wearing of a displayed photo identification for all employees a requirement.

4. Secure dumpsters in a manner that discourages unauthorized use by non-district personnel.

5. Secure electrical breakers and electrical panels to prevent unauthorized access.

6. Develop emergency "go bags" for employees who may have to care for students off site for long periods of time.

7. Regularly test the intercom system for audible effectiveness at the furthest points of the property. Increase the number of exterior speakers if necessary. Portable radios may be a valid investment and can be critical if cellular telephone services are unavailable.

8. Secure the athletic buildings, transportation building and any other small or portable buildings. The current situation allows for theft and vandalism of school property. The restrooms in the baseball complex may result in a means of cover/concealment for any intruder.

Page **55** of **64**

Source: OSSI Report

Based on the report, the district acted quickly to install locks in classrooms that can be locked from the inside, as well as electronic locks at all exterior doors. Funds to implement further

building improvements are limited severely at DPS. As a result, many of the OSSI recommendations remain unaddressed.

Each OSSI recommendation is discussed in further detail below.

- Priority OSSI Recommendations:

  1. Develop and implement an improved EMP.

  2. Improve entry points to the main building and the dome – these improvements have been included by Easley Associates in the drawings and estimates for the next bond issue.

  3. Lock and secure all open and unattended classrooms – this policy can be implemented without delay and at no additional cost to DPS.

  4. Always lock and secure all custodial, mechanical and storage closets – this policy can be implemented without delay and at no additional cost to DPS.

  5. Improve the surveillance camera system for long-term sustainability – because funds are needed, this item must be added to capital projects in the bond issue, or funded by some type of federal, state, or private security grant.

  6. Bollards at recommended entrance locations – because funds are needed, this item must be added to capital projects in the bond issue, or funded by some type of federal, state, or private security grant.

  7. Perimeter fencing – because funds are needed, this item must be added to capital projects in the bond issue, or funded by some type of federal, state, or private security grant.

  8. Secure the buses – this policy can be implemented without delay and at no additional cost to DPS.

  9. A limited intrusion alarm system – such alarm systems are typically installed at little or no up-front cost. DPS can likely implement this recommendation now without having to rely on the future bond issue.

- "General" OSSI Recommendations:

  1. Signage improvements – because funds are needed, this item must be added to capital projects in the bond issue, or funded by some type of federal, state, or private security grant.

  2. Knox Box installation for access by emergency responders when buildings are locked – DPS can probably implement this recommendation now from existing resources without having to rely on the future bond issue.

  3. Establish a policy requiring photo identification be worn by all DPS employees – this policy can be implemented without delay and at little cost to DPS.

4. Secure dumpsters to discourage unauthorized access and use – this policy can be implemented without delay and at no additional cost to DPS.

5. Lock all electrical and breaker panels to prevent unauthorized access – this policy can be implemented without delay and at no additional cost to DPS.

6. Prepare "go bags" for emergency care outdoors and away from hospitals – DPS can likely implement this recommendation now from existing resources without having to rely on the future bond issue.

7. Test the intercom system and make improvements as may be necessary – DPS can likely implement this recommendation now from existing resources without having to rely on the future bond issue.

8. Secure all outbuildings to prevent intrusion – DPS can likely implement this recommendation now from existing resources without having to rely on the future bond issue.

RECOMMENDATION

Implement the recommendations of the OSSI report.

The DPS superintendent and principal should work with Easley Associates to identify any recommendations that can be incorporated in the funding schedule for the upcoming bond issue. Estimates should be prepared for each item and an implementation priority established. Other recommendations that can be implemented either as policy or with minimal, likely available, funds should be put in place as promptly as possible.

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING 4-12

DPS lacks a complete EMP. OSSI recommends, as a top priority, that the district prepare and implement a complete EMP.

A universally accepted safety and security best practice is the preparation and implementation by a school district of an All Hazards Plan, EMP, or Emergency Operations Plan.

RECOMMENDATION

Develop a comprehensive All Hazards Plan that addresses not only school-based emergencies, such as lockdowns or emergency evacuations, but also non-school-based emergencies that may impact the schools.

DPS staff should avail themselves of the free online training available from FEMA and the U. S. Department of Education concerning emergency management and developing appropriate plans

for issues not currently addressed in the DPS All Hazards Plan. OSSI, as a follow-up to its recommendations to DPS, also provides technical assistance on an as-needed basis.

The superintendent and principals should also complete at least two online courses offered by FEMA and recommended for all public entity leaders:

- ICS-100: *An Introduction to Incident Command System (ICS)* (the 100SC version was developed specifically for school districts); and

- ICS-700 *NIMS: An Introduction to the National Incident Management System.*

Both courses can be completed online for free.[23]

Additional online training resources for district staff can be found at the Readiness and Emergency Management for Schools Technical Assistance Center.[24] The information and courses available at this website are specifically designed for K-12 school system personnel who must prepare for and respond/recover from disaster. Other information offers help in engaging students in the discussion of disaster preparation and response.

Then, the superintendent should lead the development of a comprehensive All Hazards Plan and coordinate with the Garfield County Sheriff's Office, and other emergency services providers, for assistance and support. The plan should be reviewed and approved by the school board and then shared with staff. Because it will contain sensitive information (such as likely student evacuation routes), the plan should not be widely disseminated, but all staff should know its contents and understand their role in all possible types of crisis. The district should review and practice key elements of its All Hazards Plan annually.

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

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[23] http://training.fema.gov/IS/
[24] https://rems.ed.gov/

Chapter 5:

Support Services

Support Services

This chapter reviews several areas of support services in Drummond Public Schools (DPS). It is divided into these sections:

A. Child Nutrition
B. Technology
C. Transportation

A.   CHILD NUTRITION

Successful administration of the child nutrition program depends upon consistent program organization, strong financial reporting, and precise personnel management. All of these administrative areas must align and support the district's goals for student achievement.

School meal programs began in 1946, when the *National School Lunch Act* was signed, authorizing the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) to "safeguard the health and well-being of the nation's children." The program, administered by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), is open to all public and nonprofit private schools, as well as all residential childcare institutions. The NSLP also offers afterschool snacks for sites that meet the eligibility requirements.

The *Child Nutrition Act of 1966* established the School Breakfast Program (SBP). This is a federally-assisted meal program that provides nutritionally balanced, low-cost, or free breakfasts to children in public schools, nonprofit private schools, and residential child care institutions.

DPS participates in the NSLP, the SBP, and the USDA Foods in Schools Program. Districts that participate in these federal programs receive cash subsidies and donated commodities from the USDA for each eligible meal they serve. In return, the district must serve student meals that meet federal guidelines for nutritional value, offer free or reduced price meals to eligible students, and accurately keep required records.

Students in the lowest socioeconomic bracket qualify for free lunches, while others qualify for reduced price lunches. Meals served according to federal guidelines receive some level of reimbursement, including those served to students who pay full price. School districts do not receive federal reimbursement support for teacher or guest meals. **Exhibit 5-1** shows the applicable 2017-18 and 2018-19 federal reimbursement rates for breakfast and lunch. DPS also receives an additional six cents per meal for meeting the meal pattern requirements.

Exhibit 5-1
School Meals: Federal per Meal Reimbursement Rates
2017-18 and 2018-19

Meal Type	School Breakfast Program - Severe Need[1]		National School Lunch Program (with 6 cents)	
	2017-18	2018-19	2017-18	2018-19
Free	$2.09	$2.14	$3.29	$3.37
Reduced Price	$1.79	$1.84	$2.89	$2.97
Paid	$0.30	$0.31	$0.37	$0.37

Source: https://www.fns.usda.gov/school-meals/rates-reimbursement

The *Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010* (*HHFKA*) provided sweeping modifications to the school nutrition programs and made significant changes in the required meal components. The new regulations require districts to charge equitable prices for full-pay meals and non-reimbursable à la carte items, establish nutritional requirements for all foods sold on campuses at any time during the school day, provide free water where meals are served, provide nutrition education to students in the district, and require school nutrition directors/managers to meet education, training, and certification requirements.

Exhibit 5-2 provides the nutritional requirements as specified in the *HHFKA.* Both the breakfast and lunch menus now must offer more fruits and vegetables than before. Milk must be low-fat or fat-free. Sodium levels must be reduced. Whole grains must be increased and trans fats must be eliminated. In the last year, while many districts have successfully implemented the requirements of *HHFKA*, there have been discussions at the federal level about rolling back some provisions and delaying the implementation of others. At the time of this report, it was uncertain what the final decision would be. Until a final decision on possible revisions is reached, all the provisions of *HHFKA* are in effect.

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[1] DPS is eligible to receive severe need reimbursements for breakfasts served to eligible students on sites where 40 percent or more of the lunches claimed at the site in the second preceding school year were served free or at a reduced price, and the site is participating in or initiating a school breakfast program.

Exhibit 5-2
Summary of Nutritional Requirements for Breakfast and Lunch

	Breakfast		Lunch	
Fruit and Vegetables	1 cup per day (vegetable substitution allowed). Students are allowed to select ½ cup under Offer Versus Serve.		¾-1 cup vegetables plus ½-1 cup fruit per day.	

Grains	Daily minimum of 1 ounce equivalent minimum per day; weekly minimum ranges, varying by grade:
	  K-5: 7-10 ounces
	  6-8: 8-10 ounces
	  9-12: 9-10 ounces
			Daily minimums varying by grade:
			K-5: 1 oz. eq. min. daily (8-9 oz. weekly)
			6-8: 1 oz. eq. min. daily (8-10 oz. weekly)
			9-12: 2 oz. eq. min. daily (10-12 oz. weekly)	

Meat/Meat Alternate	May substitute meat/meat alternates after minimum daily requirement for grains is met.		K-5: 1 oz. eq. min. daily (8-10 oz. weekly) 6-8: 1 oz. eq. min. daily (9-10 oz. weekly) 9-12: 2 oz. eq. min. daily (10-12 oz. weekly)	
Whole Grains	All must be whole grain rich unless exemption granted.		All must be whole grain rich unless exemption granted.	
Milk	1 cup, 1% (unflavored) or fat-free (unflavored/flavored)		1 cup, 1% (unflavored) or fat-free (unflavored/flavored)	
Sodium*	Target 2 (2017-18): K-5: ≤ 485 mg 6-8: ≤ 535 mg 9-12: ≤ 570 mg	Target 3 (2022-23): K-5: ≤ 430 mg 6-8: ≤ 470 mg 9-12: ≤ 500 mg	Target 2 (2017-18): K-5: ≤ 935 mg 6-8: ≤ 1035 mg 9-12: ≤ 1080 mg	Target 3 (2022-23): K-5: ≤ 640 mg 6-8: ≤ 710 mg 9-12: ≤ 740 mg
Trans Fat	Zero grams per serving (nutrition label)		Zero grams per serving (nutrition label)	

Source: USDA, January 2012
*Target 1 was set to be implemented by 2014-15

Exhibit 5-3 provides photos of a sampling of DPS trays selected by students during the onsite period. Trays for both breakfast and lunch are shown.

Exhibit 5-3
Sample of DPS Breakfast and Lunch Trays
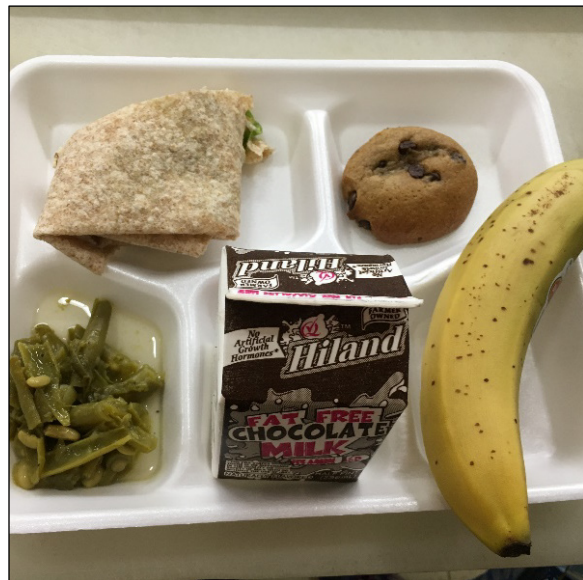
Source: Prismatic, August 2018

Exhibit 5-4 shows DPS and peer district meal prices for 2018-19. As shown, DPS' prices were higher than the peer average for both breakfast and lunch.

PRISMATIC
SERVICES, INC.

Exhibit 5-4
DPS and Peer District Meal Prices, 2018-19

District	Breakfast	Elem Lunch	Sec Lunch
Drummond	**$1.50**	**$2.50**	**$2.75**
Robin Hill	$1.25	$2.65	$2.65
Kremlin-Hillsdale	$1.30	$2.55	$2.75
Sharon-Mutual	$1.00	$2.10	$2.30
Pioneer	$1.25	$2.35	$2.35
Union City	$1.25	$2.25	$2.25
Peer Average	**$1.21**	**$2.38**	**$2.46**

Source: District's Reports, September 2018

Exhibit 5-5 shows the organization of staff within the DPS child nutrition department. As shown, the district employs a lunchroom manager who works with a contracted food services management company (FSMC). The kitchen staff is employed by the FSMC.

Exhibit 5-5
DPS Child Nutrition Organization
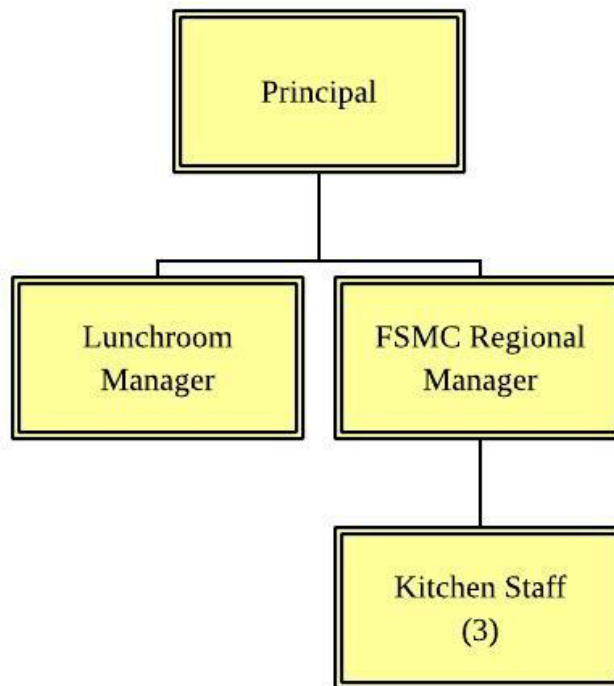
Source: Created by Prismatic, August 2018

FINDING 5-1

The district does not adequately perform an evaluation of their contract with the FSMC at year end and prior to renewal, to determine if it is cost-effective for the district and if all objectives are being met. There are no goals set by the district to evaluate the performance of the FSMC.

The district decided to put out an invitation to bid/request for proposal (RFP) and contract in 2016 for an FSMC to provide food services for their school meals program. They awarded the contract for 2016-17 to Keystone Foodservice. The contract is valid for up to one year with the possibility of up to four one-year renewals. During interviews with the principal, business manager, and cafeteria manager, all stated that the decision to contract out the child nutrition program was based on personnel problems with kitchen staff, mainly regarding difficulty maintaining adequate staff and the cost of workman's compensation claims associated with kitchen staff.

In their proposal, Keystone states their goal is "to service 75% of the student body and faculty." They also state that they "include student groups and student leaders in the menu planning and menu critiquing."

In the General Information section of the RFP, of the nine program objectives that are noted to be the FSMC responsibility, there are several the consulting team observed as not being adequately met. These include:

- increase participation at all levels of the program by improving food quality at the service point, by upgrading equipment and facilities, by seeking student and parent input, by successful menu variation and planning, by use of excellent marketing techniques and with a strong emphasis on public relations;

- continue to move toward operating a food services program that is self-sufficient and does not require any subsidy from regular school funds; and

- to promote nutritional awareness whenever the food service can interface with district programs.

When a school district enters into a contract with an FSMC, there are certain responsibilities of both parties. In April 2009, the USDA published a document titled *Contracting with Food Service Management Companies: Guidance for School Food Authorities*[2] to guide districts in the management of their contracts with food service management companies. This document was updated in May 2016. The document provides guidance to districts, or school food authorities (SFA), to determine whether to renew their contracts. It provides elements for a district to consider when going through the evaluation process, including:

- **performance** – the overall performance of the FSMC in accordance with the contract provisions, including the FSMC's completion of planned activities as described in the contract. The SFA should document its findings while conducting its monitoring requirements of the FSMC and refer to these documents when making this determination. In addition to reviewing the deficiencies noted in the FSMC's performance, the SFA should review the effectiveness of the FSMC's corrective action plans;

- **meal quality** – adherence to menu cycle/food specifications, and complaints;

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[2] http://www.fns.usda.gov/sites/default/files/FSMCguidance-sfa.pdf

- **costs** – the full cost of using an FSMC versus the projected costs under the contract;

- **financial status** – the overall financial status of the food service operation and the food service account;

- **unexpected costs** – any unexpected costs incurred as a result of using an FSMC, and any unexpected cost reductions that have resulted from using an FSMC. The SFA should ascertain these costs based on information received from the FSMC and other sources;

- **participation** – participation trends including NSLP/SBP participation compared to à la carte sales;

- **advisory board** – the comments and recommendations of the advisory board and the FSMC's responsiveness to these recommendations;

- **adjustments to payments** – any increase in the prices requested by the FSMC or any change in the basis upon which the FSMC is paid. Price adjustments must be made only as specified in the original solicitation and contract;

- **crediting for the value of USDA foods** – assurance of crediting for the value of all USDA Foods received for use in the SFA's meal service in the school year, in accordance with 7 CFR 250.51(a) and (b); and

- **corrective actions** – recommendations from local, state, and federal reviews and audits, including the status of required corrective actions.

During an interview with the FSMC regional manager, it was discovered there are currently no marketing efforts and no set goals for participation. It was also discovered that Keystone organizes one menu committee meeting with students, parents, and teachers in the fall, but this is not an ongoing formal group. During an interview with the principal, when asked if there is any student involvement or opportunity for feedback about the meals program he replied no and indicated he would like such a practice to be instituted.

The consulting team observed the cafeteria manager performing some production tasks related to the salad bar. When interviewed, she stated the principal started this practice last school year due to a shortage of Keystone employees. There was no reduction in the fixed fee per meal charged to the district even though a district-paid employee was contributing labor for production. This practice has continued during the current school year even though Keystone has fully staffed the kitchen operation. Again, there has been no reduction in the fee per meal. This practice is problematic since the contract with Keystone is to provide appropriate staff to prepare and serve the meals. If the district contributes labor hours, they should negotiate a reduction in fees.

The consulting team observed the district is performing a monthly audit of the invoice to ensure the number of meals served matches the meals on the claim. However, there are three elements that the district is not effectively evaluating – financial status, participation, and advisory board.

As noted later in this section, the child nutrition program has sustained financial losses in the past two years with a larger loss in the second year of the contract. As noted in **Finding 5-4**,

participation has not significantly increased. Instead, breakfast participation has decreased since the change from self-operation to contract. Lunch participation decreased in year two of the contract. Participation rates do not meet industry standards and the FSMC is not meeting their stated goal of 75 percent. As stated by the regional manager and principal, there is no ongoing advisory panel for providing feedback. The FSMC is not meeting their stated goal of using students for menu planning.

RECOMMENDATION

Develop a formal process for evaluating the performance of the FSMC and perform this assessment annually, prior to contract renewal.

The district should discontinue the practice of using district staff to perform some of the duties of the FSMC without an appropriate reduction in fees. The financial secretary and the cafeteria manager should develop a tabulation of breakfast and lunch participation data from the current year and compare to previous years. The financial secretary should develop a tabulation of the financial position of the child nutrition fund for the current year and compare to previous years. A committee should be formed, comprised of the principal, the financial secretary, and the cafeteria manager. This group should set goals, such as participation levels, to evaluate the performance of the contractor. This group should diligently assess this data to decide if the FSMC contract is still cost-effective as a replacement for a self-operated program.

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING 5-2

The financial status of the child nutrition program is problematic. The program operated at a loss and required general fund assistance for the past three years to cover expenses.

Exhibit 5-6 shows the DPS child nutrition program revenues and expenditures over time. The program was self-operated in 2014-15 and 2015-16 and contracted out in 2016-17. This change accounted for the decrease in labor costs as the worker's salaries are paid by the FSMC. The manager remains a district employee. The supplies expenditure is the amount of fees paid to the FSMC. They are responsible for purchasing the food and supplies for the program and do not charge the district directly for these expenditures.

This table shows a concerning trend as total expenses are increasing at a faster rate than revenue, resulting in increasing losses from year to year. The program has required general fund support all three years. The financial secretary noted the program does not have a three-month overage as recommended by the USDA for program security. The district general fund is being negatively impacted by the need to subsidize the child nutrition program.

Exhibit 5-6
DPS Child Nutrition Fund Revenues and Expenditures Over Time

	2014-15	**2015-16**	**2016-17**
Beginning Balance	*$19,941*	*$12,263*	*$4,030*
Revenues			
Return of Assets (Local Sources)	$0	$0	$0
State Reimbursement	$11,353	$1,603	$1,553
Federal Reimbursement	$81,694	$88,795	$107,079
Total Revenues	**$93,047**	**$90,398**	**$108,632**
Expenses			
Salaries and Benefits	$103,645	$87,521	$37,254
Food and Supplies	$64,282	$63,807	$148,880
Other Expenses	$0	$100	$489
Total Expenses	**$167,927**	**$151,428**	**$186,623**
Beginning Balance + Revenues - Expenses	**($54,938)**	**($48,767)**	**($73,961)**

Source: DPS OCAS Revenue and Expenditures Reports, 2014-17
Note: Totals may not reconcile completely due to rounding

Interviews with the DPS financial secretary and administrative assistant provided background as to the financial position prior to 2014. The current administrative assistant served as the cafeteria manager and the program was self-operated. She stated there was a surplus of approximately $60,000. When she moved to the position of administrative assistant, the program hired a new manager. At that point the program started to see increased expenditures and the overage decreased dramatically. The current cafeteria manager ran the program for one year and then it changed to an FSMC. By that time, there was a minimal surplus.

The decision to hire an FSMC was made due to personnel issues and not because of financial concerns. Since then, expenditures have increased without any appreciable increase in revenue and participation.

During meal period observations, the consulting team noted several opportunities for cost savings. Staffing is higher than industry standards. There are 21.5 daily FSMC labor hours. In addition, the manager works approximately five hours per day performing duties directly related to the meals program, for a total of 26.5 labor hours. A calculation of meal equivalents was 267. With daily meal equivalents, best practices point to a need for between 17 and 21 labor hours, using primarily conventional food preparation methods (**Exhibit 5-7**). This is 5.5 to 9.5 hours less than current staffing levels.

Exhibit 5-7
Oklahoma Staffing Guidelines for Onsite Production

Number of Daily Meal Equivalents	Recommended for Conventional Systems[3]		Recommended for Convenience Systems[4]	
	Meals per Labor Hour (MPLH)	Total Hours	Meals per Labor Hour (MPLH)	Total Hours
10 - 100	12	< 8	16	< 6
101 - 150	12	8 - 12	16	6 - 9
151 - 200	12	12 - 16	16	9 - 12
201 - 250	14	14 - 17	17	12 - 14
251 - 300	14	17 - 21	18	14 - 16
301 - 400	15	20 - 26	18	17 - 21
401 - 500	16	25 - 31	19	21 - 25
501 - 600	17	29 - 35	20	25 - 30
601 - 700	18	33 - 37	22	27 - 31

Source: OK SDE Child Nutrition Manual Compliance Section, July 2014

Another opportunity for cost savings is to use the permanent ware trays that the district already owns. Instead of those, the consulting team observed the exclusive use of disposable plates. The dishwasher is operable, and this practice would reduce the supplies cost of using disposable plates.

The possibility for reduced food costs is another opportunity. The secondary students are able to select items from the salad bar in addition to receiving fruit and vegetables on the line. If they only want items from the salad bar, the district could reduce fruit/vegetable costs while still serving those students reimbursable meals.

RECOMMENDATION

Assess options for changes that will result in a more cost-effective food service program.

Decreased costs from these three areas could be passed on to the district by the FSMC through a negotiated reduction in fees. Alternatively, the district could return to a self-operation and employ cost savings such as these in an attempt to operate a cost-effective child nutrition program.

A committee should be formed to discuss the pros and cons of continuing to contract out the child nutrition program. The committee should include the principal, financial secretary, administrative assistant, cafeteria manager, and school board members. If the decision is made to continue with a contractor, they should begin a negotiation process in an attempt to reduce fees.

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[3] A system where meals are generally prepared from scratch onsite.
[4] A system where meals are generally only re-heated from frozen prepared items onsite.

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources. It should result in a reduced reliance on general funds for the child nutrition program.

FINDING 5-3

DPS has a thorough and effective process for qualifying students for free or reduced price meals through the direct certification process and through meal applications. Its application approval rates are higher than the peer district averages.

Free/reduced meal applications are printed at the district and provided to families at the beginning of the school year. Families are encouraged to complete the application at the time of student enrollment. The district uses Wen-GAGE software to approve meal applications. This interfaces with the point-of-sale (POS) system so that students can use their eligibility status as soon as possible.

The direct certification program requires state and local educational agencies to automatically enroll students from households already participating in the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) or the Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservations, without an additional application from the child's family to assist low-income households with children eligible for free meals at school. DPS starts this process of matching students with the Department of Human Services before the beginning of the school year and parents receive notification of their eligibility in the mail. The district is diligent in its efforts to make sure all eligible students are approved through this automatic process.

DPS has an eligibility rate for free and reduced students that is higher than the peer district average (**Exhibit 5-8**). In DPS, 48.9 percent are approved for free or reduced price meals compared to the peer average of 44.6 percent. The approval rate is higher than all but one peer district. The Identified Student Percentage (ISP), which is determined by the number of students directly certified, is also higher than the average of the peer districts. DPS' rate of 15.20 percent is higher than the average of 14.95 percent.

Exhibit 5-8
DPS and Peer Approval for Applications and ISP Rate 2017-18

District	Application Approval Rate	ISP
Drummond	**48.9%**	**15.20%**
Robin Hill	39.5%	17.80%
Kremlin-Hillsdale	39.1%	8.97%
Sharon-Mutual	40.9%	12.27%
Pioneer	47.2%	15.25%
Union City	51.9%	20.25%
Peer Average	**44.6%**	**14.95%**

Source: OEQA and SDE Community Eligibility Reports, 2017

COMMENDATION

DPS follows a thorough process for qualifying students for free and reduced meals through both the application and direct certification processes, resulting in eligibility rates for both that are higher than the peer average.

FINDING 5-4

Participation in the DPS school meals program is lower than industry best practices. Breakfast participation rates have been lower than industry best practices for the past two years. Lunch participation rates have been lower than industry standards for the past three years.

Industry best practices exist for both breakfast and lunch to compare a district's participation rates to those established as a benchmark. **Exhibit 5-9** shows best practice rates for breakfast. These benchmarks are the recommended percentage of participation of membership. **Exhibit 5-10** shows participation rates in DPS over three years. During 2015-16, the program was self-operated. Participation met the industry standards with an average rate of 35 percent. Beginning in school year 2016-17, meal service was contracted to an FSMC. During that year and the following, participation dropped by three percent. Since the majority of breakfast participants are elementary and middle school students, participation rates dropped below industry standards.

Exhibit 5-9
Best Practice Breakfast Participation Rates

School Level	Best Practice
Elementary	35%
Middle	35%
High	25%

Source: HealthierUS School Challenge Criteria, 2014

Exhibit 5-10
DPS Average Daily Breakfast Participation Rates Over Time
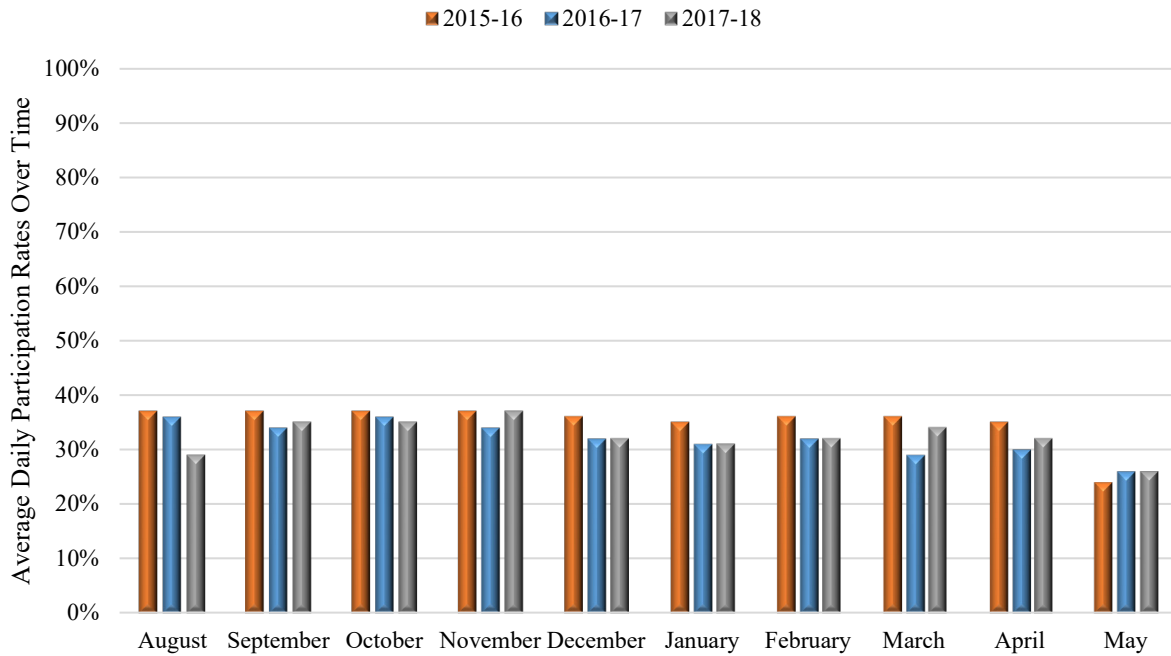
Source: DPS, August 2018

Exhibit 5-11 shows best practice rates for lunch participation. **Exhibit 5-12** shows rates for DPS over a three-year period. Participation is not meeting industry standards. Participation increased when the FSMC was first contracted but has declined in year two of the contract.

Exhibit 5-11
Best Practice Lunch Participation Rates

School Level	Best Practice
Elementary	75%
Middle	75%
High	65%

Source: HealthierUS School Challenge Criteria, 2014

Exhibit 5-12
DPS Average Daily Lunch Participation Rates Over Time
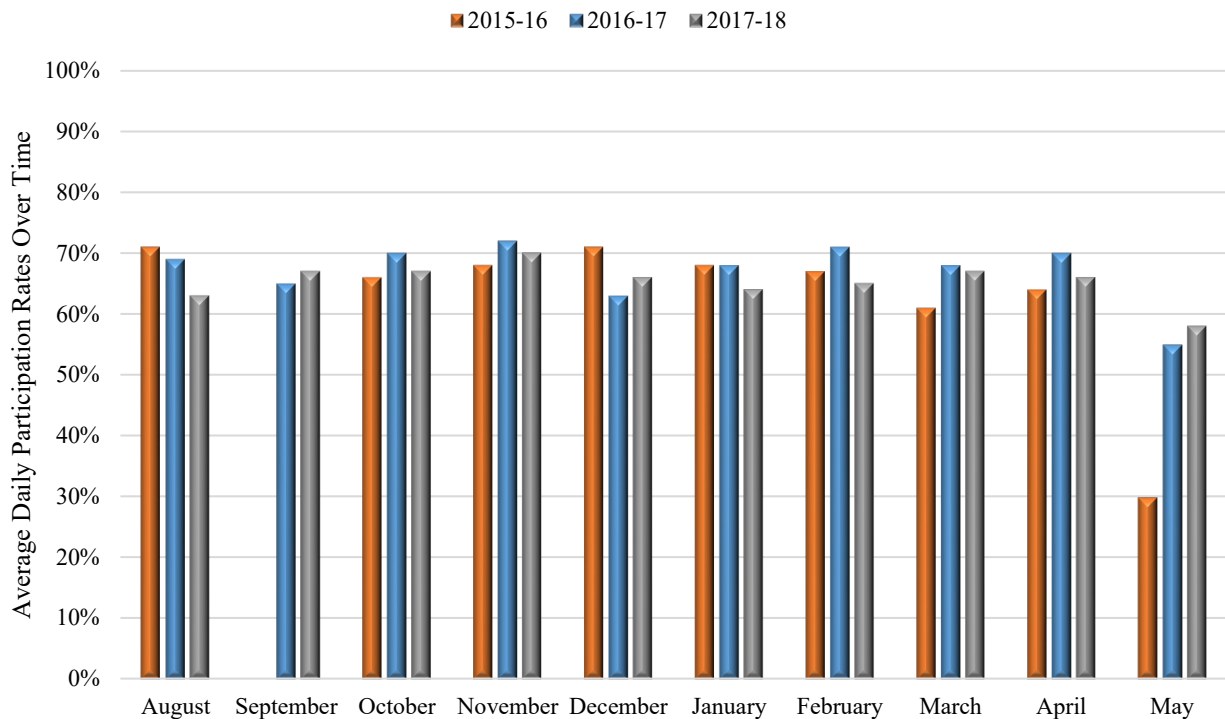
Source: DPS, August 2018

The consulting team found several practices contributing to rates lower than industry best practices:

- no entrée choices at any grade level;

- same menu for all grade levels;

- no self-serve options on the serving line;

- self-serve options for upper level grades are only available at the salad bar;

- the kitchen ran out of some choices at breakfast;

- the same canned fruit was placed on the salad bar two days in a row;

- students at all grade levels are asked which of each item they would like, which slowed down the serving process;

- the line wait time at lunch for secondary students was excessive (seven to 11 minutes);

- no à la carte items for sale; and

- student input is not solicited on a regular basis.

There are no entrée choices available. DPS elementary students do not have a choice of fruits and vegetables. DPS secondary students have the ability to select from numerous fruits and vegetables on the salad bar. When students are allowed to select from several choices, participation increases, plate waste decreases, and there is a greater opportunity to meet students' nutritional requirements. Traditionally, menus in secondary schools offer several entrée choices during the week, such as hot and cold sandwiches and wraps, prepackaged chef salads, pizza, and burritos, all in addition to the hot entrée of the day. Choices in elementary schools have become common in districts nationwide.

The same menu is served to all grade levels. Different age groups have different food preferences and menus need to accommodate the more developed palates of the older students. Secondary students are able to make some fruit and vegetable selections from the salad bar however it is not being utilized to its full potential due to servers putting the fruit and vegetable of the day on the trays prior to students going to the self-serve salad bar.

There is no ability for students to select what items they want through a self-serve process. Servers ask every student, for each item offered, whether they would like it put on their trays. This is an extremely slow process. Wait times during secondary serving ranged from seven to 11 minutes. Best practices strive for a wait time of five minutes or less. Most elementary class wait times met this benchmark. Long wait times are a deterrent for students especially at the secondary level and will serve to discourage them from participating. When a student makes a selection themselves from several options they feel a sense of control and are more inclined to consume what they have selected. **Exhibit 5-13** shows trays of pre-portioned fruits and vegetables available for self-selection.

Exhibit 5-13
Example of Pre-Portioned Vegetable Servings at Another School

Source: Prismatic file photos

The School Nutrition Association (SNA) has developed *Keys to Excellence: Standards of Practice for Nutrition Integrity.*[5] This tool defines national standards for quality programs and provides a framework for continuous program review, evaluation, and improvement. Indicators of best practices in the area of meal service include the following:

Best Practice A5.2:

Service options and line architecture are designed to encourage healthy choices and minimize the time students wait to be served.

Indicators:

- **A5.2.1 –** Menu options are clearly posted before the point of service in prominent locations.

- **A5.2.2 –** Concepts such as self-service, food courts, kiosks, food bars, vending machines, and scramble system serving stations are used where appropriate.

- **A5.2.3 –** Individual portions, POS marketing, self-serve, and student education activities are planned to reduce the time it takes to serve students.

There are no à la carte items available for sale to high school students. An à la carte program has the potential of increased revenue and higher student satisfaction and participation.

Students are not being fully utilized to provide input on menus and the overall meals program. The FSMC regional manager stated they organize a menu committee once in the fall comprised of eight to ten students, some parents, and teachers. He said they do this to comply with their contract with the district. The principal stated there is no opportunity for student involvement and he would like to see a student advisory panel be organized and used on an ongoing basis.

Results from student surveys indicated an extremely low number (20 percent) like the food served in the cafeteria. Only 29 percent think the cafeteria serves a good variety of food. **Exhibit 5-14** shows the responses about the cafeteria from the 129 students who responded. These survey data substantiate the need for major improvements to the meal program which should result in improved participation levels. Most anecdotal written comments simply stated "improve the food." There was one statement however that was more constructive and spoke to the perceived differences due to the change from a self-operated program to a contractor provided meal service:

> It could be improved by better school lunches. I was here previously when I was in fifth grade, and then I left. But I'm back now, and I have made previous comparisons to then DPS, and now DPS, and at the top of my comparisons list is the lunches. Back then we had homemade sandwiches, good chili whenever Frito Chile Pie was for lunch. And the spaghetti was decent, not just noodles and sauce like it is now.

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[5] School Nutrition Association. (2015). *Keys to excellence: Standards of practice for nutrition integrity* [PDF file]. National Harbor, Maryland. Retrieved from http://www.schoolnutrition.org/CareerEducation.aspx

Exhibit 5-14
Student Survey Results

Survey Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Discipline and order are maintained in the school cafeteria.	3%	17%	19%	22%	39%
I have enough time to eat my lunch each day.	22%	31%	11%	22%	14%
I like the food served in the cafeteria.	3%	17%	19%	22%	39%
The cafeteria serves a good variety of food.	7%	22%	26%	21%	25%

Source: Prismatic Survey Results, May 2018

There are a variety of resources and training materials available to assist child nutrition programs in increasing participation. The Smarter Lunchrooms Movement at the Cornell Center for Behavioral Economics in Child Nutrition Programs has an assortment of training materials, best practices, research articles, and self-assessment forms. The SNA has a self-assessment section on menu planning and marketing in their *Keys to Excellence*. The Institute of Child Nutrition (ICN) has a publication, *Best Practices for Marketing the School Nutrition Program*, as well as training courses for staff such as *Focus on the Customer*. USDA's Team Nutrition has a toolkit *Fruits and Vegetables Galore* which contains a workbook titled *Meal Appeal Attracting Customers.*

RECOMMENDATION

Develop strategies for increasing student participation rates, focusing first at the secondary level.

The FSMC should organize a secondary student advisory group which meets regularly to provide input on the menus currently being used as well as taste new food items and recipes. Feedback from these meetings should be used to develop a secondary menu. Menu planning should include multiple entrée choices at the secondary level. An à la carte program should be started for the secondary students. Nutritional requirements of the HHFKA "Smart Snacks" must be followed when selecting items for sale. The salad bar for secondary students should contain all the cold fruit and vegetable offerings instead of offering some on the line. Once these changes are implemented for the junior and high school students, the child nutrition program should begin to offer more choices and self-serve for the higher elementary grades.

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING 5-5

There is limited nutrition education provided to students in the district. Nutrition promotion is one of the requirements of the *Healthy Hunger Free Kids Act of 2014.* In addition, the wellness policy outlined in the *Child Nutrition Reauthorization Act* requires nutrition education.

During the onsite review, the consulting team observed minimal nutrition education materials posted in the cafeteria. The monthly menu (**Exhibit 5-15**) is put on a bulletin board but it does not contain any nutrition information. **Exhibit 5-16** is an example of a menu board used in other districts that provides nutritional information as well as shows the daily menu to students. It is an example of nutrition education that is colorful, educational, and attractive to students. The food service section of the district website and the monthly breakfast and lunch menus are additional areas where the child nutrition program may provide nutrition education information.

<table>
<tr><td align="center">**Exhibit 5-15**
DPS Menu on Bulletin Board</td><td align="center">**Exhibit 5-16**
Sample Menu Board</td></tr>
<tr><td></td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td align="center">*Source: Prismatic, August 2018*</td><td align="center">*Source: Prismatic, December 2014*</td></tr>
</table>
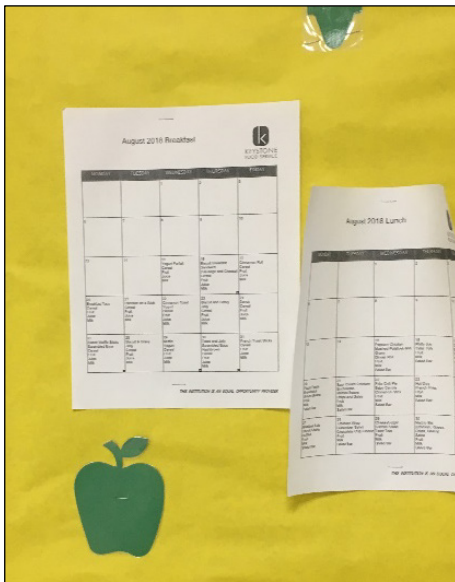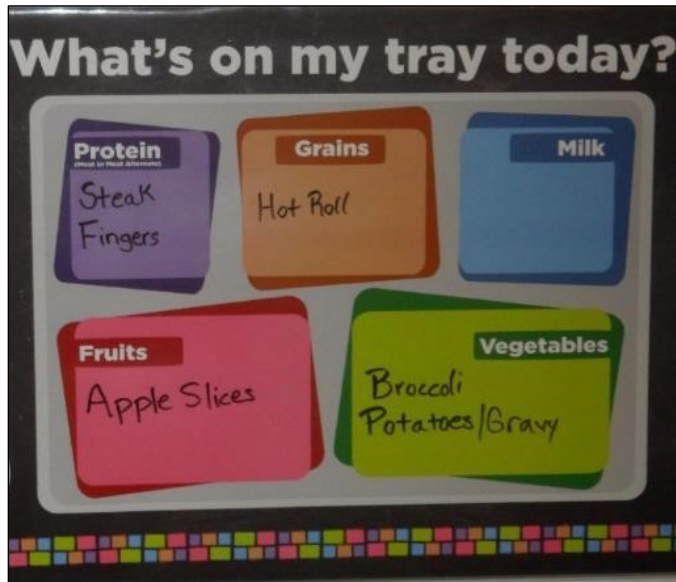
Since the passage of the *National School Lunch Act,* there has been an expectation that nutrition education should be a strong component of the program. It has been anticipated that child nutrition programs would become the schools' learning laboratory for effective nutrition education in their communities. The contract with the FSMC states the following expectation in the General Information section as one of the program objectives to be performed by the FSMC: *To promote nutritional awareness whenever the food service can interface with the district programs.*

Exhibit 5-17 provides a comparison of the 2004 and 2010 federal requirements. Among other things, the current USDA guidelines add a requirement for nutrition promotion.

Exhibit 5-17
Comparison of Local School Wellness Policy Requirements

Area	2004 Requirements	2010 Requirements
Overview	Direct local education agencies (LEAs) to have a local wellness policy (LWP) in place for each school under its jurisdiction.	Strengthens LWPs and adds requirements for public participation, transparency, and implementation.
Elements of the Local School Wellness Policy	LWP to include, at a minimum, goals for nutrition education, physical activity, and other school-based activities to promote student wellness, as well as nutrition guidelines for all foods available on school campus.	**In addition to the 2004 requirements, the LWP is also to include goals for nutrition promotion.**
Stakeholder Involvement	LEAs are required to involve parents, students, and representatives of the school food authority, the school board, school administrators, and the public in the development of a LWP.	In addition to the 2004 requirements, LEAs are now required to permit teachers of physical education and school health professionals to participate in the development of a LWP.
Stakeholder Participation	The stakeholders named above are required to participate in the development of the LWP.	In addition to the 2004 requirements, LEAs are now required to permit all stakeholders named above and in 2004 to participate in the implementation and periodic review and update of LWP.
Local Discretion	LEAs can determine the specific policies appropriate for the schools under their jurisdiction, provided that those policies include all required elements specified in the Act.	Same as 2004 requirement.
Public Notification	None.	LEAs are required to inform and update the public (including parents, students, and others in the community) about the content and implementation of the LWP.
Measuring Implementation	LEAs are required to establish a plan for measuring implementation of the LWP.	LEAs are required to periodically measure and make available to the public an assessment on the implementation of LWP, including the extent to which schools are in compliance with LWP, the extent to which the LWP compares to model LWP, and a description of the progress made in attaining the goals of the LWP.
Local Designation	LEAs are required to establish a plan for measuring LWP implementation to include delegating one or more persons with the responsibility for ensuring LWP compliance.	LEAs are required to designate one or more LEA officials or school officials to ensure that each school complies with the LWP.

Source: USDA Food and Nutrition Service: http://www.fns.usda.gov/tn/local-school-wellness-policy

Most child nutrition programs use the many free posters available from manufacturers and organizations to decorate their cafeterias, while also providing messages about good nutrition. Many districts use menus and the district website to provide nutrition information to both parents and students. There are a number of resources available to assist child nutrition programs in providing nutrition education information.

Most are provided at no cost, such as:

- *USDA My Plate*, which has graphics, materials for educators such as lesson plans, and other printable materials that can be downloaded at no cost;[6]

- USDA Team Nutrition, which has nutrition education materials for the preschool, elementary, middle, and high school levels;[7]

- *Fuel Up to Play 60,* which is a school nutrition and physical activity program sponsored by the National Dairy Council and the National Football League that has nutrition education materials;[8]

- ICN, which provides professionals working in child nutrition with training materials on the topic of nutrition education;[9] and

- SNA,[10] the Oklahoma SNA,[11] and the Oklahoma SDE Child Nutrition Unit,[12] which provide nutrition education training materials for staff working in child nutrition.

RECOMMENDATION

Provide nutrition education to students using a variety of venues.

The child nutrition manager and the FSMC regional manager should evaluate the nutrition education materials available and determine which will be most appropriate for DPS students at all grade levels. Posters should be displayed in the cafeteria and changed often to maintain interest and continue to provide new information. Nutrition resources and information for parents and students should be added to the child nutrition page on the district website and kept updated. Menus should contain different nutrition messages every month.

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING 5-6

The district is not maximizing the use of technology in the child nutrition department. Parents are not completing applications for meal benefits online. Parents are not able to make payments for student meals or view their student's accounts online. The POS is not automated. Menus are printed and distributed to each student and are not updated on the district website.

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[6] http://www.choosemyplate.gov
[7] http://www.fns.usda.gov/tn/team-nutrition
[8] http://www.fueluptoplay60.com
[9] http://www.nfsmi.org
[10] https://schoolnutrition.org
[11] http://www.snaofok.org
[12] http://ok.gov/sde/child-nutrition-programs

PRISMATIC
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A meal application for each student is printed by the administrative assistant and sent home for parents to fill out and return. They are processed by the child nutrition manager using the Wen-GAGE application processing software. The paper application states, in the Frequently Asked Questions section, "You are encouraged to complete an online application instead of a paper application if you are able. Visit www.fns.usda.gov/end/application/familyfriendlyapps.html to begin or learn more about the online application process." When pulling up this site, an error message stating "page not found" is received. Applications are not available for parents to download online and they have no opportunity to apply online. Wen-GAGE has an online application available for use in school districts, but DPS is not using it.

There is no system for parents to make payments online for their student's meals. The consulting team observed money for student meals brought to the front office, which is a disruptive process for the administrative assistant as she has to take the money as well as write a receipt for the student. In addition, safe money handling practices were not being followed. Money was also brought to the lunchroom manager. The consulting team noted one student made two attempts to give a cash payment to the manager during meal service and the student was asked to come back later.

The POS process is not automated. The lunchroom manager serves as the cashier during meal service. She has a list of students with names and barcodes. She makes a check mark by the student as they get their meal. After meal service, in her office, she uses a scanner to read each bar code for participating students which records, in the automated system, the meal served and any reduction in the student's account. The manager stated that in past years they used a finger scanner but discontinued its use due to the delay it caused in the lines. She also used to have the scanner and the laptop at the POS where she was able to immediately record the meal served to the student account and be able to determine if the student had to pay for the meal or not. This practice was discontinued due to the unreliability of the Wi-Fi.

There is no money collected at the POS, as the manager does not have access to the student accounts at that location. Twice a month, the manager develops a statement for those students who owe for their lunches. These statements are mailed to the parents, incurring postage costs. She stated the invoices average from $16.00 to $75.00. When the money comes to the school, the manager then has to record its receipt into the student's account. This is a cumbersome, inefficient, costly, and time-consuming process that could be alleviated by the use of the scanner and laptop at the POS and the collection of money during meal service or by the cafeteria manger during the day.

Menus are printed in the main office by the administrative assistant and distributed to students. This is a costly and time-consuming process. They are also posted on the bulletin board in the cafeteria. The consulting team found no menus currently on the district website or on its Facebook page.

School child nutrition programs must meet strict standards of accountability. Federal and state requirements dictate a great number of data reports be prepared to demonstrate accountability and fiscal responsibility. Some of the benefits of automation in a child nutrition program are increased efficiency and speed of data handling, more timely report processing, more reliable information, and better services for parents.

Parents and students have a keen understanding of technology, use it in their daily lives, and come to expect it when they participate in the school meals program. On the surveys conducted for this performance review, 79 percent of DPS students reported having and using internet and 67 percent of parents said they regularly use technology to keep up-to-date with the school and their child's education. Providing automated processes for parents such as online payments and meal applications is an effective way to ensure that all eligible students are enrolled in the free and reduced program and paying students do not have to bring cash to purchase meals. An online payment system provides the added benefit of parents being able to monitor their child's purchases and make payments before a child has to charge their meal. Providing this kind of data to parents can serve to prevent overcharging and problems in the collection process.

In their Operations Report of 2018, the School Nutrition Association (SNA) notes the following nationwide data regarding automated POS and meal payments:

- the percentage of districts that use an automated POS system is 97 percent;

- the percentage that use an online payment system is 83.5 percent; and

- the most common tactic used to prevent or minimize unpaid student meal debt is to offer an online meal payment/monitoring of account balances, as reported by 90 percent of school districts.

Software programs for school food service have moved beyond the initial offering, in the mid-80s, of point of service terminals to a current wide array of programs used to enhance the efficiency and accountability of the program. Federal regulations require data such as meal counts, HACCP temperature recording, and nutritional analysis. A wise use of technology and automated processes ensures that a district is meeting the regulations and requirements and doing so in a cost-effective and efficient manner.

RECOMMENDATION

Increase the use of technology by implementing components available from the POS software provider that will enable parents to apply online for meal benefits and make student payments.

The district should work with their software provider to enable parents to fill out their applications for meal benefits online and make payments to their student's account. This should be implemented for the beginning of the 2019-20 school year. The district should also make the necessary changes for consistent, reliable Wi-Fi capability to be available at both the POS area as well as in the cafeteria manager's office.

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING 5-7

The district is not adequately managing its kitchen equipment. There is no equipment replacement plan. The budget for the child nutrition fund does not include a line item for capital replacement.

Records of the age of the kitchen equipment and frequency of repair are not maintained. The kitchen equipment inventory contains minimal information regarding the large equipment. There is no date listed for the convection oven, stove, or warmer. A visual inspection by the consulting team estimates these items to be older than ten years. These are more than likely fully depreciated. The inventory notes that the milk cooler and dishwasher were purchased in 2013.

Kitchen staff indicated they would benefit from an additional convection oven. They also stated the food warmer does not hold its temperature even though it has been recently repaired. The district replaced the compressors on the walk-in freezer and refrigerator during the summer of 2018. The cost of these repairs was $7,117. The business manager stated equipment repairs are paid out of the general fund.

If a piece of equipment breaks down and is inoperable for longer than one day, or if the piece of equipment is unrepairable, DPS has no backup plan for the preparation of food since there is only one kitchen in the district. When a school district is approved to administer the NSLP and SBP, there is an implied understanding with USDA and the State Department of Education that kitchen facilities and equipment are sufficient to prepare and serve meals to students.

*Cost Control for School Foodservice Directors and Administrator*s[13] suggests budgeting 2.6 percent of revenue on large equipment. *School Food & Nutrition Service Management*, Sixth Edition[14] recommends 3.8 percent. In an article in *Dietary Manager*, Diane K. Schweitzer, a food service equipment and design specialist, discusses the various considerations related to decisions about equipment purchases in institutional kitchens. The list includes repair history, energy efficiency, and frequent repairs that exceed the cost of replacing the piece of equipment. She goes on to say, "The foodservice director or manager must consider many facts that surround decisions related to new equipment purchases, or replacing equipment that may have exceeded its useful life."

RECOMMENDATION

Develop a kitchen equipment replacement plan by monitoring repair frequency and age of items; include an annual amount for repairs and capital expenditures in the child nutrition budget.

The district should attempt to estimate the age of all pieces of large equipment and include this information on the kitchen equipment inventory. They should document repairs on all pieces of large equipment. An equipment replacement plan should be developed based on the age of the

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[13] VanEgmond-Pannell, D. (1992). *Cost control manual for school food service directors*. Kentucky: Kentucky Department of Education, Division of School and Community Nutrition.
[14] Pannell-Martin, D., & Boettger, J. (2014). *School food and nutrition management for the 21st century* (6th ed.). School Nutrition Association.

equipment as well as the frequency of repair. Equipment should be replaced before it is inoperable to ensure there is an adequate kitchen preparation facility for the USDA school meals program.

FISCAL IMPACT

The district should budget 2.6 percent of projected revenue for large equipment on an annual basis. Based on revenue projections in the 2019-20 budget ($182,378), this amount would be $4,742.

Recommendation	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
Budget for equipment replacement.	($4,742)	($4,742)	($4,742)	($4,742)	($4,742)

B. TECHNOLOGY

Oklahoma is striving to further implement technology into all classrooms. For example, the first goal of the 2004 Oklahoma Plan for Instructional Technology/Telecommunications was that all Oklahoma students would achieve technological literacy by the eighth grade.

The Foundation for Excellence in Education's Digital Learning Council introduced the *10 Elements of High Quality Digital Learning* in the fall of 2010. These elements identify action to be taken by lawmakers and policymakers to promote a high quality education for all students. The Digital Learning 2014 State Analysis compared Oklahoma with the national average on each of the elements (**Exhibit 5-18**). Overall, Oklahoma earned a 77 percent or C+ on this report card. Oklahoma's areas of concern include:

- Student Eligibility – lack of requirements for online courses to earn a high school diploma;

- Personalized Learning – lack of students able to enroll in more than one online course provider simultaneously;

- Quality Choices – lack of multiple opportunities for virtual charter schools and online vendors to apply for initial approval, or approval for three or more years;

- Assessment and Accountability – non-use of evaluative outcomes-based student-performance data for virtual charter schools, online providers and online courses, and subsequent closure due to poor performance;

- Funding – lack of course completion funding payment to providers based upon student daily attendance, performance, and competency; and

- Delivery – lack of state actions to ensure broadband access and effective data use.[15]

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[15] This analysis has not been updated by Digital Learning Council.

However, Oklahoma scored high in providing student access to quality digital content.

Exhibit 5-18
Digital Learning 2014 State Analysis: Oklahoma

10 Elements of High Quality Digital Learning	Oklahoma Grade & Percentage		National Average Grade & Percentage	
1. Student eligibility: All students are digital learners.	D+	67%	D-	61%
2. Student access: All students have access to high-quality digital content and online courses.	A	100%	C	75%
3. Personalized learning: All students can customize their education using digital content through an approved provider.	C	75%	C+	77%
4. Advancement: Students progress based upon demonstrated competency.	B-	81%	F	59%
5. Quality content: Digital content, instructional materials, and online and blended learning courses are high quality.	A-	92%	A-	93%
6. Quality instruction: Digital instruction is high quality.	B-	82%	B-	84%
7. Quality choices: All students have access to multiple high-quality providers.	C+	79%	C-	74%
8. Assessment and accountability: Student learning is the metric for evaluating the quality of content and instruction.	F	58%	D+	68%
9. Funding: Funding creates incentives for performance, options, and innovation.	C	75%	F	54%
10. Delivery: Infrastructure: Infrastructure supports digital learning.	F	56%	D-	60%

Source: http://www.digitallearningnow.com/report-card/state/2014/oklahoma-3/

Oklahoma was previously one of 22 states and one territory to create K-12 assessments aligned to Common Core State Standards through the Partnership for the Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC).[16] A major impact of PARCC's Common Core assessments, and a concern of many Oklahoma school districts, involved technology. Oklahoma has transitioned to a new vendor, Measured Progress, for the Online Oklahoma School Testing Program (OSTP) to assess student mastery of the Oklahoma Academic Standards rather than the Common Core Standards; however, technology remains a major component of the assessment process. The State Department of Education (SDE) has released technology guidelines[17] for the Measured Progress assessments for schools so they will be properly equipped and ready to administer the

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[16] http://www.parcconline.org/
[17] https://oklahoma.onlinehelp.measuredprogress.org/wp-content/uploads/sites/5/2018/02/OSTP_Technology_Guidelines_Spring_2018_v2.pdf

tests this spring and in future retesting sessions.

Exhibit 5-19 illustrates the most current assessment technology specifications that districts in Oklahoma must consider as they administer assessments in 2018-19. These include:

- Required Specifications – Unlike specifications provided in previous years, the technology guidelines are required. In the past, there were minimum and recommended specifications. These specifications provide the levels of computer and network capacity that are required to provide a smooth testing experience for students. Bolded items are new from previous specifications.

Exhibit 5-19
Oklahoma Spring 2019 OCCT Assessment Technology Specifications

Component	Requirement
Connectivity	Must be able to connect to the Internet via wired or wireless networks
CPU	1.2 Ghz
Memory	**2 GB**
Screen Size	9.7" screen size or larger/"10-inch class" tablets or larger
Screen Resolution	1024 x 768
Windows Desktops/Laptops	Windows 7, 8.1, **10** 32-bit, 64-bit
Mac Desktops/Laptops	10.9-**10.13**
Linux Desktops/Laptops	**Ubuntu 14.04.5 LTS, 16.04.3 LTS, Fedora 25, 26 (64-bit only)**
Windows-Based Tablets/Netbooks 2-in-1	**Windows 8.1, 10 (32-bit and 64-bit)**
Apple iOS	**iPad running iOS 11.2.5**
Chrome OS for Chromebooks	**62-64**
Browsers (Used for Practice Test Only)	**Internet Explorer 11** **Firefox 56 or newer** **Chrome 64 or newer** **Safari 9 or newer** **Microsoft Edge 40.15 or newer**
Input Device Requirements for All Desktops/Laptops	Keyboard – wired or wireless/Bluetooth Mouse or Touchpad
Headphone/Earphone/Ear Buds	Headphones/earphones/ear buds are required for students who have a text-to-speech accommodation

Source: https://oklahoma.onlinehelp.measuredprogress.org/wp-content/uploads/sites/5/2018/02/OSTP_Technology_Guidelines_Spring_2018_v2.pdf

The stated technology requirements further illustrate the importance of an adequate technology infrastructure and effective long-range planning to accommodate an increasing number of students participating in online testing in the coming years.

DPS has an Internet Use Policy in place, as well as backup system servers. The district has server maintenance outsourced to Pioneer. DPS utilized E-rate funding for wireless. The district has whiteboards in place. Staff has received initial training on the whiteboards.

The current technology organization for DPS is shown in **Exhibit 5-20**. The district receives technology support from a part-time IT technician.

Exhibit 5-20
DPS Technology Organizational Structure
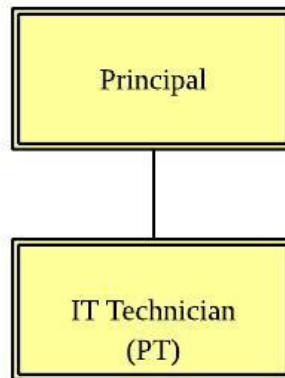
Source: Created by Prismatic, August 2018

FINDING 5-8

DPS has only one part-time staff member for technology, which is often insufficient for the support needs of teachers and students. To date, there has been no succession planning or cross-training in place.

Currently, DPS does not have someone onsite regularly to respond to daily technology questions or issues. The part-time staff member is only onsite on an as-needed basis and is paid $25 per hour.

A 2015 nationwide survey of 173 district officials, principals, and teachers found that 71 percent believed a specific office or department should be dedicated to technology in their district. The survey also found that 53.9 percent of those surveyed felt the technology training available was insufficient.[18] In a focus group with DPS teachers, the general sentiment was that there is inadequate support for technology in the district. If there is a problem, staff emails the technician. When he receives enough requests, he comes onsite to address the issues. No tracking process is in place to document the kinds of issues incurred or when they are completed.

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[18] https://s3.amazonaws.com/dive_assets/rlpsys/State_of_EdTech_Survey_2015.pdf

RECOMMENDATION

Develop and implement a "student as technician" program in cooperation with Autry Technology Center and a teacher technician program paid with stipends to supplement technology support at the sites.

DPS should include a cross-training program. The program would ensure critical processes can be performed by multiple staff members.

Maintaining district equipment and troubleshooting assistance should be primarily handled through a technology department. However, given current budget constraints, hiring additional support staff is likely not feasible. To assist with basic troubleshooting at the sites, the district should implement a "student as technician" program.

The district is encouraged to implement this concept by working with the Autry Technology Center to create and implement a "student as technician" program that benefits DPS students and staff. The superintendent should work with the principal and the extra-duty staff assigned to technology to identify the kinds of skills that would be most helpful in a "student as technician" program.

The district should also consider a teacher technician program with staff members cross-training for equipment repair and servicing. Having sufficient technical support is critical to successful technology use, both in classrooms and in administrative offices.

FISCAL IMPACT

The fiscal impact of this recommendation depends on the number of "students as technicians" and the number of teacher technicians in the program. Recommendation of the consulting team is three "students as technicians" and three teacher technicians. A $500 stipend is recommended for the teacher technicians and an hourly wage of $10 per hour for the "students as technicians" for three hours per week, 15 weeks per school year.

Recommendation	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
Develop a "students as technician" and teacher technician program.	($2,850)	($2,850)	($2,850)	($2,850)	($2,850)

FINDING 5-9

The district does not have a dedicated technology budget. The most recent technology budget is found in the Technology Plan 2006-08.

DPS draws on a number of sources to fund technology expenditures including grants, E-rate monies, state and federal funds, Title programs, and the general fund. There is no clear information on the total amount spent on technology at DPS.

According to the district's Technology Plan 2006-08, $44,300 was budgeted in 2006, $80,800 in 2007, and $63,000 in 2008.

In staff surveys, when asked about the lifespan of district technology equipment, 62 percent *agreed* or *strongly agreed* that equipment was operated past its useful lifespan (**Exhibit 5-21**). In onsite interviews and focus groups staff also expressed concerns about the age of equipment and the lack of funds needed to replace or maintain existing equipment. According to research from The Gartner Group, an independent technology research and consulting firm, the useful life of computers in public education is four to five years. Generally, computers at DPS are largely donated from Autry Technology Center and are three years old when received.

Exhibit 5-21
Staff Survey Results on Technology Equipment Lifespan

Survey Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
The district's technology equipment is often used past its useful lifespan.	27%	35%	23%	12%	4%

Source: Prismatic Survey, May 2018

To achieve satisfactory efficiency status on the International Society for Technology in Education (ISTE) Index, equipment should be placed on a four- to five-year life cycle. Some categories, such as student lab computers, may require more frequent replacement than those computers used in administrative capacities.

Technology can no longer be an afterthought or add-on in today's classrooms. It must be purposely integrated into instructional strategies and practices. In order for that to happen, funding must be available to ensure that classroom technology is up-to-date and usable. Several studies, including research by the Gartner Group, report that organizations should be budgeting between four and six percent of their overall budget to technology.

RECOMMENDATION

Establish a district technology budget that is realistic and supportive of classroom needs.

Given the district's budgetary restraints, the consulting team recommends DPS budget $25,000 per year. A suggested breakdown is shown in **Exhibit 5-22**.

Exhibit 5-22
Example Technology Budget

Items	2018-19	Cost
Maintenance	Extra-duty teacher and/or computer technician contract to monitor and maintain connectivity throughout system Replace computers with 6+ years	$15,000
Student Accounting System	Software Lease	$3,000
Staff Training	SMARTBoards refresher, Technology Integration	$2,000
Advanced technology classes	Purchase software/hardware	$2,000
Curriculum programs for remediation and enhancement	Purchase curriculum materials and/or online textbooks	$3,000

Source: DPS Technology Plan, 2006-08

The superintendent should work with the technology committee and IT technician to develop guidelines for an annual technology budget. The technology budget should be closely tied to the district strategic and technology plans.

FISCAL IMPACT

The fiscal impact of this recommendation will depend upon the replacement schedule adopted and the ability to hire needed staff. The implementation of a four- to five-year replacement cycle is recommended. The district should begin with the budget estimates noted in the new district technology plan.

Recommendation	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
Establish a district technology budget.	($25,000)	($25,000)	($25,000)	($25,000)	($25,000)

FINDING 5-10

The district does not employ a computer teacher to work with students and teachers in the labs. This leaves students and teachers with an insufficient level of technical support.

During focus groups and interviews, teachers indicated a need for computer basic instruction for students and additional assistance when accessing computer labs. Currently, a part-time, non-certified staff member is available to monitor the elementary computer lab three hours per day. The monitor's duties, primarily, are to ensure computers are working and that students can log into their accounts and software packages. No staff member is assigned to the high school lab, either full- or part-time, to assist teachers and students.

Computer labs at DPS are not being fully utilized. The consulting team observed empty labs during the onsite visit. The consulting team also observed technology being unused in some classes because troubleshooting was needed and the teacher lacked either the time or the skills to resolve the problem. Teachers indicated a personal lack of confidence and skill when using the

labs with their students. Not only are computers underutilized but students are missing needed skill development and application of technology.

RECOMMENDATION

Identify staff member(s) to teach computer basics to students and assist teachers and students in computer labs.

The superintendent should work with the principal, technology committee, and teacher representatives to identify the kinds of skills that would be most helpful in a computer lab teacher. Having sufficient technical support is critical to successful technology use, in classrooms and labs, and to increase student and teacher use.

FISCAL IMPACT

The current computer lab assistant works three days per week at $8.50 per hour. Using the DPS salary scale for the certified positions and salaries for comparable positions, the consulting team estimates an additional part-time position will require $5,000 per year in salary. Currently, part-time instructors are hired for 173 days.

Recommendation	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
Hire a part-time computer lab teacher.	($5,000)	($5,000)	($5,000)	($5,000)	($5,000)

FINDING 5-11

The district has little or no technology staff development or plan. During focus groups and interviews, staff reported a wide range of technology skills among the teaching staff. Initial training was provided when SMARTBoards were purchased but no follow-up training has been made available. Currently staff development sessions are held at the start of school and focus on state requirements such as blood-borne pathogens, school security, and classroom management. Teachers related that when they request to attend sessions at other locations, administration is helpful in sending them. However, they do not always know what is available or what they need.

The Technology Plan 2006-08 included a budgetary section on staff training. A budget of $2,000 was allocated for this area.

In walk-throughs during the onsite portion of the review, the consulting team found few examples of technology being used in the regular classrooms. A few teachers were using SMARTBoards to enrich instruction (**Exhibit 5-23**). Overall, computers and other technology equipment were idle, rather than in use. Computer labs were empty (**Exhibit 5-24**). The only notable exception to this was in the FCCLA room, where the consulting team observed students on computers.

Exhibit 5-23
Elementary Classroom

Source: Prismatic, August 2018

Exhibit 5-24
High School Computer Classroom
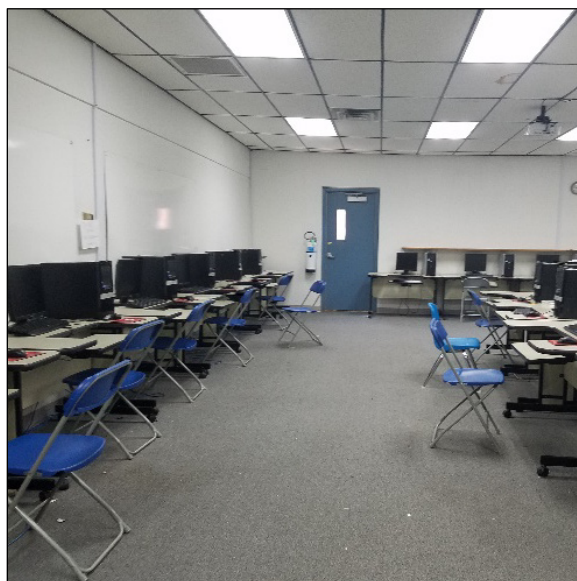
Source: Prismatic, August 2018

Possible causes for this lack of technology implementation and integration are the absence of district expectations and training. The ISTE Index identifies exemplary school districts as having these staff development practices related to technology:

- a comprehensive staff development program is in place that impacts all staff. The program is

progressive in nature and balances incentive, accountability, and diverse learning opportunities;

- online training opportunities are provided for staff both onsite and remotely, and represents a diversity of skill sets;

- a process and delivery system has been established for just-in-time training, organization-wide, and is used consistently;

- expectations for all staff are clearly articulated and are broad in scope. Performance expectations are built into work functions and are part of the organizational culture;

- technical staff receives ample training as a normal part of their employment, including training towards certification; and

- basic troubleshooting is built into the professional development program, and is used as a first line of defense in conjunction with technical support.

Standards developed by ISTE divide teacher technology use into five broad practices:

1. facilitate and inspire student learning and creativity;

2. design and develop digital-age learning experiences and assessments;

3. model digital-age work and learning;

4. promote and model digital citizenship and responsibility; and

5. engage in professional growth and leadership[19].

RECOMMENDATION

Develop a training program that focuses on increasing teachers' basic technology skills and integrating technology into the instructional program.

Ongoing opportunities for professional development should be available to teachers, administrators, and support personnel at all levels. It should focus on the specific needs of individual staff and be sustained through coaching and periodic updates.

The technology committee and IT technician should build upon the foundation already laid with previous training. The district should complete a needs assessment to identify areas for development. The next step is to identify minimum expectations for teacher skills in the district.

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[19] http://www.ascd.org/publications/educational-leadership/mar13/vol70/num06/Technology-Skills-Every-Teacher-Needs.aspx

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING 5-12

The district's technology plan is from 2008. DPS has not formalized a process for including multiple stakeholders on a technology committee or the development of a current technology plan. Multiple stakeholders include parents, students, community members, and businesses. Community and business partnerships could provide additional perspective in planning, implementation, and evaluation.

From the district's previous technology plan, there is no evidence of committee participation by parents or community members and currently no such committee exists. Including stakeholders such as parents, students, community members, and businesses could provide additional perspective in planning, implementation, and evaluation.

The National Center for Technology Planning recommends five phases for an effective planning model:

- **Phase 1: Recruit and organize the planning team.** It is important that the planning team consists of all stakeholder groups, and members should excel in planning and communication skills. Stakeholders may include technology specialists, district leaders, parents, students, community members, and business leaders;

- **Phase 2: Research.** This phase consists of a needs assessment and an effort to identify the technologies that can be applied to those needs and ascertain how they can be applied;

- **Phase 3: Construct the technology plan.** This phase focuses on applying the research to establish the district's vision/mission and to define the goals and objectives that will lead to fulfilling that vision and mission;

- **Phase 4: Formalize the planning.** This phase culminates into a comprehensive document that analyzes the present state of the district with respect to technology, articulates specific goals and objectives, incorporates clearly defined strategies and budgetary plans to realize the desired state of technology in the district, and includes a process for evaluation; and

- **Phase 5: Continually implement, evaluate, and revise.** This phase deals with the ongoing implementation, evaluation, and revision of the plan to ensure progress is made.

The consulting team found no evidence that DPS has updated the plan since it was written in 2006, although many goals have been achieved. Key to the planning process is conducting periodic needs assessments and structuring the plan around the results. Additionally, there are no parents, students, community members, or business leaders on a planning team. During the review, the consulting team found no evidence of a technology planning committee in place since the 2006 technology plan was developed.

RECOMMENDATION

Create a technology committee comprised of administrators, teachers, and parents or students to develop and update the district's technology plan.

Establishing a committee that includes staff and outside stakeholders should provide additional perspectives in planning, implementation, and evaluation of technology. Such stakeholders could include parents, students, community members, and businesses as partners. Including teacher leaders on the technology committee could also enhance opportunities for strategic planning and could increase buy-in among staff members, as well as increase understanding of what is possible.

The DPS technology plan should be a current, comprehensive document that drives technology expenditures, implementation, and decision-making. The plan should be tied to the district strategic plan and professional development plan. The district should formalize and utilize a process for including a technology committee in technology strategic planning and the development of a long-term planning document. The superintendent should direct the technology committee to develop and periodically update a comprehensive technology plan. The plan should be achievable and based upon the current state of the district. By incorporating clearly articulated vision and mission statements, followed by specific goals, measurable objectives, adequate funding, and a detailed evaluation process, the district ensures that technology purchases and services are in line with the goals set forth in the plan and result in student achievement gains. The plan and progress should then be communicated to all stakeholders to ensure a common understanding and purpose. To facilitate effective use of technology funds, the technology committee should:

- periodically review the technology plan for accuracy and make necessary additions and deletions;

- develop hardware and software standards, and review them with all personnel;

- centralize the software purchasing process to avoid purchases that cannot be supported or will not function properly on the district's equipment;

- recommend the types of computer equipment that should be purchased and the most effective distribution of that equipment;

- develop a training program for all staff; and

- establish a policy on the purchase of extended warranties for hardware and the standardization of operating systems, antivirus, applications, and office software.

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING 5-13

DPS has a parent communication system in place. In addition to that system, DPS also utilizes social media to keep the community informed.

The district regularly uses social media to communicate with external stakeholders. This supports stakeholder engagement and effective communications. DPS uses a private Facebook group which allows parents, teachers, and staff to post questions, pictures, and relevant information. DPS posts pictures from events, fundraiser details, and updates to keep parents informed. This method of communication is free and provides parents quick and easy access to the information.

The district provides a Parent Portal through the MAS student information system. The Portal allows parents to view assignments and grades that teachers have posted. Additionally, DPS uses Remind, a school communication and free messaging app to communicate with staff, parents, and students. According to staff interviews and focus groups, the app is used to inform users of school closures, activities, etc.

A report by Civic Enterprises[20] points to the importance of communication in achieving student success. The report emphasized using technology capabilities to provide access to information for parents, students, and school personnel. The importance of communicating with parents not only to address a problem but also to share positive aspects of the school experience was highlighted. DPS is making efforts to address these specific communication issues through the use of the Drummond Facebook group, MAS, and the Remind app.

COMMENDATION

DPS has a parent communication system in place.

FINDING 5-14

There are currently no electronic procedures for attendance, grading, lessons, or planning. This reduces the efficiency of these processes.

While the district uses MAS for a student information system and parent portal, staff indicated in focus groups and interviews that attendance, grading, and lesson planning are all paper-based. DPS is missing a number of procedures that would increase the efficiency of basic processes and data tracking.

Google for Education[21] is a free, online integrated solution for schools, and includes a suite of productivity tools for communication, classroom connectivity, and collaboration. Google's website, Google Apps for Education, now known as G Suite for Education, provides district-wide core services, including email through Gmail for students and staff, Calendar, Classroom,

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[20] Bridgeland, J. M., Balfanz, R., Moore, L. A., & Friant, R. S. (2010). *Raising their voices: Engaging students, teachers, and parents to help end the high school dropout epidemic* (PDF file). Washington, DC: Civic Enterprises. Retrieved from http://www.civicenterprises.net/MediaLibrary/Docs/raising_their_voices.pdf

[21] https://edu.google.com

Contacts, Drive, Docs, Forms, Groups, Google Hangouts, and more. An advantage is that use of Google G Suite complies with The Children's Online Privacy Protection Act of 1988 (COPPA) and The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA). No advertising is posted and student data are protected.

RECOMMENDATION

Implement Google for Education to increase communication and classroom collaboration throughout the district at no cost.

Google for Education is a group of digital tools designed to host and distribute online documents, communication, and collaboration by way of cloud-based technology. As such, no additional hardware or software is required.

In order for a school to utilize Google for Education, a school designee must signup for the G Suite for Education, enter the school's domain information, and create an admin account. Next, the technology support members add users, set up the apps, and access features. Google for Education provides free, online staff development for instructional staff in order for implementation to move forward.

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING 5-15

The district does not have a process to record or track technology maintenance issues. The district would benefit from developing and implementing procedures for submitting and tracking technology issues and resolutions.

Currently, no formal process or procedure exists. There is no observance or follow through of a formal, documented process for addressing computer issues such as set-up, configuration, software installation, and repair. As a result, teachers, support staff, and administrators call or email the part-time technician to report support issues and request assistance. This lack of documentation and procedure leads to unresolved or incomplete repairs; plus, there is no supporting information available to consult when purchasing equipment or accounting for man-hours on task. This absence of processes and procedures leads to inefficiencies, additional costs, and unresolved support issues.

Time and manpower needed to provide appropriate responses to technology-based problems at DPS are limited. Additionally, the absence of support procedures and criteria, incident requests and completion data, communication and follow-up, make the existing staff members less effective in supporting technology.

With an online work order system and written procedures, staff will be able to access it from the district network to report issues or dilemmas with technology. If fully implemented and utilized, the system could speed response times and provide a database for identifying and analyzing systemic problems.

RECOMMENDATION

Complete and implement support procedures and a technology work order system that includes features such as logging, priority assignment, and completion.

The district should implement procedures and documentation processes to track district technology issues. Detailed support data provides staff with needed information when considering new equipment purchases, retiring existing equipment, or accounting for man-hours on a task.

One solution that DPS should consider is Zoho Desk, a cloud-based help desk ticketing software.[22] Zoho Desk allows the technician to document and track technology incidents, provide work queues, reminders, and prioritization, as well as self-help troubleshooting for users. Detailed reports are available to determine the average resolution time, as well as the number of tickets opened and closed. A free version is available that allows for three technicians or agents.

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING 5-16

There is currently no district standard for hardware or software and no system for tracking data. Because no standard exists, equipment with inadequate memory and specifications has been purchased or remains in use. No framework for equipment replacement or lifecycle exists, resulting in equipment in classrooms that is past its usefulness or kept in storage. A partial inventory of existing laptops in the district listed machines with Windows XP or Windows 7 operating systems. Both operating systems are out of date.

In the district, there are no minimum technology (network, hardware, and software) standards and protocols in place. A lack of coordination and guidelines results in equipment and software that no longer meet user needs or are obsolete and unusable for the designated purpose. While the initial tendency may be to hold onto technology as long as it has any functionality, that typically leads to more user frustration than high quality learning experiences. This absence of processes and procedures leads to additional costs and an increased backlog of support issues.

RECOMMENDATION

Develop district technology standards, procedures, and processes for administrative tasks, equipment and software purchases, implementation, and upgrades.

The responsibility and technical expertise needed to meet user demands can no longer be performed in a fragmented fashion. All district technology needs must be prioritized and addressed in a systematic manner beginning with the development of standards.

The district should develop district standards for all hardware, software, and network purchases.

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[22] https://www.zoho.com/desk/

The Oklahoma Technology Guidelines for 2019 should be the starting point of the discussion on district needs and standards.

The next step is to use the current inventory. Using the existing inventory, the IT technician or other designated staff member should establish a priority list of which types of computers are to be replaced first and with what type of device. The IT technician should also establish the expected longevity and scheduled replacement for each computer category.

Once these replacement schedules have been established, the superintendent should link district general funds designated for computer replacement to the number of computers to be replaced. The same process can be used for other computer-related equipment, such as printers. DPS may consider selling surplus equipment in an online auction and utilizing a complete surplus management system. One option to consider is Public Surplus.[23] The company:

- provides a detailed audit record of all activity;

- automatically reallocates surplus items internally; and

- provides a dynamic bid auction for those items not internally reallocated.

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING 5-17

The district website is out of date. The website has calendar info from the previous year. School meal menus are from March 2018. As a result, website communication with staff, parents, and students is lacking.

The DPS website has many pages that go unused or underutilized. These include the Handbook, Sports Schedule, and Staff links, all with last year's information. The cafeteria's menu pages are missing. The school calendar has been updated since the consulting team visit. The Board Meetings link includes agendas and minutes only. No information about who the Board Members are is given. The district has two Facebook pages, elementary and high school, that share photos and highlight events.

Staff and parent survey results indicate some dissatisfaction with the DPS website (**Exhibit 5-25**). Almost one-third of staff and parents do not feel that the current website is useful.

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[23] http://www.publicsurplus.com/sms/browse/home

Exhibit 5-25
Survey Results on the Website

	Survey Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Staff	The district website is useful for staff, parents and students.	15%	42%	12%	19%	12%
Parents	The district website is a useful tool for me and/or my child.	28%	22%	22%	11%	17%

Source: Prismatic Survey, May 2018

Moveable Online regularly outlines best practices for websites by industry. They note that desktops and laptops are no longer the most common access point for users browsing the web. Many people use smartphones to navigate the internet.[24] Simple navigation is also an important factor in any website design, but especially for schools, as stakeholders and prospective students depend on easily accessible information.[25] Simple does not necessarily mean minimal. A website with simple navigation in mind should not have outdated information or empty tabs that lead the user to a dead end.

For students, an effective district website includes schedules, policies, and faculty contact information that are up to date. Teacher pages on the website should include assignments, files that can be shared with students and parents, classroom rules and procedures, links to useful educational content, and links to instructional support programs that students may access from home.

RECOMMENDATION

Update and expand the district website. Increase efforts to provide clear and consistent methods of communicating with stakeholders.

The district should designate someone to manage the content and currency of the district website. At a minimum, the district should include these items on its website in addition to items already available:

- board meeting notes (agendas and minutes are already included);

- information on the board members and elections;

- policy manual;

- teacher-level content;

- information on academic performance;

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[24] http://moveableonline.com/blog/2014/08/20/8-key-features-websites-education-sector/
[25] https://www.eschoolview.com/What-Makes-a-Good-School-Website.aspx

- connections to Facebook and other social media feeds; and

- financial data, including budgets.

The district may find it efficient to contract with a service provider to support the website redesign and content development.

FISCAL IMPACT

The consulting team recommends that the district contract with an outside provider for some support in this area. Based on available providers, website design and support could be obtained for as little as $150 per month with a one-time set-up fee of $500.

Recommendation	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
Improve the district website.	($2,300)	($1,800)	($1,800)	($1,800)	($1,800)

FINDING 5-18

DPS does not have a district-wide inventory of technology. There is no replacement cycle.

The district does not maintain a current technology inventory. No documentation or estimate exists for the number of administrative computers, printers, or other technology in the district. Because DPS does not have a systematic fixed asset inventory for technology equipment, the numbers of available and updated technology equipment cannot be easily obtained or verified. Current inventory procedures are paper-based, inadequate (on individual flash drives for each room), or do not exist.

Items should be recorded in a digital file by serial number, tagged, and have their location and person of primary responsibility noted, as well as date of purchase. Multiple digital copies of this file should be saved and given to the superintendent and principal. Updates should be made as new purchases are received and obsolete equipment is retired. At a minimum, an annual inventory of all equipment should be conducted.

RECOMMENDATION

Adopt a formal inventory process and procedure for computers and other technology equipment that includes assigning new equipment and maintaining a record of all technology devices.

Procedures for developing the whole school inventory should include specific steps in regard to existing computer and other technology as well as subsequent purchases. The inventory should be periodically and systematically updated.

When equipment from future purchases is delivered, it should be received by the responsible technology designee and then processed into the inventory system. Physical inventories should be taken and status reports should be generated according to the adopted school board policy.

Having the receiving, tagging, assignment, and inventory processes standardized will prevent confusion about the count, value, age, and location of district technology assets.

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING 5-19

The district has equipment in place but there has been no evaluation of whether it is being used fully. As a result, the district is not ensuring it is maximizing its technology use or expenditures.

The district has no structured procedures in place to assess staff, student, or parent use of, and satisfaction with, technology available in the district. There is no formal process in place for evaluating technology implementation and use. DPS has made a number of technology investments in infrastructure, hardware, and software, and continues to invest in technology. However, by not following up after the initial purchase and set up to determine the use of technology or the problems preventing its use, the district lacks the kind of information that leads to sound decision-making and improvement.

With the onset of online assessments, web-based textbooks, and college and workplace requirements, students must be comfortable and adept at using computers, the Internet, and other technology resources. In order for students to develop and build the necessary skills and comfort level, students must have reliable, consistent access and integrated use of technology. In addition to providing access to students, it is critical that the district identify what technologies are being used, provide teachers with the tools and training to integrate those technologies into instruction, and evaluate whether or not these strategies result in student achievement gains.

RECOMMENDATION

Develop procedures to assess technology use and satisfaction with the goal of establishing higher use.

The district should frequently gauge user satisfaction and adjust, in order to ensure optimal technology service. The district should track and analyze technology use in classrooms, in order to ensure it has used its technology resources most effectively. This will also identify whether additional supports, such as training or improved infrastructure, are needed. The district could also implement a method to assess staff, student, and community satisfaction with technology-integrated classes and instruction. This knowledge could help inform future planning in technology acquisition and implementation.

A number of survey instruments and checklists are available free of charge. Survey examples may be found at the Wufoo Form Gallery,[26] including technology support surveys, website content surveys, and student satisfaction surveys. Additionally, ISTE has developed a Classroom Observation Tool that provides districts with a mechanism to record and analyze technology use in classrooms. This free tool is built in Microsoft Excel and allows district personnel to record

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[26] http://www.wufoo.com/gallery/

information on classroom groupings, teacher roles, time, types of technology used, and compliance with the ISTE. Once the information is gathered, district personnel should discuss the findings with staff and make needed adjustments.

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING 5-20

Internet access in parts of the building is lacking or non-existent. Without fast, reliable access, teachers can be reluctant to use internet-based resources in classroom instruction and non-teaching staff can be hampered in completing their daily duties.

Instructional staff members indicated during focus groups and interviews a lack of connectivity in parts of the building. This was also experienced by the consulting team during onsite visits. Teachers reported that carts of iPads go unused due to a lack of consistent or slow Internet access in parts of the building.

DPS used E-Rate funding to establish a wireless network throughout the building. While connectivity in the high school area of the building is consistent, access issues exist in the elementary areas of the building and by the gymnasium. As a result, iPads and other technology equipment are not being used or used effectively.

RECOMMENDATION

Assess all areas of the school building and increase the number of wireless access points where needed.

DPS outsources their server and wireless maintenance to Pioneer Telephone Cooperative (PTC). An assessment of the current placement of wireless access points should be conducted to determine areas that are lacking connectivity. After the analysis, existing access points may need to be relocated or additional access points purchased.

FISCAL IMPACT

PTC installed 15 wireless access points at a cost of $8,250, according to staff interviews and documentation from PTC. Based on that cost, the consulting team recommends budgeting $1,100 for two additional access points to increase connectivity.

Recommendation	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
Assess and increase wireless connectivity.	($1,100)	$0	$0	$0	$0

FINDING 5-21

The district's computers were acquired through Autry Technology Center. At the time of this review, they are three years old.

Given budgetary constraints in DPS, a cooperative agreement is in place where Autry Technology Center donates used computers to the district. Because Autry replaces their computers after three years, the machines are still viable for DPS' uses at no cost. Autry Technology further cleans the hard drives, checks for viruses, and prepares the computers for use by district staff and students.

COMMENDATION

DPS is commended for forming a partnership with Autry Technology Center to acquire donated equipment and computers.

FINDING 5-22

The district received a National Rifle Association (NRA) grant for a security system. This included funding for new security technology.

During the 2017-18 school year, DPS submitted and received a grant from the NRA, for $8,499, for a project to enhance the main entrance and security of the building. The funds allowed DPS to acquire a security system with access control and visitor management elements, including a sliding glass window, new entry door, remote access button, new wall/double door, and Lobby Guard.

COMMENDATION

DPS is commended for addressing security concerns by submitting and receiving a grant through the NRA for a building security system.

C.   *TRANSPORTATION*

The primary objective of school transportation is to provide safe, timely, and efficient transportation services to students. Oklahoma's 7,600 school buses travel more than 67 million miles a year, carrying nearly 369,000 children every day.

School districts collectively operate the safest form of transportation in the country and, per the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration school buses are safer than any other form of public or private mode of transportation. Students are nearly 50 times more likely to get to and from school safely when riding school buses instead of riding in cars, and school buses are built with crash-safety features unmatched by any other type of commuter vehicle. They also help ameliorate some of the adverse environmental effects of mass automobile commute – each school bus filled replaces 36 cars in America, saving over two billion gallons of fuel and nearly 45 billion pounds of carbon dioxide emissions each year.[27]

The Oklahoma School Code (OSC) authorizes school districts to provide student transportation services between school and home, from school to career and technology location, and for approved extracurricular activities. The federal *Individuals with Disabilities Education Act*

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[27] National Highway Transportation Safety Administration – http://www.nhtsa.gov/

(*IDEA*) requires districts to provide transportation services to students who must travel to receive special education services, if they provide regular school transportation services.

The Oklahoma State Department of Education (SDE) provides some funding for regular transportation of students who live more than 1.5 miles from the assigned school. Oklahoma school districts receive a transportation supplement that is calculated based upon a per capita allowance, the district's student density, and the number of students who live more than 1.5 miles from school (considered the average daily haul or ADH). These factors are multiplied by a state funding figure of $1.39 (transportation factor), a figure that has not been updated since 1988.

This level of funding does not begin to support all transportation expenses in a typical Oklahoma school district. In general, the state transportation supplement provides just 16 percent of the funding needed to operate a district transportation program. Thus, every dollar saved in a school district's transportation program can instead be spent in other district programs, including classroom instruction.

The Oklahoma Department of Public Safety (ODPS) requires bus drivers to obtain a specialized bus driver's license. The SDE requires bus drivers to obtain bus driver certification and training and to pass a license history review. DPS conducts criminal background checks on all new employees and annually evaluates the motor vehicle records of the personnel who drive school vehicles. New bus drivers also must pass an alcohol and drug test for pre-employment and submit to random drug tests that are administered throughout the year, as defined by the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration's regulation § 382.305.

The DPS transportation department provides route and extracurricular transportation for its students. With approximately 88 square miles to cover, the district uses six regular buses (**Exhibit 5-26**). **Exhibit 5-27** provides a breakdown of the fleet, support vehicles, and equipment. Of the six regular buses, one has been placed out of service and is not being used due to the expense of the repairs. Special needs transportation is provided via an SUV in the fleet. Currently, the district owns all of the vehicles in its fleet and does not lease any.

Exhibit 5-26
DPS Bus Fleet Usage

Bus Type	Number	% of Fleet
Regular	6	100%
Special Needs	0	0
Total	**6**	

Source: DPS, August 2018

Exhibit 5-27
Bus Fleet, Support Vehicles, and Equipment

Inventory #	Year	Make/Model
1	2007	GMC Yukon
2	2008	Chevy Uplander Truck
3	1999	GMC Suburban Van
4	2005	Chevy Malibu
5	1998	Flatbed Trailer
6	2002	Titan Stock Trailer
7	2006	Bumper Stock Trailer
8	1997	Bluebird School Bus
9	2002	Thomas Freightliner School Bus
10	2014	Dodge 1 Ton Pickup
11	2014	Chevy Suburban
12	2015	Chevy Suburban
13	2012	Chevy School Bus
14	2008	Bluebird School Bus
15	2008	Thomas Freightliner School Bus
16	2012	Bluebird School Bus

Source: DPS, August 2018

After morning routes, school buses are parked in the rear of the main building (**Exhibit 5-28**). DPS buses are parked in two metal buildings each night (**Exhibits 5-29** through **5-31**).

Exhibit 5-28
DPS Bus Parking (Aerial View)
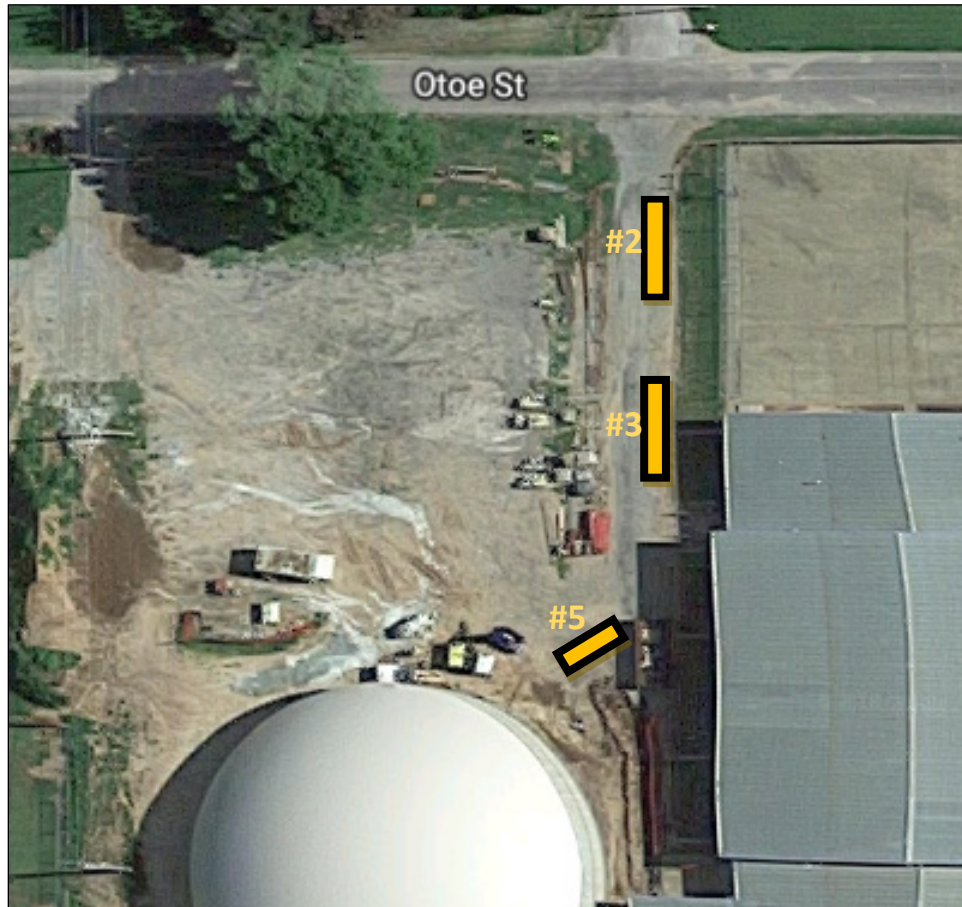
Source: Prismatic, August 2018

Exhibit 5-29
DPS Bus Parking and Storage Buildings (Street View)

Storage Building
#1
Using 2 bays

Storage Building
#2
Using 4 bays

Source: Prismatic, August 2018

Exhibit 5-30
DPS Bus Parking and Storage Buildings (Aerial View)

Storage Building #1
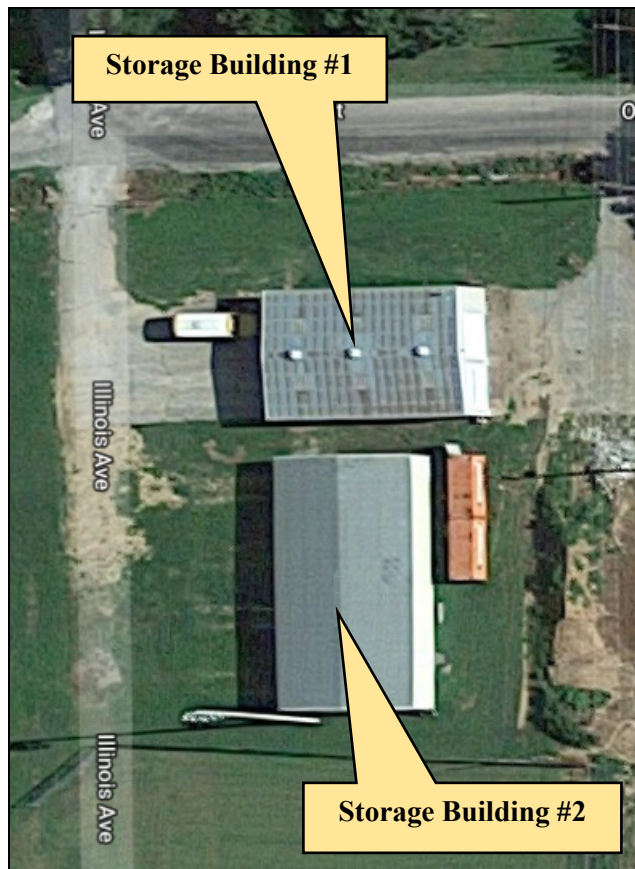
Storage Building #2

Source: Prismatic, August 2018

Exhibit 5-31
DPS Storage Building 1

Interior view of Building #1

Source: Prismatic, August 2018

Currently, the district has 13 Oklahoma CDL certified drivers to operate school buses. Of the 13, three are regular route drivers while the other ten are utilized on an as-needed basis. Drivers maintain a current Oklahoma Commercial Driver's License, with the proper endorsements and must report any moving violations to the principal, who also serves as the transportation director. Before the start of each school year and before any drivers are permitted to drive a school bus, drivers must submit to a full license review. DPS then reviews the licenses for proper endorsement and infraction history. DPS transportation policy mandates that any traffic infraction must be reported to the director of transportation immediately. The district maintains and files driving records that comply with the ODPS. The department maintains these records for the duration of the school year.

Exhibit 5-32 provides a seven-year comparison of DPS transportation expenditures as a percent of total expenditures as well as the annual transportation expenditures per student. Over that time, transportation expenses have ranged from 2.3 percent to 10.1 percent of all expenditures. Transportation dollars per student have varied from $258 per student in 2011-12 to $1,007 in 2015-16.

Exhibit 5-32
Trend in DPS Transportation Expenses
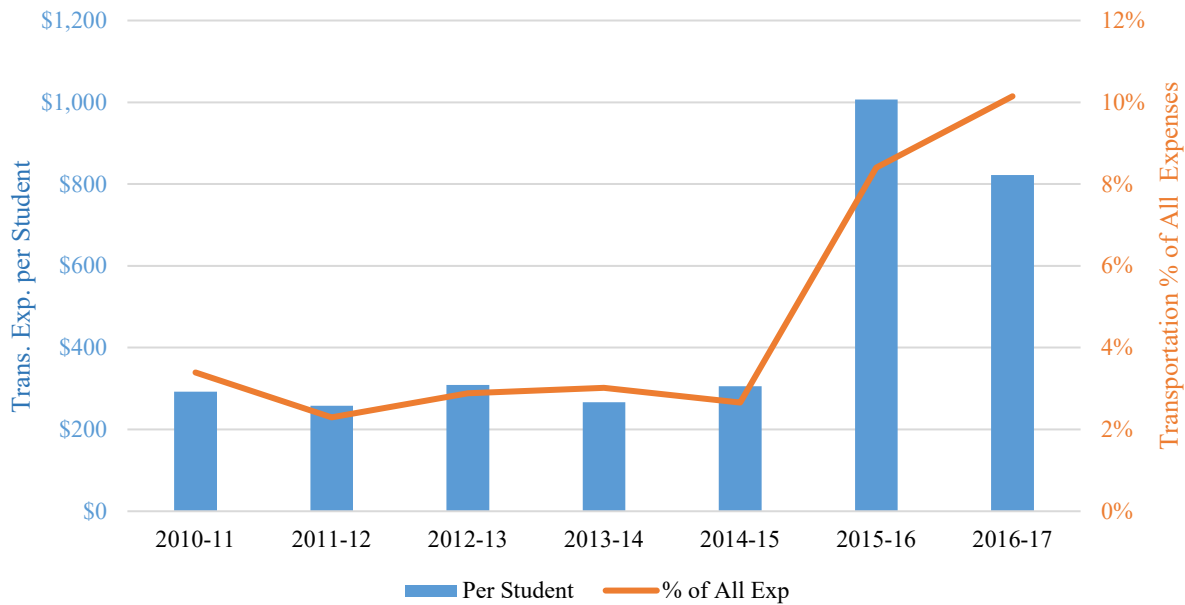
Source: OCAS and Prismatic calculations

Exhibit 5-33 compares DPS transportation costs over time. The exhibit includes all transportation expenses by category. In the past five years, almost every category of transportation spending has increased substantially. This has resulted in a near doubling of total transportation expenses.

Exhibit 5-33
Trend in DPS Transportation Operating Costs

Expenditure Category	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	Percent Change
Salaries	$18,300	$21,067	$26,240	$28,370	$29,614	61.8%▲
Benefits	$3,529	$4,017	$4,982	$5,820	$6,150	74.3%▲
Purchased Services	$26,383	$26,602	$28,723	$25,139	$219,140	730.6%▲
Supplies	$44,616	$31,637	$36,348	$28,904	$24,901	(44.2%)▼
Property	$7,048	$4,500	$0	$222,054	$0	(100.0%)▼
Other	$289	$135	$689	$112	$3,031	948.8%▲
Total	**$100,165**	**$87,958**	**$96,982**	**$310,399**	**$282,836**	**182.4%▲**
Annual Percent Change		**(12.2%)▼**	**10.3%▲**	**220.1▲**	**(8.9%)▼**	

Source: SDE, OCAS, School District Expenditures and Prismatic calculations

Exhibits 5-34 and **5-35** compare the change in DPS and the peer districts' transportation costs over time. **Exhibit 5-34** includes all transportation expenses recorded in the Oklahoma Cost Accounting System (OCAS) by each district. As shown, DPS' transportation expenses have increased more than any of the peers.

Exhibit 5-34
Comparison of Transportation Costs Over Time (Including Property Expenses)

Entity	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	Percent Change
Drummond	**$100,166**	**$87,959**	**$96,983**	**$310,552**	**$282,838**	182.4%▲
Robin Hill	$30,486	$33,894	$26,903	$38,686	$54,561	79.0%▲
Kremlin-Hillsdale	$126,856	$256,425	$110,603	$114,367	$132,078	4.1%▲
Sharon-Mutual	$226,372	$214,282	$178,828	$255,999	$149,626	(33.9%)▼
Pioneer	$39,132	$31,636	$324,285	$27,516	$30,336	(22.5%)▼
Union City	$70,020	$35,141	$42,034	$45,216	$44,425	(36.6%)▼
Peer Average	**$98,573**	**$114,276**	**$136,531**	**$96,357**	**$82,205**	(16.6%)▼

Source: SDE, OCAS, School District Expenditures, All Funds, 2012 through 2017, SDE State Aid Section, and Prismatic calculations

Exhibit 5-35 provides a comparison of just property expenses allocated to transportation in DPS and the peers. As shown, transportation property expenses tend to be intermittent rather than annual, both in DPS and the peers. Only one of the peers had no expenses in this category.

Exhibit 5-35
Comparison of Property Expenses for Transportation Over Time

Entity	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17
Drummond	**$7,048**	**$4,500**	**$0**	**$222,054**	**$0**
Robin Hill	$0	$11,833	$11,833	$11,833	$0
Kremlin-Hillsdale	$5,553	$120,377	$599	$2,634	$0
Sharon-Mutual	$37,440	$0	$0	$77,358	$0
Pioneer	$38	$0	$295,369	$0	$0
Union City	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0

Source: SDE, OCAS, School District Expenditures, All Funds, 2012 through 2017, SDE State Aid Section, and Prismatic calculations

FINDING 5-23

The DPS principal/transportation director manages all pupil transportation functions. The principal is responsible for transportation data input, records management, and other clerical duties.

The organizational structure is represented in **Exhibit 5-36**. All current route bus drivers are dual employees and receive additional pay for driving a school bus. As routes or driving positions become available, interested staff already employed by the district are encouraged to bid on the vacated assignment. The transportation director is directly involved in the daily pupil transportation operation, and his time is split with many transportation functions, including transportation coordinator, timekeeper, substitute driver assignment, and transportation records management.

Exhibit 5-36
DPS Transportation Organization
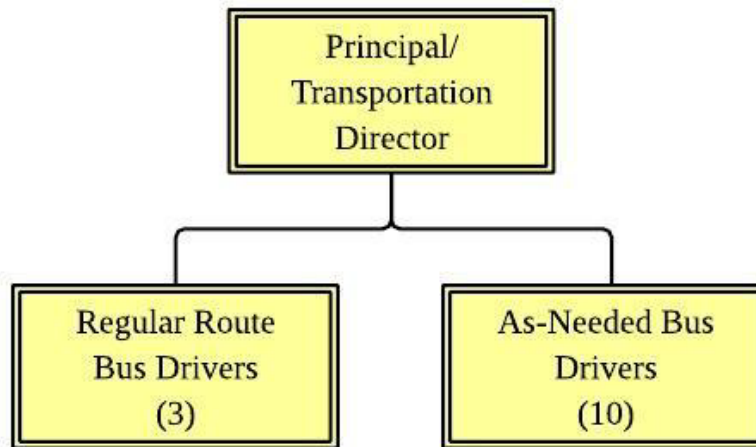
Source: Created by Prismatic, August 2018

RECOMMENDATION

Assign clerical transportation functions to clerical staff.

This will permit the principal/transportation director to concentrate less on routine tasks and focus on more specific areas of pupil transportation operations. This recommendation can be achieved by transferring some of the transportation clerical issues to one of the existing secretarial positions.

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING 5-24

The DPS transportation department receives no training or information regarding the students with individual education plans (IEPs) being transported by the district. Bus drivers do not receive any information on students that may require special considerations. During the onsite visit, the consulting team did not find any information or information-sharing relating to students and transportation services. As drivers are also employed elsewhere in the district, staff may assume that drivers are already aware of the needs of IEP students, but this may not be the case.

DPS drivers do not receive training on interaction or intervention strategies, that may be useful while transporting students with an IEP. Bus drivers are only given limited, word-of-mouth explanations of a student's situation and, more often than not, no formal instructions at all on any student with an IEP.

Currently, there are approximately 70 students with IEPs that are transported daily on regular buses or by means of caregivers. During the site visit, the consulting team requested information

on the student's intervention portfolio and any general notation supplied to each driver. Due in part to privacy concerns, this information is not readily available to the individual driver.

RECOMMENDATION

Adopt and implement a plan for special needs considerations for students transported via regular buses.

The transportation director and subsequent drivers should receive educational training and information on each student's individual situation, and each driver should receive supplementary training to understand, monitor, report, and interact with any student assigned to his or her vehicle.

The transportation director should attend all IEP meetings, as each student's individual program has a direct implication for the transportation department. The special needs department should educate any and all assigned drivers and debrief with the transportation director on a bi-monthly basis to report, plan, and review any issues a student is experiencing. The transportation director should work in concert with the special education department to inform and educate all employees that may have direct interaction with special education.

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING 5-25

Bus drivers do not receive written procedures or instructions regarding job performance expectations. They are routinely unaware of policies in such areas as pupil transportation, tobacco use, cell phones, and student interaction. Those individuals assigned to drive a school bus receive some general information, but little information is documented.

Currently, those employees assigned to drive school buses do not receive written procedures or instructions regarding transportation of students. During the onsite work, the consulting team ascertained that drivers were unaware of SDE policies or manuals of instruction in the areas of pupil transportation that give information on such topics as tobacco use, cell phones, student interaction, danger zones, loading and unloading, and emergency exits (**Exhibit 5-37 and Exhibit 5-38).**

What information is received is generally received by word of mouth or by means of historical practice. Route changes or addendums are added or changed to the route maps, as needed. Such information is kept on record in the superintendent's office, and is dispersed to the appropriate driver.

During the assignment process, bus drivers receive a standard DPS Handbook, which is online. This handbook contains two pages (**Exhibit 5-39**) of general transportation information, but does not cover in detail specific information on transportations' operational activities.

Exhibit 5-37
SDE Transportation Department Manual

Exhibit 5-38
Oklahoma School Bus Driver Manual Excerpt

SECTION 10 – School Buses

- **Danger Zones and Use of Mirrors**
- **Loading and Unloading**
- **Emergency Exit and Evacuation**
- **Railroad-Highway Crossings**
- **Student Management**
- **Antilock Braking Systems**
- **Special Safety Considerations**

This section is for drivers who will be driving school buses.

Commercial Driver's Manual   10-1

First Aid CPR. Cur Vo-Tech. Sept. 21st

Source: SDE, August 2018

Situations That Create Risk

School bus drivers have a duty to operate their school bus safely. However, there are situations inside a school bus that could distract the driver and compromise the driver's ability to operate the bus safely. A distraction is something that takes a driver's concentration away from driving. It is usually something that will make you have to look in the rear-view mirror.

Many situations on a school bus can be distracting. A partial list of potentially distracting situations is below.

- Loading and unloading
- Pushing, shoving, running down the aisle
- Fighting/bullying
- Use of loud and abusive language
- Throwing objects
- Smoking
- Lewd behavior
- Use of drugs and alcohol
- Vandalism
- Weapons
- Inappropriate or sexual misconduct

As much as possible a school bus driver needs to handle these situations in a way that will not compromise the safe operation of the school bus.

How to Maintain Control

The first step to maintaining control of the student's behavior on the bus is to remember what students need. Just like adults, students need:

- Respect,
- Recognition,
- To feel in control of their circumstances
- To associate with their peers
- o feel important to their peers.

Some things bus drivers do help maintain control of their bus. Things like a one-on-one talk, a friendly smile, reward programs, concentrating on the ringleader, calling the difficult person to the front of the bus, and telling the good students they really are good can help a driver get or maintain control.

Some things bus drivers do don't help maintain control of their bus. Things like screaming or yelling, disciplining a student in front of the whole group, being grumpy, threatening, and not saying good morning can cause problems for a school bus driver.

General Guidelines

Remember a school bus driver should never hit or touch a child unless there is a danger to you or to other students. Some exceptions may be when a small child initiates a hug. Regardless, it is essential that you know and follow your districts guidelines on these matters. Below is a list of guidelines that will help you avoid pitfalls as you maintain discipline on your bus.

1. Save discipline for safety-related behavior; don't nitpick.
2. Don't get drawn into an argument with a student.
3. Don't threaten to do something you cannot do.
4. Don't threaten something and then not do it.
5. Don't discipline the whole group; take the ringleader aside.
6. Handle negative comments away from other students.
7. Don't let the situation get out of hand.

Handling a Serious Problem

1. Stop the bus.
   - Park in a safe location off the road.
   - This may be a parking lot or a driveway.
2. Secure the bus.
   - Take the ignition key with you if you leave your seat.
3. Stand up and speak to the offender or offenders.
   - Speak in a courteous manner with a firm voice.
   - Remind the offenders of the behavior expected of them.
   - Don't show anger but do show that you mean business.
4. If a change of seating is needed, move the student to a seat near you.
5. NEVER put a student off the bus except at school or at his or her residence/school bus stop.
   - If you feel that the offense is serious enough that you cannot safely drive the bus, call your dispatcher.
6. Know and follow your district's student discipline procedures for the school bus.

Although maintaining order on a school bus is a challenging task, there are drivers who have learned how to be successful. If you face challenges that are difficult, find someone who can help you be successful too. This could be an experienced driver or a supervisor.

36   OKLAHOMA SCHOOL BUS DRIVER MANUAL • OKLAHOMA STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Source: SDE, August 2018

Exhibit 5-39
Excerpt From DPS Handbook on Transportation

TRANSPORTATION

Following are the bus safety rules:

1. Students will be picked up at designated stops only. Please be there on time-don't keep the bus waiting. As the bus approaches, students will stand well back and remain until the bus has completely stopped.

2. Stay off the road at all times while waiting for the bus. Bus riders conduct themselves in a safe manner while waiting.

3. Wait until the bus comes to a complete stop before attempting to enter.

4. Be careful in approaching bus stops.

5. Bus riders are not permitted to move toward the bus at the school loading zone until the bus has been brought to a complete stop.

6. Riding a school bus is a privilege not a requirement.

7. No food or drink on buses (only water will be allowed on bus).

8. Students must be in Pre-K to ride the bus.

WHILE ON THE BUS:

1. Keep hands and head inside the bus at all times after entering and until leaving the bus.

2. Refrain from the use of any form of tobacco.

3. Assist in keeping the bus safe and sanitary at all times.

4. Remember loud talking and laughing or unnecessary confusion diverts the driver's attention and may result in a serious accident.

5. Treat bus equipment as you would valuable furniture in your home. Damage to seats, etc., must be paid for by the offender.

6. Bus riders should never tamper with the bus or any of its equipment.

7. Leave no books, lunches, or other articles on the bus.

8. Keep books, packages, coats and all other objects out of the aisle.

9. Help look after the safety and comfort of small children.

10. Do not throw anything out of the bus window.

11. Bus riders are not permitted to leave their seats while the bus is in motion.

12. Horseplay is not permitted around or on the school bus.

13. Bus riders are expected to be courteous to fellow pupils, the bus driver, and the patrol officers or drivers assistants.

14. Keep absolute quiet when approaching a railroad-crossing stop.

AFTER LEAVING THE BUS:

1. When crossing the road, go at least ten feet in front of the bus, stop, check traffic, and watch for driver's signal, then cross road.

Source: DPS Handbook Page 21, August 2018

As an example, Edmond Public Schools (EPS) has a robust training program for new drivers and a retraining program for existing drivers who need it. This surpasses state requirements and contributes to a safer working environment. EPS also provides its transportation employees with a 52-page handbook that covers all aspects of employment as well as directions on how to pick

up and drop off students, road courtesy, and what to do in case of an accident. **Exhibit 5-40** provides the table of contents for the Edmond Handbook.

Exhibit 5-40
EPS Transportation Handbook Table of Contents

Source: EPS Transportation, October 2013

RECOMMENDATION

Develop an operation's manual specific to student transportation.

The transportation director should develop and distribute a driver's information notebook, specific to DPS. General topics covered in the manual should include:

- Mission Statement / Vision / Goals
- Organizational Chart
- School Bus Operator Qualifications
- Driving Record Standards

- Driver Duties and Responsibilities
- Disciplinary Guidelines
- Student Conduct Form
- Student Management Techniques
- Cellular Telephone Use
- School Bus Idling
- Dress Code

- School Bus Crash/Accidents
- Incident Reporting Procedure
- Student Injuries and Illnesses
- Bus Stops and Walk-to-Stop Distances

- Field Trips
- Loading and Un-loading Students
- Certificate of Absence
- Leave Request
- Employee Agreement Form
- 2019-20 Payroll Schedule

Distribution of the notebook should be given during the mandated in-services held each school year. The transportation director should also set aside time during the in-service to brief and instruct employees on the driver's notebook.

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources

FINDING 5-26

Several operational areas of transportation (SDE compliance standards, proper forms, and bus routing) are left unattended, due to the lack of expertise in the pupil transportation arena. As in many small districts, the principal overseeing transportation wears many hats.

The principal occupies a multi-functional position; his responsibilities are essential to transportation operations. Currently, there are critical areas of required information that are left unresolved or incomplete. In the case of Bus 2, SDE records were turned in and filed without benefit of ensuring that the maintenance has been corrected or completed (**Exhibit 5-41**). One area of non-compliance noted by the consulting team was the crossing arms. As stated in the latest edition of the *Oklahoma School Bus Specifications*, if the bus has the housing for, and a section of the bumper dedicated to a crossing arm, then a crossing arm is required to be

operational or it should not pass state inspection (**Exhibit 5-42**). The consulting team confirmed this interpretation with staff in the Accreditation Standards Division of SDE. All DPS buses that the consulting team inspected either had a crossing arm partially in place or the holes drilled for a crossing arm. It appears that annual inspections of DPS buses have been completed in error.

Exhibit 5-41
DPS School Bus and Pre-Trip Form

Bus 2   **Daily Pre-Trip Form**

Source: Prismatic, August 2018

Source: DPS, August 2018

Exhibit 5-42
Oklahoma School Bus Specification Manual Excerpt

CROSSING CONTROL ARM

A. School buses shall equipped with a crossing control arm mounted on the right side of the front bumper. When opened, this arm shall extend in a line parallel to the body side and aligned with the right front wheel.

B. All components of the crossing control arm and all connections shall be weatherproofed.

C. The crossing control arm shall incorporate system connectors (electrical, vacuum or air) at the gate and shall be easily removable to allow for towing of the bus.

D. The crossing control arm shall be constructed of non-corrodible or nonferrous Material or shall be treated in accordance with the body sheet metal specification. (See BUS BODY AND CHASSIS SPECIFICATIONS, Metal Treatment.)

E. There shall be no sharp edges or projections that could cause injury or be a hazard to students. The end of the arm shall be rounded.

F. The crossing control arm shall extend a minimum of 70 inches (measured from the bumper at the arm assembly attachment point) when in the extended position. The crossing control arm shall not extend past the end of the bumper when in the stowed position.

G. The crossing control arm shall extend simultaneously with the stop signal arm(s), activated by stop signal arm controls.

H. An automatic recycling interrupt switch shall be installed for temporarily disabling the crossing control arm.

I. The assembly shall include a device attached to the bumper near the end of the arm to automatically retain the arm while in the stowed position. That device shall not interfere with normal operations of the crossing control arm.

Source: SDE/Student Transportation, August 2018

RECOMMENDATION

Assign a teacher or clerical staff member to partner with local industry peers and the SDE to gain knowledge of pupil transportation's roles, objectives, and responsibilities.

The transportation department should incorporate SDE practices and standards into daily operations and follow-up with current documentation to ensure all repairs and documentation is complete and SDE specifications are achieved. The assigned person should become familiar with SDE publications and implementation practices. Further, the transportation program should incorporate required standards from the SDE in the areas of safety and regulation and provide materials to the staff during mandated in-service meetings. Some of the information and training should include:

- emergency evacuation of bus passengers;

- Oklahoma School Bus Inspection Guide;

- evaluations of bus routes;

- pre-trip/post-trip bus inspections forms; and

- guidelines for transportation of students with special needs.

The assigned person should partner with the schools' administrators and other stakeholders to best learn, plan, and direct the overall development of best practices.

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING 5-27

Bus routes are pre-driven for efficiency within the prescribed attendance zone. Currently, one bus has been slated to provide transportation to the district's transfer (out of district) students.

Before the beginning of each school year, the transportation program director allows drivers to dry-run each route to ensure proper route safety and efficiency. This is a useful tactic in that all current drivers are dual employees and the likelihood that one of the other district CDL holders may be tasked to do a route is probable. During dry-runs, the three bus routes (**Exhibit 5-43**) are monitored for road conditions, new stops, doubled-up points of pick-up, and possible abandoned stops. Routes are set to a beginning time and calculated to arrive at each school no later than ten minutes before the first bell. DPS has developed a system of picking up students that live outside the district at a central transfer point (**Exhibit 5-44**).

Exhibit 5-43
DPS School District Bus Routes

Source: DPS, August 2018

Exhibit 5-44
DPS School District Bus Routes
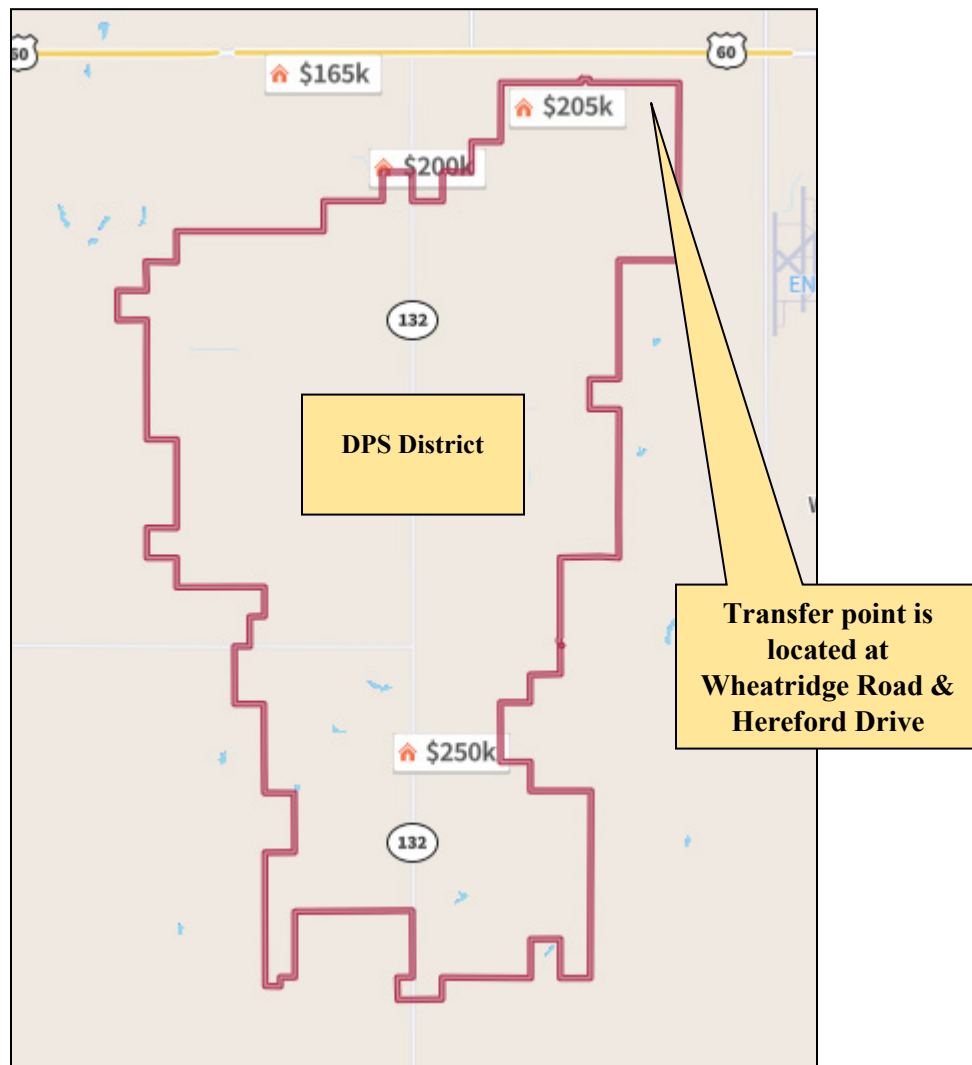
Source: Prismatic, August 2018

COMMENDATION

DPS is commended for allowing bus drivers to pre-drive each bus route for safety and accuracy.

FINDING 5-28

DPS drivers adhere to two important practices:

- drivers are required to check the bus for sleeping students and lost items at the end of each route assignment; and

- discipline reports are given directly to the administrator and copies are sent to the parents, school, transportation office, and the bus driver, as needed.

DPS bus drivers are required to check each bus for sleeping students and lost items at the end of each bus route. This policy of physically walking the bus at the end of the route has been a standard practice. The measure has a dual purpose – to ensure that no child is left on the bus and to collect lost items. All buses assigned to a route are equipped with a "child check" button (**Exhibit 5-45**) that require a driver to walk to the rear of the bus for de-activation. In the event a student leaves something behind, the item is kept on the bus for retrieval or later taken to the school for retrieval.

Exhibit 5-45
DPS Bus "Child Check" Button

Source: Prismatic, August 2018

Instructing the bus drivers to walk the aisles is an efficient way to ensure no child is left unattended on a bus. Incidents across the country are reported every year regarding children being left on board after a route is completed. Any tool that contributes to passenger safety is a valuable asset to a student transportation operation.

The director of transportation is also the first point of contact for all transportation discipline. Discipline records (**Exhibit 5-46**) are currently submitted to the transportation office for first response. Expectations in regards to discipline on the bus are spelled out in the district's student handbook.

Exhibit 5-46
Student Conduct Form

Student Name:		**Transportation**	Bus Number:	AM or PM
Student Class/Grade:		**Discipline Report**	Driver Name:	
Date of Incident:			Date Incident Reported:	

Notice to Parent/Guardian
1. The purpose of this report is to inform you of a disciplinary incident involving your child.
2. You are urged to both understand the action taken by the driver and to cooperate with the corrective action initiated by the school administration.

Driver's Report

___Violation of Safety Procedures   ___Throwing Objects In or Out of Bus   ___Drugs/Alcohol/Tobacco Products

___Destruction of Property   ___Eating/Drinking/Littering   ___Standing/Moving Around Bus

___Fighting/Pushing/Tripping/Etc.   ___Inappropriate Language/Gestures   ___Other: _____

Driver's Detailed Explanation of Incident/Behavior: _____

_____

Action Taken

___Changed Student's Seat

___Reported to Principal

___Contacted Parent

___Other: _____

Consequences

___Student Regrets Incident/Cooperative

___Recurring Incidents Will Be Reported

___Student Denied Bus Privileges Until: _____

___Other: _____

Driver's Signature: _____   Administrator's Signature: _____   Parent/Guardian Signature: _____

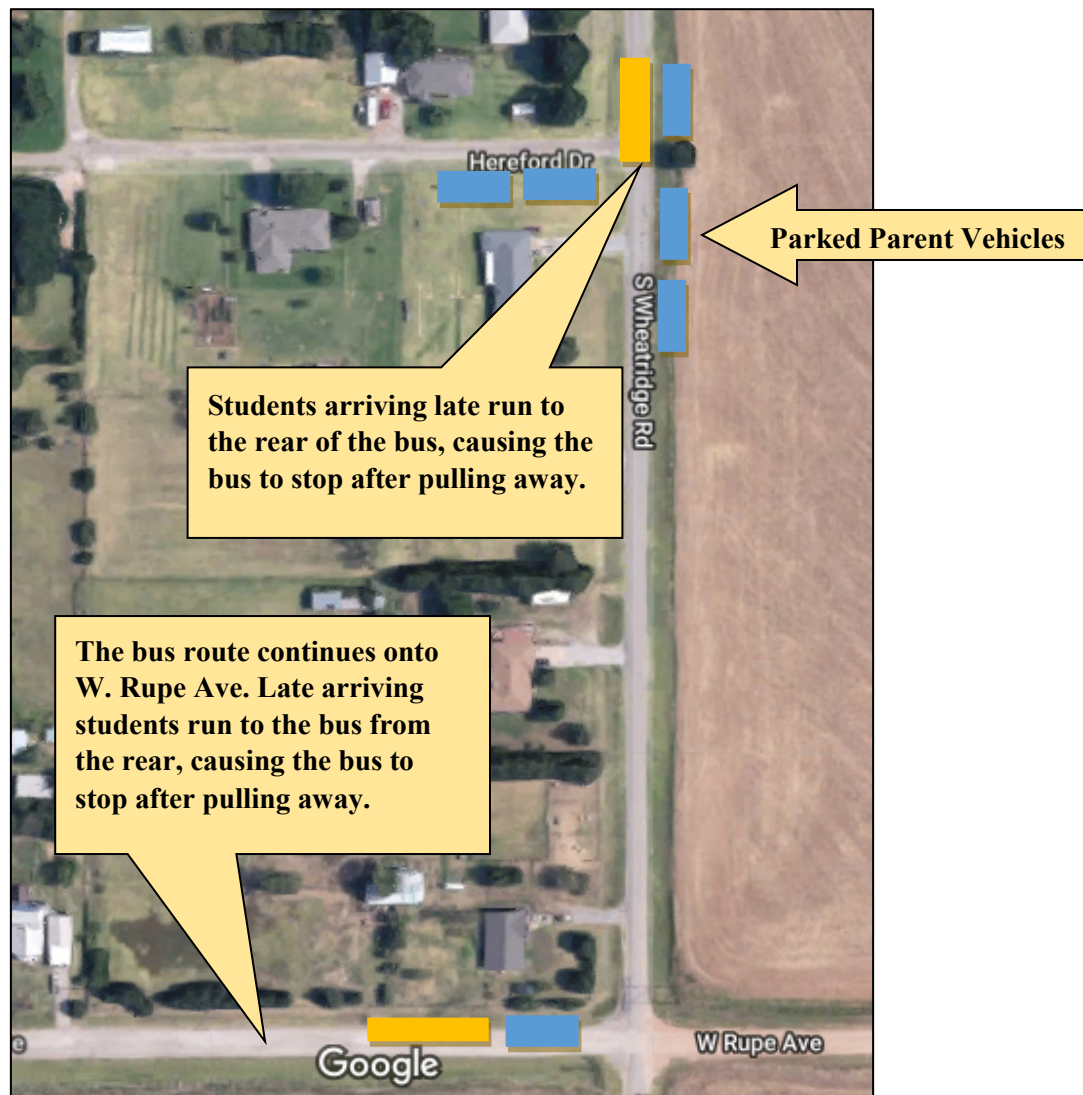*Source: DPS, August 2018*

COMMENDATION

The transportation department is commended for supporting the safety of students riding the buses and adhering to the standard practices in discipline.

FINDING 5-29

With the bus assigned to transfer students, parents are often late to the bus stop. Late students sometimes run to the bus from the rear.

In addition to transportation for students living within the boundaries of the district, DPS also provides transportation services and a central bus stop (**Exhibit 5-47**) for students that "transfer" in from other districts. This approach allows students a way to school at little or no cost to caregivers.

Exhibit 5-47
Hereford Drive & Wheatridge Road Bus Stop

Parked Parent Vehicles

Students arriving late run to the rear of the bus, causing the bus to stop after pulling away.

The bus route continues onto W. Rupe Ave. Late arriving students run to the bus from the rear, causing the bus to stop after pulling away.

Source: Prismatic, August 2018

Currently there are several safety concerns related to this particular bus stop:

- late arrivals;

- students boarding the bus from the rear; and

- cars stopping the bus "on-route" to allow students on the bus.

Bus stops should be created and used with precise safety expectations for all stakeholders. The SDE provides guidance for evaluating bus stop safety (**Exhibit 5-48**). Two areas of consideration are whether the bus stop offers a clear vision area for all drivers and whether students are boarding the bus a safe distance from traffic.

Exhibit 5-48
Oklahoma School Bus Route Evaluation Form (Excerpt)

Revised August 2016

Oklahoma State Department of Education --- 2500 North Lincoln Boulevard --- Oklahoma City, Oklahoma 73105---4599

EVALUATION: School Bus Stop Areas for Student Pickup/Discharge

School district personnel may use this form for evaluating local school bus route service to assure all conditions are the safest possible for student school bus transportation. *(Do not submit to the SDE.)*

Date:_____City:_____District Name: _____

Person Conducting Evaluation:_____Bus Number:_____

Route:_____Bus Stop Location:_____

Use the answers to the following questions to guide you in determining the best bus stop location for your students. Very few school bus stops will comply with all of the ideal characteristics listed below. In spite of that, attempt to balance the conditions of each stop to provide the optimum level of safety.

Ideally the following answers will be yes;

1. Does this bus stop location allow all approaching drivers a **clear vision area** of at least 500 feet, about 1 ½ blocks, to allow traffic to stop safely? _____

2. Is there a **vehicle pull---out** area at this bus stop location? _____
_____

3. Is the designated student waiting area a **safe distance from traffic**? _____
_____

4. Is this bus stop area **well---lighted**? _____
_____

5. Are **signs** posted to advise motorists of a school bus stop area? _____
_____

6. Is the **speed limit posted** at/near this bus stop area? _____
_____

Ideally the following answers will be no;

7. Is this bus stop area at/near a busy **intersection**? How close? _____
_____

8. Does the bus stop area have a **registered sex---offender** living within 2000 feet of a school bus stop area?_____

9. Do the students have to **cross a street** to board or exit the bus at this location? _____
_____

10. Do students have to cross **multiple---lane streets** to get to the bus stop area? _____

11. Is there evidence of **illegal drug or gang activity** near this school bus stop? _____
_____

Source: SDE, Page 1 of 5, August 2018

RECOMMENDATION

Remind parents of the need to be on time at the bus stop and enforce rules for boarding buses.

The transportation director should ensure that parents know bus stop safety expectations. Further, SDE standards should be incorporated into the daily bus operations.

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources

Vehicle Maintenance and Replacement

FINDING 5-30

During the onsite visit, there was a lack of maintenance records available for review. A lack of adequate documentation in this area puts the district at a disadvantage when budgeting and when records are needed during accident investigations.

Over the course of the onsite visit, the consulting team requested various forms of maintenance records, including:

- repair orders (who is requesting repairs?);

- fuel receipts;

- parts invoices (who is ordering parts?); and

- bills for services rendered (mechanic).

The records pertaining to vehicle repairs, parts, fuel, and the mechanics expenses were not readily available or not available at all. The consulting team was provided some information on annual bus inspections ($375 per year), but no information about completed or on-going repairs and the costs associated with vehicle maintenance.

RECOMMENDATION

Begin the process of cataloging all vehicle repairs, invoicing parts, services, and any financial information related to the operation of support vehicles.

Vehicle maintenance records should be recorded and maintained and any costs associated with pupil transportation should be kept on file for any vehicle or transportation function. For audit purposes and for overall accountability and records management, the file structure should be maintained for the entire life cycle of the vehicle and the transportation program.

The transportation director should ensure that vital records are kept for the daily operation of transportation. All transportation records should be maintained in such a way that they are readily available. Currently, there are several online versions of fleet management software available to assist in this endeavor. The district could also develop a set of Excel files that could provide adequate recordkeeping.

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources. If the district chooses to purchase fleet management software, the consulting team estimates a cost of $200 to $1,000.

FINDING 5-31

Bus drivers are required to clean and inspect buses for mechanical malfunctions on a daily basis. However, the consulting team found several defects that were not reported by means of the Daily Inspection Sheet, and repairs or cleaning that had not been done.

As a requirement for operating a school bus in the State of Oklahoma, drivers must complete a daily record (**Exhibit 5-49**) of the condition of the bus and report any defects. During the site visit, the consulting team conducted bus inspections. Several buses were found to have missing or damaged equipment (**Exhibit 5-50**). The consulting team requested copies of the current daily pre-trip form used by DPS, but none were supplied for this review.

Exhibit 5-49
SDE Pre-Trip Form

Source: SDE, August 2018

Exhibit 5-50
DPS Fleet Inspection

Bus #	1	2	3	4	5	6
Mirrors		✓	✓	✓	✓	
Glass	O	✓	✓	✓	*N/R*	
Tires	u	✓	✓	✓	✓	O
Body Damage	t	*N/R*	✓	*N/R*	✓	f
Seats		✓	✓	✓	✓	f
Flooring	of	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Emergency Door		✓	✓	✓	✓	S
Clean Inside	S	✓	✓	✓	✓	i
Clean Outside	e	*N/R*	*N/R*	✓	*N/R*	t
Fire Ext.	r	✓	✓	✓	✓	e
First Aid	v	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Body Fluid Kit	i	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Triangles	c	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Alarm (Sleeping Kids)	e	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Camera System		*N/R*	✓	*N/R*	*N/R*	

Source: Prismatic, August 2016
Index: ✓ = OK, N/R = Needs Review

Exhibit 5-51 through **5-53** show the deficiencies the consulting team found. None of the buses in the DPS fleet have a working crossing arm or apparatus to act as a crossing arm. The standard provided on the SDE Pre-Trip Form OAC 210:30-5-6 lists a crossing arm as required equipment.

Exhibit 5-51
Bus 2

Missing Crossing Arm   **Bent Bumper**

Broken Fan   **Broken Mat Lashing**
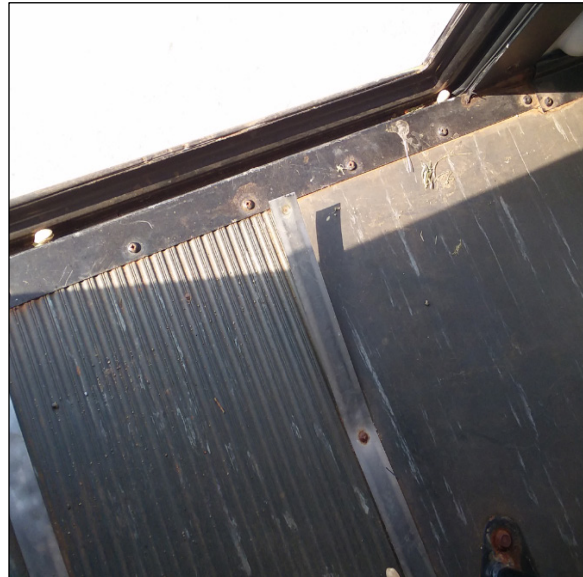
Source: Prismatic, August 2018

Exhibit 5-51 (continued)

Broken Glove Box Lock   **Unsecured Trash Can Behind Seats**

Source: Prismatic, August 2018

Exhibit 5-52
Broken and Missing Crossing Arms

Bus 3   **Bus 4**

Source: Prismatic, August 2018

Exhibit 5-53
Bus 5

Broken and Missing Crossing Arm   **Broken Fan**

Exposed Wires   **Broken Crossing Arm**

Source: Prismatic, August 2018

Exhibit 5-53 (continued)

Cracked Windshield

Source: Prismatic, August 2018

RECOMMENDATION

Review cleaning and inspection requirements with all bus drivers.

The transportation director will need to ensure that all standards of performance on vehicle readiness and required documentation is complete before and after a vehicle is placed into service. The DPS transportation director should ensure that each bus driver receives a copy of the SDE "Oklahoma School Bus Driver Manual." This manual will give each driver insights to policies that regulate pupil transportation.

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

Appendix A:

Staff Survey Results

_____

Staff Survey

Surveys Completed: 27
Totals may not add to 100 percent due to rounding.

Statistical Data

How long have you been employed by the school district?	
5 years or less	50%
6 – 10 years	15%
11 – 15 years	15%
16 – 20 years	4%
21 years or more	15%
What is your role in the school district?	
School Administrator	8%
Classroom Teacher	69%
Other Certified (Librarian, Guidance Counselor)	8%
School Aide/Nurse	0%
Instructional Aide	8%
Other Support Staff (Cafeteria, Office, Custodial)	8%

Survey Questions

	Survey Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1	The district has a long-range strategic plan that guides the decision-making process.	19%	52%	26%	4%	0%
2	I understand the district's policies and procedures.	37%	56%	4%	4%	0%
3	I have an accurate, written job description to guide me in my work.	33%	44%	11%	7%	4%
4	I understand the district's organizational structure.	33%	52%	4%	7%	4%
5	I know to whom I report for all my job functions.	59%	37%	0%	0%	4%
6	I understand the district's salary schedule and justification for paying extra-duty stipends.	44%	48%	4%	4%	0%
7	I receive adequate training overall to perform my job functions.	33%	56%	0%	11%	0%

	Survey Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
8	I received an annual personnel evaluation last year.	37%	41%	15%	7%	0%
9	District staff works well together.	50%	46%	4%	0%	0%
10	The district has an adequate number of staff to carry out its operations.	15%	27%	4%	42%	12%
11	The district actively recruits high quality staff to fill vacant positions.	22%	67%	7%	4%	0%
12	The district has a pool of quality substitutes to fill positions when necessary.	4%	41%	11%	37%	7%
13	The district effectively communicates with parents and community members.	22%	56%	7%	11%	4%
14	The central office effectively communicates with district staff.	33%	33%	4%	22%	7%
15	The superintendent effectively communicates with district staff.	19%	48%	15%	15%	4%
16	The principals effectively communicate with their staffs.	41%	44%	7%	7%	0%
17	The teachers effectively communicate with students and parents.	33%	59%	4%	4%	0%
18	The district effectively uses volunteers to assist with meeting district goals.	22%	48%	15%	15%	0%
19	The district gives student needs a high priority when making major decisions.	33%	52%	11%	4%	0%
20	School board members listen to the opinions of parents and the community members.	31%	46%	23%	0%	0%
21	The school board understands the needs of the district.	33%	52%	15%	0%	0%
22	The superintendent is accessible to district staff.	30%	56%	4%	11%	0%

	Survey Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
23	The principals are accessible to their staffs.	70%	30%	0%	0%	0%
24	The teachers are accessible to students and parents.	74%	26%	0%	0%	0%
25	Teachers often collaborate on projects related to the curriculum.	44%	33%	15%	7%	0%
26	Teachers know what is to be taught and when because they have access to a district-adopted Pacing Calendar that reflects the current Oklahoma Academic Standards (PASS).	44%	15%	19%	15%	7%
27	The district's curriculum is aligned from grade to grade and from class to class.	33%	33%	22%	11%	0%
28	Teachers have scope and sequence documents that determine what is taught and when.	33%	26%	15%	19%	7%
29	Test data from district-adopted benchmarks and mandated end-of-year tests are used to improve the district's curriculum.	16%	56%	16%	4%	8%
30	Teachers effectively use student data to improve instructional practices.	28%	56%	12%	4%	0%
31	The principals are effective instructional leaders.	48%	44%	0%	8%	0%
32	There is adequate high quality professional development for the principals and teachers.	32%	28%	12%	20%	8%
33	Non-teaching staff has opportunities for professional development relevant to their responsibilities.	12%	24%	36%	24%	4%
34	At least some of the required annual professional development is offered online.	20%	20%	48%	12%	0%
35	The needs of the special education students are being met.	16%	32%	16%	28%	8%

	Survey Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
36	The needs of the gifted and talented are being met.	12%	31%	38%	4%	15%
37	Teachers adequately prepare students for state mandated tests.	35%	58%	4%	0%	4%
38	Students are adequately prepared for college, if they choose that path.	27%	54%	15%	4%	0%
39	Students receive timely information on college entrance requirements and scholarship offers.	15%	23%	50%	12%	0%
40	Students receive adequate vocational training to prepare them for the workforce, if they choose that path.	27%	50%	23%	0%	0%
41	The district provides students with adequate counseling services.	15%	35%	23%	15%	12%
42	The school library meets the needs of the teachers and students.	27%	58%	8%	4%	4%
43	District stakeholders provide input into the budgetary process.	8%	27%	62%	4%	0%
44	The district actively applies for competitive state and federal grants.	20%	48%	32%	0%	0%
45	I complete an annual inventory of the equipment in my work area.	31%	58%	12%	0%	0%
46	The district wisely manages its revenues and expenditures.	23%	42%	35%	0%	0%
47	The district has a long-range plan to address facility needs.	27%	50%	19%	4%	0%
48	The district's facilities are well-maintained.	12%	58%	8%	23%	0%
49	The district's facilities are kept clean.	19%	58%	4%	19%	0%
50	The district has an energy management program in place to minimize energy consumption.	15%	19%	54%	12%	0%

	Survey Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
51	There are facility and/or equipment concerns throughout the campus.	27%	42%	23%	8%	0%
52	The district's facilities are secure from unwanted visitors.	12%	8%	12%	35%	35%
53	I know what to do during a crisis or an emergency.	27%	73%	0%	0%	0%
54	Student discipline is well-maintained.	15%	62%	12%	12%	0%
55	Drugs are a problem in this district.	4%	4%	31%	38%	23%
56	Bullying is a problem in this district.	4%	19%	19%	38%	19%
57	I often purchase a meal from the cafeteria.	8%	35%	0%	23%	35%
58	Students seem to like the cafeteria meals.	4%	52%	8%	20%	16%
59	I find the cafeteria meals appealing and appetizing.	15%	31%	12%	19%	23%
60	I understand how to use technology as it relates to my job functions.	35%	62%	0%	4%	0%
61	District staff and administrators often use email to communicate with one another.	62%	39%	0%	0%	0%
62	The district has adequate technology to support its operations.	23%	42%	12%	23%	0%
63	When necessary, the district's technology equipment is quickly repaired or serviced.	23%	58%	12%	8%	0%
64	Technology is readily accessible and easy to use in the performance of my job duties.	31%	46%	8%	15%	0%
65	The district's technology equipment is often used past its useful lifespan.	27%	35%	23%	12%	4%
66	The district website is a useful tool for staff, parents, and students.	15%	42%	12%	19%	12%

	Survey Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
67	Buses arrive and depart on time each day.	62%	35%	4%	0%	0%
68	There are enough working buses to meet the needs of the district.	19%	38%	19%	23%	0%

Written Responses

If you would like to provide any additional comments on the school district, please do so here. Where is the district doing well? In what areas could it be improved?

- Communication is probably where we are the weakest. This being communication between principal to teacher to parents! Feel like there ae too many chiefs and not enough Indians sometimes! Need just one person who makes the final decision and lets the staff know so we can inform our parents as soon as we can.

- We do the best we can with the available money. The faculty for the most part is very supportive of each other.

- Our principal is easy to talk with, and works at ways to improve our school's appearance. The teachers work very well together.

- Safety!!!.

- We have tremendous leadership who is doing the very best they can, given the age of the facility and the lack of funds appropriated by our State. The teachers are doing everything possible to work with inadequate supplies, to really leave a positive mark on student's lives and education!!

- Communication – great! Respect for teachers and personnel – great! We need more money to hire additional classroom aides.

Appendix B:

Parent Survey Results

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Parent Survey

Surveys Completed: 18
Totals may not add to 100 percent due to rounding.

Survey Questions

	Survey Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1	School board members listen to the opinions and desires of parents and community members.	22%	28%	39%	11%	0%
2	School board members know and understand the educational needs of students in the district.	22%	39%	28%	11%	0%
3	The superintendent is a respected and effective leader.	28%	22%	39%	11%	0%
4	District and school staffs are accessible to parents.	39%	44%	11%	6%	0%
5	I feel welcome at my child's school.	50%	33%	6%	11%	0%
6	My child feels welcome and accepted at school.	44%	39%	6%	11%	0%
7	I receive timely communications from my child's teachers regarding his/her progress in school.	33%	50%	0%	6%	11%
8	My child's school encourages parents to volunteer, if they are able.	33%	39%	11%	11%	6%
9	Parents play an active role in decision-making in our school.	28%	22%	28%	17%	6%
10	Education is the main priority in our school district.	39%	44%	6%	11%	0%
11	Students learn the necessary material to be prepared for the next grade.	33%	61%	0%	6%	0%
12	I am satisfied with the education my child receives.	39%	44%	6%	6%	6%

	Survey Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
13	Teachers are held accountable for ensuring that students learn.	33%	50%	11%	6%	0%
14	I receive enough information from the district regarding academic expectations for my child (i.e. student testing, retention, etc.).	33%	44%	11%	11%	0%
15	Our school can be described as a "good place to learn."	39%	56%	0%	6%	0%
16	The district spends its money wisely.	17%	22%	50%	6%	6%
17	The district asks the community for input when developing its budget.	22%	11%	44%	6%	17%
18	My child's school is clean.	33%	50%	6%	6%	6%
19	My child's school is attractive and welcoming.	33%	28%	11%	22%	6%
20	My child's school is well maintained.	28%	44%	0%	22%	6%
21	District facilities are open for community use.	22%	28%	33%	6%	11%
22	My child feels safe and secure at school.	44%	44%	6%	0%	6%
23	Bullying is a problem in this district.	12%	6%	35%	29%	18%
24	Drugs are a problem in this district.	0%	0%	50%	39%	11%
25	The school buildings and grounds are safe and secure.	18%	47%	6%	12%	18%
26	Discipline is fairly and equitably administered in my child's school.	17%	44%	33%	6%	0%
27	The district website is a useful tool for me and/or my child.	28%	22%	22%	11%	17%
28	I regularly use technology to keep up-to-date on my child's education (emailing teachers, online gradebook, etc.).	39%	28%	22%	11%	0%
29	My child regularly uses technology at school.	22%	56%	17%	0%	6%

	Survey Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
30	Teachers know how to use technology in the classroom.	17%	56%	17%	11%	0%
31	Discipline and order are maintained in the school cafeteria.	17%	44%	33%	6%	0%
32	The cafeteria serves a good variety of food.	6%	50%	11%	22%	11%
33	My child's school bus runs on time nearly every day.	17%	28%	56%	0%	0%
34	My child feels safe riding the bus.	17%	28%	56%	0%	0%
35	Bus drivers effectively handle discipline issues on the bus.	17%	28%	56%	0%	0%
36	The length of my child's bus ride is reasonable.	22%	22%	56%	0%	0.0%

Written Responses

If you would like to provide any additional comments on the school district, please do so here. Where is the district doing well? In what areas could it be improved?

- Regarding the question of the superintendent…he is well respected however, it is my impression that he does not do much. I see that he has pushed a lot of his duties on to other staff. The principal is outstanding! He does a great job of taking care of the schools needs from working with teachers to helping parents to changing light bulbs when needed.

- They can improve by things working properly, cleaning the school it needs to be cleaned a lot better, and making it safe for every event like a lock down people walk in the school all the time. Need to close off entrances and redo entrances with locks that close when the bell rings parents must video chat with office at the door to get in during school hours. School lunches are terrible and they need to wear hairnets kids are always finding hair in the food and keep everyone from going back where they cook.

- Pick up/drop off needs improvement. Cluttered, chaotic and very inconvenient if parents have younger children at home. Otherwise, no complaints.

- I think the superintendent should be a superintendent not a coach. His/her focus should be improving the district, teacher resources, funding, and thinking outside the box to improve the educational experience for students and make it a great place to work for teachers and staff. The schools website is pitiful. Promises have been made for three years now that this is will be made a priority and nothing has changed. There should be a central location that all parents and students can obtain CURRENT information about what is going on in the

school district. Make the updated information available. I would also like to see home cooked meals back in the cafeteria for the kids. The meal cost nearly doubled when the meals became outsourced. Had the kitchen staff been privy to that cash inflow meals could have been prepared differently and more nutritiously. On a good note, we were proud tha the teachers chose to stay in school during the walk outs. Not because we don't believe they deserve more pay or funding for their classrooms but because they put the well-being of students first. They are a first rate bunch. Mr. Johnson does an excellent job as well. I see him at most school events and I have always seen him greet students by name. He makes the extra effort to improve our school sometimes in unconventional ways. I love that initiative!.

- Provide a way a student can finish two or three credits during the school year, and graduate with the class if the child has to work full-time to provide.

- This is a great school. Every school has it good and bad but they do a great job with all the kids. Thank you for all you do.

- Would like to see a vocal or choir program. Quiz bowl programming is amazing!! Teachers are always welcoming when I have questions or want to talk about my kids' educational performance. Administration tries to make improvements based on feedback from teachers and parents and with the very limited budget received each year.

- Bullying/favoritism needs lots of improvement in the district. The District needs more extra-curricular activities. And the district needs to improve on a variety of foods served as well as time for children to eat.

Appendix C:

Student Survey Results

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Student Survey

Surveys Completed: 129
Totals may not add to 100 percent due to rounding.

Survey Questions

	Survey Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1	Education is the main priority in our school district.	30%	57%	7%	5%	1%
2	Students learn the necessary material to be prepared for the next grade.	32%	46%	10%	10%	2%
3	I am being academically prepared for life after high school.	20%	39%	26%	9%	6%
4	Our schools can be described as "good places to learn."	29%	46%	15%	8%	2%
5	I knew what to expect on the state tests.	25%	42%	21%	6%	6%
6	There is at least one adult at school to whom I can go when I have a problem.	46%	27%	16%	9%	3%
7	I feel welcome and accepted at school.	32%	43%	10%	10%	6%
8	The school library meets my needs for books and other resources.	26%	39%	30%	2%	2%
9	I have received sufficient college and/or career counseling.	7%	22%	47%	19%	5%
10	My teachers communicate regularly with my parents about my academic progress.	20%	30%	38%	8%	4%
11	My school is clean.	15%	41%	21%	14%	8%
12	My school is attractive and welcoming.	19%	48%	17%	9%	8%
13	My school building is well maintained.	16%	43%	27%	9%	4%
14	I feel safe and secure at school.	26%	44%	14%	10%	6%
15	Bullying is a problem in this district.	12%	28%	22%	24%	14%
16	The school buildings and grounds are safe and secure.	20%	48%	22%	7%	3%

	Survey Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
17	Discipline is fairly and equitably administered in this school.	21%	43%	15%	12%	9%
18	Teachers and staff respect students in this school.	26%	44%	19%	8%	3%
19	Drugs are a problem in this school.	4%	6%	22%	34%	34%
20	Discipline and order are maintained in the school cafeteria.	3%	17%	19%	22%	39%
21	I have enough time to eat my lunch each day.	22%	31%	11%	22%	14%
22	I like the food served in the cafeteria.	3%	17%	19%	22%	39%
23	The cafeteria serves a good variety of food.	7%	22%	26%	21%	25%
24	The district has made online classes available to students.	16%	34%	42%	5%	2%
25	I regularly use technology to keep up-too-date on schoolwork (emailing teachers, using online gradebook, etc.)	10%	33%	21%	31%	5%
26	I regularly use computers or other technology at school.	23%	46%	11%	15%	5%
27	The district's technology is new enough to be useful to me.	18%	46%	20%	11%	5%
28	Teachers know how to use technology in the classroom.	22%	55%	17%	4%	2%
29	Teachers effectively integrate technology-based resources into instruction, such as online videos.	11%	47%	27%	10%	5%
30	I have regular Internet access at home.	48%	31%	7%	9%	5%
31	My bus runs on time nearly every day.	14%	27%	49%	9%	1%
32	Students feel safe riding the bus.	17%	25%	48%	5%	4%
33	Bus drivers effectively handle discipline issues on the bus.	30%	29%	35%	2%	4%
34	The length of my bus ride is reasonable.	25%	29%	41%	3%	2%

Written Responses

If you would like to provide any additional comments on the school district, please do so here. Where is the district doing well? In what areas could it be improved?

- Many things need to be updated.

- In my opinion, this is a good school, but it does not spend its money very well. It buys/improves aspects when the funds could be better spent somewhere else. Athletics are favored over academics.

- Have students stop breaking stuff like the AC and the paper towel dispenser in the bathroom.

- I believe personally that the IEP at my school should be well maintained and that we should be helped or checked on every week, thanks.

- Strict discipline and that all.

- We just need heat, I'm always so cold, and we need more art supplies, because it is good, and they need to quit acting like the baseball boys walk on water, bc they don't, also transphobia is here, and I want to use the women's restroom, but I haven't asked, I'm sure they'd let me though, they are nice☺.

- It could improve by the cafeteria food and more enjoyable. Need to be less sexist.

- The food is terrible, today our mac and cheese tasted like metal.

- Have a study hall, the one that I have right now is only used for math so its kind hard to schedule any other time to do any unfinished work. Also, ask some of the students who have IEPs if the teachers are respecting that.

- We need heat during the winter and whenever else it is cool in the school.

- I can't think of anything bad about the school right now, other than what I already answered.

- Needs more money to be provided to the art teacher so the students will have supplies to perform many different art projects, instead of running out or not having enough. They have to run off of donated items or ones purchased by the teacher, Mrs. Boulware.

- Different AG teacher.

- Our school does not discipline the bad students enough, they merely get a "slap on the hand" and don't do that again, when they should be suspended or expelled.

- Once you get into the younger grades, from about freshman down, bullying begins to be a problem, especially in the 8th grade.

- Lunch food and how special ed students in high schooled are helped out.

- The school isn't very safe and some of the teachers aren't respectful of students.

- The food could be better.

- This school needs to be warmer.

- More teachers to help my brother.

- The restrooms could be improved and in better conditions.

- Extra-curricular activities could be given more money.

- It could be improved by better school lunches. I was here previously when I was in fifth grade, and then I left. But I'm back now, and I have made previous comparisons to then Drummond, and now Drummond, and at the top of my comparisons list is the lunches. Back then we had homemade sandwiches, good chili whenever Frito Chile Pie was for lunch. And the spaghetti was decent, not just noodles and sauce like it is now. Another predominant thing of my comparisons list is the people; back in fifth grade, everyone was nice to everyone. We said "hi" to each other in the hallways in between classes, but now, what I've noticed is people are extremely rude, an example would be that if you join into a conversation, people [name deleted] say "Shut up, [name deleted] nobody asked for your opinion, so stop stating it on everything else" like, what is wrong with you [name deleted]? Be a human being for once. Oh, and another comparison is that people talk behind other people's backs, [name deleted] hasn't stopped talking about me to [name deleted]. I caught him pointing at me during match this morning.

- The food can improve as well as a heater we didn't have a heater the whole winter and I had to wear like 4 coats every day to make it. We need longer athletics and shorter class periods. I also have been riding the short bus and I have to pack 4 in a seat the capacity is 29 and there is like 40 kids on that bus. Also we need longer time in between class periods. I would also like a new baseball facility because that's the only thing we really good at. One more thing I'm in reading class and I have to get 20 points every 9 weeks and that's too much maybe cut it down to 5? Thank you.

- The school could have a better education program such as having more classes such as art, foreign classes ex. Spanish, French, German, Korean, or Chinese. On teachers some should at least know what they are teaching, know the material they are teaching the students. The school could be cleaner such as cleaning the water fountains. Have better discipline rules. Some students are treated unfairly by some teachers, such as one of my classmates that was simply asking a question my classmate got in trouble. The food could be much better. The food taste very plain. It could be much more better.

- We need better food service better classes.

- We could do more fundraisers in the summer so we could have money to do fun stuff here and there; get better options for lunch.

- I personally think the school could be a little more updated. But I also understand that money is sometimes an issue. This school is very clean and mostly attractive for the most part, but it could use some work. I feel very safe and welcome and this school also has a great staff.

- BULLYING!!!!!!!!!!

- They could handle bullying more effectively so students actually want to attend school and enjoy it. There could also be more variety of food for lunch. Most teachers are doing a good job of teaching.

- The lunch.

- I'd say we need more meetings like pep rallys.

- LUNCH NEEDS TO BE BETTER!!!!! WE NEED GOOD FOOD IN OUR TUMMIES :/

- THE LUNCH NEEDS TO BE BETTER;/

- Its doing well in just about everything.

- Sometimes they have a lot of events on in one week, but it hasn't been a big problem. Overall, I think this school is very good, until you have the occasional bullying problem. I like the fact that the teachers are really good listeners and they are easy to talk to. I also like that the teachers really care about you both as a person and academically. Some teachers even feel like second or third mothers or fathers. I love this school!!!

- Lunchroom.

- I think Drummond is doing a good job on keeping the students well educated.

- We need some remodeling. I don't feel too safe, we need some more security too. Improve improve improve.

- It's a really good school with good people and friends. Glad I came here!

- It is doing well in academics. We have a great high school baseball team, and quiz bowl teams. I feel that we need to improve our food. Its good, but could be better.

- I think that the school is doing a good job teaching wise but what I think might be wonderful is school clubs so some people could make friends and not feel lonely.

- Hair color rule, dress code enforcement should be to everyone in the school not just people who play sport.

- We need better food, new books for class, some kids need more help and they don't get the help they need.

- We need new school food. On some of the questions I put disagree because only some of the teachers don't handle things in the fairest way and wont always hear both parts of the story. I also think that academics are not the schools best priority but I don't think it should be. Some students definitely do get bullied and some teachers don't do anything except send the kdi that's being the bully and sending them to the hall wont always stop them. We also need new text book.

- We need better school food and some kids get bullied and the teachers don't do anything about it. We also need better books for our class especially geography and math.

- The hair coloring rule/dress code should be enforced to everyone not just to the students who play sports.

- Thank you for the awesome education!!!!!

- It could improve in better materials as in new and up to date textbooks. I love my school and don't want to move.

- I have a good school district and I wouldn't like to move.

- Our district is very athletic, so I wish we could get a real track and better fields for are softball players.

Appendix E:

Resources Referenced in Chapter 2

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Booklet 8

Audit

Professional Learning Communities:
source materials for school leaders and
other leaders of professional learning

Deciding where you are as a professional learning community

Louise Stoll, Ray Bolam, Agnes McMahon, Sally Thomas, Mike Wallace,
Angela Greenwood and Kate Hawkey

What is an implementation rubric?

Rubrics are usually used as assessment tools to measure pupils' work. They are scoring guides that don't depend on a numerical score. Instead, they list a full range of criteria or elements to assess a particular piece of work or performance. They describe varying degrees of quality for each element, increasing from left to right. A benefit of rubrics is that they provide signposts to where you can get to as a result of development, and pointers to next steps that might be taken when trying to develop particular activities.

What is the purpose of this rubric?

This implementation rubric helps you see where colleagues think you are as a professional learning community (PLC) as they reflect on different criteria related to specific characteristics and processes of PLCs. The 12 topics down the left-hand side are the eight characteristics and four developmental processes of PLCs we identified in our study. For each of these, a number of key descriptors are mapped out horizontally, showing the development of each through four phases of their journey, highlighted at the top of the four columns. These range from what might be happening when you are starting on the journey to develop a PLC to action taken when the PLC is self-sustaining:

> **Starting out;** acquiring information and beginning to use ideas.
> **Developing;** experimenting with strategies and building on initial commitment.
> **Deepening;** well on the way, having achieved a degree of mastery and feeling the benefits.
> **Sustaining;** introducing new developments, re-evaluating quality – PLC as a way of life.

How might you use the rubric?

You might choose to use the rubric in a range of ways. For example:

- individual staff members complete the rubric privately and give it to a designated person or team who collate(s) responses and feed(s) these back to the staff for discussion
- individual staff members complete the rubric before sharing and discussing their responses with each other
- small groups complete the rubric together and then compare and summarise their responses

The rubric on pages 3–9 and summary response sheet on page 10 can be photocopied for circulation. Each person completing the rubric needs to look at the descriptors, perhaps highlighting comments that represent your PLC. They can then decide which phase best represents the PLC's current position, either highlighting the appropriate box in the table or marking the box in the blank response sheet included after the rubric. There is also a space labelled 'How do you know?' where people can note down evidence.

Looking through individual highlighted responses can help you see trends and patterns as well as differences in opinion. You can prepare a summary sheet of all the responses using the blank summary response sheet.

At the end of the activity, you will find some questions to discuss once you have pulled together the results.

The process can be repeated each year. You can look at changes people think have occurred and discuss the reasons for these changes.

Professional learning community implementation rubric

PLC characteristics	**Starting out** *Acquiring information and beginning to use ideas*	**Developing** *Experimenting with strategies and building on initial commitment*	**Deepening** *Well on the way, having achieved a degree of mastery and feeling the benefits*	**Sustaining** *Introducing new developments, and re-evaluating quality – PLC as a way of life*
Shared values and vision	Staff have diverse values related to educational issues. They are beginning to recognise the need to attend to some PLC-wide issues. There are initial discussions about these issues. Some smaller groups (PLCs) within the staff may share values about education and leadership.	An increasing number of staff share educational values, and participate actively in discussions about vision and values. Shared educational vision is often stronger and more apparent in particular sections or departments of the PLC.	Educational values and vision are fairly widely shared throughout the PLC and generally demonstrated through practice. The vision is revisited regularly and commitment to whole-school, centre or college-wide professional values is increasing.	Educational values and vision are widely shared throughout the PLC, regularly revisited and revised as appropriate by the whole staff, and demonstrated through practice. There is a high degree of commitment to whole-school, centre or college-wide professional values and a strong sense of cohesion and consistency of approach.
How do you know this?				

PLC characteristics	Starting out *Acquiring information and beginning to use ideas*	Developing *Experimenting with strategies and building on initial commitment*	Deepening *Well on the way, having achieved a degree of mastery and feeling the benefits*	Sustaining *Introducing new developments, and re-evaluating quality – PLC as a way of life*
Collective responsibility	Staff do not feel a sense of whole-school, centre or college-wide shared responsibility for *all* pupils. Some smaller groups, particularly those with common teaching or support responsibilities, feel a sense of shared responsibility. There are few whole-school, centre or college discussions about learning, progress, development and successes of pupils.	Some staff members feel a sense of collective responsibility for *all* pupils in the school, centre or college. Smaller groups (PLCs) feel a sense of shared responsibility for all pupils within their subject, year, key stage or phase. There are some whole-school, centre or college discussions about pupils' learning, progress, development and successes.	There is a growing sense of collective responsibility throughout the school, centre or college for the learning, progress, development and success of *all* pupils. Discussions of learning, progress, development and success of *all* pupils.	A desire to do the best for all pupils pervades the school, centre or college. There is regular and deep whole-school, centre or college dialogue about learning, progress, development and successes of individual pupils.
How do you know this?				
Learning-focused collaboration	Many staff mainly work in isolation. They focus on their own goals, value self-reliance and rarely share practices and strategies. Some smaller groups or departments collaborate and share learning and teaching and support strategies.	Some staff work together across the PLC, with joint planning, sharing strategies, and engaging in whole-school, centre or college-wide projects. Some support staff or care workers and teaching staff collaborate closely but this is not a common feature.	Staff increasingly plan together, collaborate and share ideas through meetings, website resources, team teaching etc. There are examples of productive teamwork between teachers and support staff.	Collaborative planning of learning and teaching activities is taken for granted. Sharing of ideas and strategies and joint problem-solving are widespread. Teamwork involving teachers and support or care staff is widespread.
How do you know this?				

PLC characteristics	Starting out *Acquiring information and beginning to use ideas*	Developing *Experimenting with strategies and building on initial commitment*	Deepening *Well on the way, having achieved a degree of mastery and feeling the benefits*	Sustaining *Introducing new developments, and re-evaluating quality – PLC as a way of life*
Existence of professional learning	Professional learning mainly consists of formal, short courses and whole-school, centre or college in-service training. Take-up is largely based on individual interest. Enthusiasm for whole-school, centre or college professional learning experiences is limited. There are few work-based professional learning opportunities eg peer observation, coaching etc. There is mainly ad hoc talk about learning from external courses and visits.	A considerable number of staff are engaged in a variety of professional learning opportunities based on individual interest (eg courses, higher degrees etc) and increasingly this is also linked to school, centre or college aims. An increasing number of staff participate enthusiastically in whole-school, centre or college professional learning experiences. Staff feed back on their learning to smaller groups and, sometimes, the whole staff.	Staff are generally interested in a diverse range of individual and group opportunities to increase their knowledge, understanding and skills. Many staff participate enthusiastically in whole-school, centre or college professional learning experiences. Staff generally feed back their learning to the whole staff.	All staff are enthusiastically involved in a diverse range of individual, group and whole-school, centre or college professional learning experiences. The school, centre or college as a workplace is seen as an important site for learning by all staff. Staff devote effort and energy into incorporating valuable new strategies into their practice. Learning is widely shared across the whole staff.
How do you know this?				
Reflective professional enquiry	There is little reflection on, or enquiry into, practice. Data collection and the use of data to inform and develop learning and teaching practice are limited. Data may be seen as an end in itself and often as someone else's problem.	Some staff are involved in activities to investigate and improve learning and teaching, eg peer observation and coaching, action research, review and moderation of pupils' work etc. Data collection and the use of data to inform and develop learning and teaching are variable across the school, centre or college.	Many staff are actively involved and show increasing confidence about using different methods to explore and improve learning and teaching. Data collection and the use of data to inform and develop learning and teaching are increasingly consistent across the school, centre or college.	A questioning orientation to practice and 'need to know how we are doing and how we can improve' is pervasive. Staff confidently use a wide range of methods to investigate learning and teaching, using findings to inform and develop their practice. Data are collected, analysed and used to support this process.
How do you know this?				

PLC characteristics	Starting out *Acquiring information and beginning to use ideas*	Developing *Experimenting with strategies and building on initial commitment*	Deepening *Well on the way, having achieved a degree of mastery and feeling the benefits*	Sustaining *Introducing new developments, and re-evaluating quality – PLC as a way of life*
Openness, networks and partnerships	There is very little professional contact outside the school, centre or college.	Some staff are interested and engaged in networks and activities beyond the school, centre or college as a source of generating and sharing ideas and strategies.	External sources for generating and sharing ideas and strategies are generally perceived as valuable.	Staff look beyond the school, centre or college for new ideas and strategies. External input is sought out and welcomed.
	External networks and partnerships are limited, as is the seeking of external ideas and strategies.	There is some involvement with the community.	Staff are increasingly taking up opportunities to become involved in networks and external partnerships. Some whole-school, centre or college networking is being explored.	Links with other schools, centres, colleges and external agencies are seen as valuable, productive and important.
	The school, centre or college is relatively isolated from its community.		Community partnerships are generally welcomed and positive.	Many staff are involved in individual and school, centre or college-wide external networks.
				Community partnerships are thriving.
How do you know this?				
Inclusive membership	Membership of the PLC is confined to a small group of teaching staff and some or all school leaders.	Classroom support staff are increasingly involved as active members of the PLC.	Many support staff (teaching and other) participate as active members of the PLC.	The PLC includes all members of staff.
	Input of support staff is not invited.	Other support staff are less involved.	Parental and governor or school council member involvement is welcomed.	All support staff are highly valued members of the PLC.
	Parental and governor or school council member involvement is limited.	Parental and governor or school council member involvement is generally welcomed.		The whole-school, centre or college PLC draws people together from across the organisation.
				Parental, pupil and governor or school council member involvement is welcomed and encouraged.
How do you know this?				

PLC characteristics

	Starting out *Acquiring information and beginning to use ideas*	Developing *Experimenting with strategies and building on initial commitment*	Deepening *Well on the way, having achieved a degree of mastery and feeling the benefits*	Sustaining *Introducing new developments, and re-evaluating quality – PLC as a way of life*
Mutual trust, respect and support	Staff relationships highlight issues around trust and conflict. A blame culture may exist. Trust and respect exists among some members of smaller groups or departments. Development issues are viewed as a threat by a number of staff.	A moderate level of mutual trust exists school, centre or college-wide, with increasing mutual respect, although there is some anxiety about classroom observation etc. There is strong mutual trust and respect among some groups of staff who work closely together.	Trust, respect and positive professional relationships are developing school, centre or college-wide. Staff are increasingly open about their practice.	Staff relationships are characterised by openness, honesty, mutual trust, respect, support and care. Everyone's contribution is valued.
How do you know this?				

PLC processes

	Starting out	Developing	Deepening	Sustaining
Optimising resources and structures	There are few systems and policies in place to support the development of the PLC. Time, space, money and/or communication mechanisms tend to act as barriers.	Attention is paid to trying to put into place the necessary structures, systems and policies that will help support PLC development: creating time; locating space; planning communication mechanisms; use of meetings and other procedures; arranging staff deployment etc.	Most of the necessary structures, systems and policies are in place to support PLC development. Attention is paid to dealing with resource and structural issues that get in the way of PLC development.	Time, money, space, meetings, communication procedures and staff deployment are targeted as a priority to promote the ongoing development of the PLC. Resource and structural issues are dealt with swiftly and actively.
How do you know this?				

PLC processes	Starting out *Acquiring information and beginning to use ideas*	Developing *Experimenting with strategies and building on initial commitment*	Deepening *Well on the way, having achieved a degree of mastery and feeling the benefits*	Sustaining *Introducing new developments, and re-evaluating quality – PLC as a way of life*
Promoting professional learning	An explicit needs identification process is rarely used, either for individual staff or whole-school, centre or college needs. Co-ordination responsibility for continuing professional development is unspecified or unclear. Information for staff mainly comprises details about courses and training days.	A needs identification process has been developed and is being used for staff and whole-school, centre or college professional learning needs. Continuous learning of all staff is increasingly promoted. Attention is paid to strengthening the co-ordination of professional learning. Performance management is starting to be used as a process to support the PLC's development.	Staff and whole-school, centre or college professional learning needs are clearly identified. Continuous learning of all staff is promoted and carefully co-ordinated. A range of opportunities is planned to enable staff to learn from and with each other and facilitate the transfer of new learning into practice. Performance management is used as a positive process to support the PLC's development. Some staff are encouraged to take responsibility in promoting the professional learning of colleagues.	Staff and whole-school, centre or college professional learning needs are regularly and consistently identified. Continuous professional learning and development for all staff is actively promoted and carefully co-ordinated. Attention is paid to ensure that new learning is transferred into practice. Opportunities are automatically planned to ensure staff can learn with and from each other. Staff are actively encouraged to take responsibility in promoting the professional learning of colleagues.
How do you know this?				

PLC processes	Starting out *Acquiring information and beginning to use ideas*	Developing *Experimenting with strategies and building on initial commitment*	Deepening *Well on the way, having achieved a degree of mastery and feeling the benefits*	Sustaining *Introducing new developments, and re-evaluating quality – PLC as a way of life*
Evaluating and sustaining the PLC	There is little or no discussion about the concept of a PLC. There is little evaluation of how the process of the PLC operates or how its development progresses. There is little evaluation of continuing professional development's (CPD's) impact or of other PLC activities.	The idea of a PLC is introduced to staff. There is occasional evaluation of how the process of the PLC operates or how its development progresses. There is some evaluation of CPD's impact and of other PLC activities	The PLC is consciously and actively developed. There is regular evaluation of how the process of the PLC operates or how its development progresses. CPD's impact on practice is evaluated, as are many other PLC activities.	Being a PLC is just 'part of the way we do things here'. People understand and support the idea of a PLC. Regular attention is given to evaluating the process, progress and impact of the PLC and all of its activities, including CPD.
How do we know this				
Leading and managing to promote the PLC	The headteacher (principal) works to build trust and begins to develop and share a learning vision and focus. Senior leadership team members are encouraged to participate in PLC leadership. Few other staff are involved in leading any PLC activities.	Attention is given by senior leaders to developing and spreading a learning vision and focus and building trust. Senior leaders model teamwork and leadership of learning. Other staff are involved in leading some PLC activities.	Senior leaders maintain their attention to developing and spreading a learning vision and focus and building trust. Senior leaders model learning. Leadership for different PLC activities is increasingly taken up by other staff.	Senior leaders are deeply committed to the development and sustainability of the school's PLC and prioritise this as a major leadership and management task. Distributing leadership among staff is an accepted practice.
How do we know this				

Summary response sheet

	Starting out	Developing	Deepening	Sustaining
Shared values and vision				
Collective responsibility				
Learning-focused collaboration				
Existence of professional learning				
Reflective professional enquiry				
Openness, networks and partnerships				
Inclusive membership				
Mutual trust, respect and support				
Optimising resources and structures				
Promoting professional learning				
Evaluating and sustaining the PLC				
Leading and managing to promote the PLC				

You can use this sheet to: a) mark down individual responses to the implementation rubric;
b) summarise all of the responses of individuals.

Questions for reflection and discussion

What did you notice as you were completing the rubric?

Which are the characteristics and processes, or aspects of these, where you feel you have progressed furthest along the route? What factors seem to have helped you?

Which are the characteristics and processes, or aspects of these, where you feel progression has been slower? What seems to have been holding back the PLC's development in these areas?

How will you move forward with this information? (You may also find it helpful to use *Investigating the culture of your professional learning community*, another *Audit* activity, to gather some different kinds of data. Alternatively, the *Planning* and *Action* materials may offer some ideas about next steps.)

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Audit

Investigating the culture of your professional learning community

Comparing your preferred future and the current situation in your professional learning community

Deciding where you are as a professional learning community

The Six Secrets of Change

Michael Fullan

The Six Secrets of Change

- 6. Systems Learn
- 1. Love Your Employees
- 5. Transparency Rules
- 2. Connect Peers with Purpose
- 4. Learning Is the Work
- 3. Capacity Building Prevails
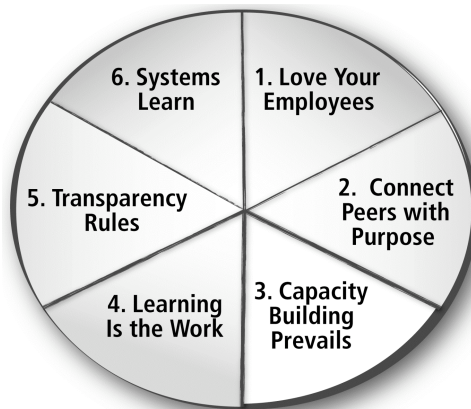
— Fullan, 2008a

Learning to Lead Change

The Pathways Problem

Change Factor

vs.

Change Process

What is Change?

- New materials
- New behaviors/practices
- New beliefs/understanding

The Implementation Dip

education in motion

Change Insights

- The implementation dip is normal
- Behaviors change before beliefs
- The size and prettiness of the planning document is inversely related to the quantity of action and student learning (Reeves, 2002)
- Shared vision or ownership is more of an outcome of a quality process than it is a precondition
- Feelings are more influential than thoughts (Kotter, 2008)

Implementation
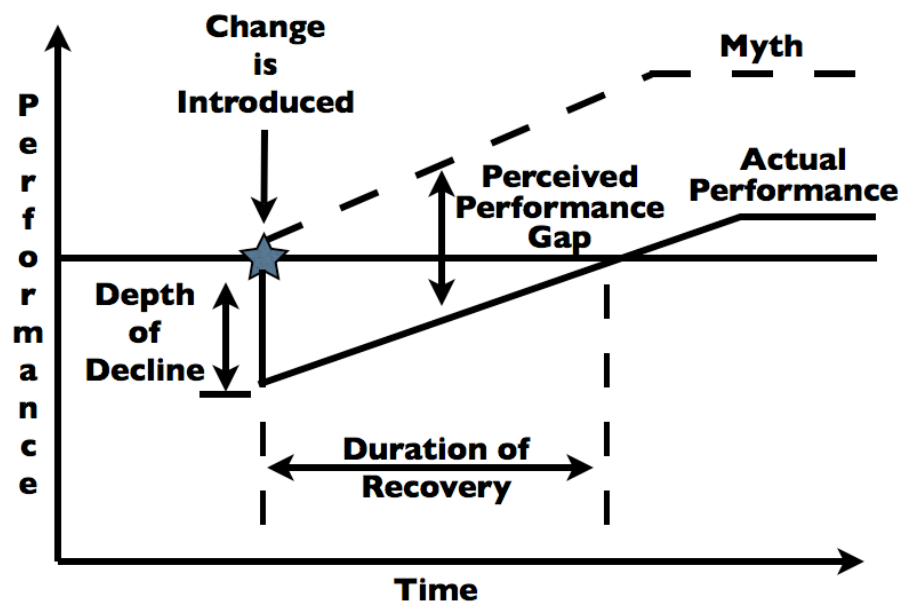
— Herold & Fedor, 2008

Change Savvy

Change savvy leadership involves:

- Careful entry into the new setting
- Listening to and learning from those who have been there longer
- Engage in fact finding and joint problem solving
- Carefully (rather than rashly) diagnosing the situation
- Forthrightly addressing people's concerns
- Being enthusiastic, genuine and sincere about the change circumstances
- Obtaining buy-in for what needs fixing
- Developing a credible plan for making that fix

— Herold & Fedor, 2008

Influences on School Capacity and School Student Achievement

| Student Achievement |
| Instructional Quality Curriculum, Instruction, Assessment |
| School Capacity |
| Policies and Programs on Professional Development |
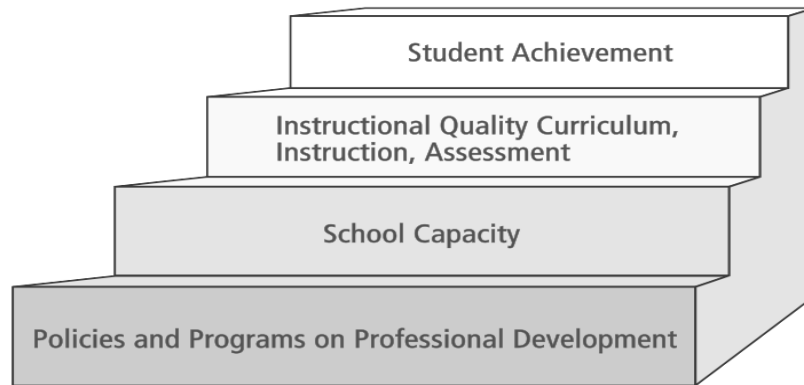
— *Newmann, King, & Youngs, 2000*

School Capacity

The collective power of the full staff to improve student achievement.

School capacity includes and requires:

1. Knowledge, skills, dispositions of individuals
2. Professional community
3. Program coherence
4. Technical resources
5. Shared leadership

— *Newmann, King, & Youngs, 2000*

What is Collaboration?

A systematic process in which we work together, interdependently, to analyze and impact professional practice in order to improve our individual and collective results.

— *Dufour, Dufour, & Eaker, 2002*

Tri-Level Reform

TRI-LEVEL REFORM

District State School/Community

— *Fullan, 2005*

Managing Change	The performance of the top school systems in the world suggest three things that matter most:

1. Getting the right people to become teachers
2. Developing them into effective instructors
3. Ensuring that the system is able to deliver the best possible instruction for every child (intervene early to address gaps)

— Barber & Mourshed, 2007

Managing Change	In viewing the video clip on managing change, use the P-M-I to identify:

- What is a Plus
- What is a Minus
- What is Interesting

P-M-I		
Plus	**Minus**	**Interesting**

Secret One: Love your Employees

Explore the importance of building the school by focusing on both the teachers and staff, and students and the community. The key is enabling staff to learn continuously. Evidence will be provided from successful business companies as well as from education.

Theory X Assumptions

- The average human being has an inherent dislike of work and will avoid it if he or she can.
- Because of their dislike for work, most people must be controlled and threatened before they will work hard enough.
- The average human prefers to be directed, dislikes responsibility, is unambiguous, and desires security above everything else.

— McGregor, 1960

Theory Y Assumptions

- If a job is satisfying, then the result will be commitment to the organization.
- The average person learns under proper conditions not only to accept but to seek responsibility.
- Imagination, creativity, and ingenuity can be used to solve work problems by a large number of employees.

— McGregor, 1960

Dimensions of Relational Coordination

Relationships	American	Southwest
Shared goals	"Ninety percent of the ramp employees don't care what happens, even if the walls fall down, as long as they get their check."	"I've never seen so many people work so hard to do one thing. You see people checking their watches to get the on-time departure … then it's over and you're back on time."
Shared knowledge	Participants revealed little awareness of the overall process. They typically explained their own set of tasks without reference to the overall process of flight departures.	Participants exhibited relatively clear mental models of the overall process — an understanding of the links between their own jobs and the jobs of other functions. Rather than just knowing what to do, they knew why, based on shared knowledge of how the overall process worked.
Mutual respect	"There are employees working here who think they're better than other employees. Gate and ticket agents think they're better than the ramp. The ramp think they're better than cabin cleaners — think it's a sissy, woman's job. Then the cabin cleaners look down on the building cleaners. The mechanics think the ramp are a bunch of luggage handlers.	"No one takes the job of another person for granted. The skycap is just as critical as the pilot. You can always count on the next guy standing there. No one department is any more important than another."

Communications

	American	Southwest
Frequent and timely communication	"Here you don't communicate. And sometimes you end up not knowing things … Everyone says we need effective communication. But it's a low priority in action … The hardest thing at the gates when flights are delayed is to get information."	"There is constant communication between customer service and the ramp. When planes have to be switched and bags must be moved, customer service will advise the ramp directly or through operations." If there's an aircraft swap "operations keeps everyone informed. … It happens smoothly."
Problem-solving communication	"If you ask anyone here, what's the last thing you think of when there's a problem, I bet your bottom dollar it's the customer. And these are guys who work hard every day. But they're thinking, how do I keep my ass out of the sling?"	"We figure out the cause of the delay. We do not necessarily chastise, though sometimes that comes into play. It is a matter of working together. Figuring out what we can learn. Not finger pointing."

— Gittell, 2003

Motivational Work	▪ Meaningful, accomplishable work
	▪ Enabling development
	▪ Sense of camaraderie
	▪ Being well led

Characteristics of Firms of Endearment (FoEs)	What we call a humanistic company is run in such a way that its stakeholders — customers, employees, suppliers, business partners, society, and many investors — develop an emotional connection with it, an affectionate regard not unlike the way many people feel about their favourite sports teams. Humanistic companies — or firms of endearment (FoEs) — seek to maximize their value to society as a whole, not just to their shareholders. They are the ultimate value creators: They create emotional value, experiential value, social value, and of course, financial value. People who interact with such companies feel safe, secure, and pleased in their dealings. They enjoy working with or for the company, buying from it, investing in it, and having it as a neighbour.
	— Sisodia, Wolfe, & Sheth, 2007

FoEs Performance	▪ Over a ten-year horizon, FoEs outperformed the *Good to Great* companies: 1,026 percent return versus 331 percent (a 3-to-1 ratio).
	▪ Over five years, FoEs returned 128 percent, compared to 77 percent by the *Good to Great* companies (a 1.7-to-1 ratio).
	— Sisodia, Wolfe, & Sheth, 2007

Reflection on Content: (Three-Person-Interview)	In groups of three discuss the following questions:
	1. Who are your stakeholders?
	2. What does your organization believe in and stand for?
	3. What conditions do you need to create a Theory Y (FoE) environment?

Worksheet

Secret Two: Connect Peers with Purpose

Purposeful peer interaction within the school is crucial. Student learning and achievement increase substantially when teachers work in learning communities supported by school leaders who focus on improvement.

Jersey Video	Why is this a positive example of teaching connecting with peers?
Knowledge Sharing	Literacy Learning Fair
Learning Fair Outcomes	▪ Forces schools to explain themselves ▪ Time for celebrating the work of the year ▪ Learn new ideas from other schools ▪ Friendly competition to outdo each other ▪ Fosters district identity
Results of Connecting	▪ <u>Knowledge</u> flows as people pursue and continuously learn what works best ▪ <u>Identity</u> with an entity larger than oneself expands the self into powerful consequences. — *Fullan, 2008a*
We-We Commitment	What are your two best strategies for connecting peers?

Secret Three: Capacity Building Prevails

The most effective strategies involve helping teachers and principals develop the instructional and management of change skills necessary for school improvement. The role of assessment for learning is essential in order to link data on learning to instructional practices that achieve student results.

Capacity Building	Capacity building concerns competencies, resources, and motivation. Individuals and groups are high on capacity if they possess and continue to develop these three components in concert.
	— *Fullan, 2008a*
Judgmentalism	Judgmentalism is not just perceiving something as ineffective, but doing so in a pejorative and negative way.
	— *Fullan, 2008a*
Non-Judgmentalism	Focused on improvement in the face of ineffective performance rather than labeling or categorizing weaknesses.
	— *Fullan, 2008a*
Fear Prevents Acting on Knowledge	When people fear for their jobs or their reputation it is unlikely that they will take risks. Fear causes a focus on the short-term to neglect of the mid or longer term. Fear creates a focus on the individual rather than the group. Teamwork suffers.
Lincoln on Temperance	Assume to dictate to his judgment, or command his action, or mark him to be one to be shunned and despised, and he will retreat within himself, close all avenues to his head and his heart; and tho your cause be naked truth itself, transformed to the heaviest lance harder than steel can be made, and tho you throw it with more than Herculean force and precision, you shall no more be able to pierce him than to penetrate the hard shell of a tortoise with a rye straw.
	— *Quoted in Miller, 2002, pp. 148-149*
Lincoln on Slavery	We can succeed only in concert. It is not 'can any of us imagine better', but 'can we all do better.'
	— *Quoted in Miller, 2002, pp. 224; italics in original*

Judgmentalism | Is it possible to perceive something as ineffective and not be judgmental about it?

Letter off A, B
- Pick any of the four quadrants that represents a situation that you have experienced
- Make a few notations within the quadrant
- Do a two-step interview with your partner A, B

FEELING	FEEDBACK	
	Indirect	**Direct**
Belittled		
Not Belittled		

As a leader…
- Practice non-judgmentalism when you are giving feedback
- Practice non-defensiveness when you are receiving feedback

Capacity Building | People who thrive here have a certain humility. They know they can get better; they want to learn from the best. We look for people who light up when they are around other talented people.

— Taylor & LaBarre, 2002

Secret Four: Learning Is the Work

Professional development (PD) in workshops and courses is only an input to continuous learning and precision in teaching. Successful growth itself is accomplished when the culture of the school supports day-to-day learning of teachers engaged in improving what they do in the classroom and school.

Culture of Learning	If we were to identify the single greatest difference between Toyota and other organizations (including service, healthcare, and manufacturing), it would be the depth of understanding among Toyota employees regarding their work. — *Liker & Meier, 2007*

Toyota's Approach	The essence of Toyota's approach to improving performance consists of three components: 1. Identify critical knowledge 2. Transfer knowledge using job instruction 3. Verify learning and success — *Liker & Meier, 2007*

Breakthrough

— *Fullan, Hill, & Crévola, 2006*

The Container Store	The Container Store provides 235 hours of training to first-year employees and 160 hours every year thereafter, all with a view to creating a culture where people learn from experience. — *Sisodia, Wolfe, & Sheth, 2007*

Non-Judgmentalism … Again	The objective is not to identify whom to blame for a problem, it is to find out where the system failed. — *Liker & Meier, 2007*

Secret Five: Transparency Rules

Ongoing data and access to seeing effective practices is necessary for success. It takes up the dilemmas of 'de-privatizing practice' in which it becomes normal and desirable for teachers to observe and be observed in teaching facilitated by coaches and mentors.

Getting Started with Transparency	Data walls — elementary teachers Data walls — high school teachers *— Liker & Meier, 2007*
Medicine	To fix medicine we need to do two things: measure ourselves, and be open about what we are doing. *— Gawande, 2007*
Classroom Improvement	Transparency + non-judgmentalism + good help = classroom improvement *— Fullan, 2008a*

Statistical Neighbors

As part of the overall strategy, Ontario created a new database, which is called "Statistical Neighbors." All four thousand schools are in the system. They are organized into four bands — students and schools from the most disadvantaged communities, two bands in the middle, and a fourth comprising students in the least disadvantaged communities. Schools can be examined using other categories as well — size of school, percentage of ESL students, geographical setting (rural or urban), and so on.

We are now in a position to use the data, and here is where the nuance of Secret Five comes into play. Simply publishing the results can possibly do some good, but more likely than not would have negative side effects. Instead we operate under a set of ground rules:

1. We do not condone league tables — displaying the results of every school from lowest to highest scores without regard to context. Instead we do the following:

    a. Help schools compare themselves with themselves — that is, look at what progress they are making compared to previous years;

    b. Help schools compare themselves with their statistical neighbors, comparing apples with apples;

    c. Help schools examine their results relative to an external or absolute standard, such as how other schools in the province are faring and how close they are to achieving 100 percent success in literacy and numeracy.

2. We work with the seventy-two school districts and their four thousand schools to set annual "aspirational targets" based on their current starting point.

3. We focus on capacity building, helping districts identify and use effective instructional practices.

4. Although we take each year's results seriously, we are cautious about drawing conclusions about any particular school based on just one year's results. We prefer to examine three-year trends to determine if schools or districts are "stuck" or "moving" (improving or declining).

5. For schools and districts that are continuing to under-perform, we intervene with a program called Ontario Focused Intervention Partnership (OFIP), which provides targeted help designed to improve performance. There are currently about 850 of the 4,000 schools in this program. We are careful not to stigmatize schools in OFIP (in keeping with Secret Three), because doing so gets people sidetracked into issues of blame.

Overall, we think that this approach to data-informed development is effective. There is quite a lot of pressure built into the process, but that pressure is based on constructive transparency. When data are precise, presented in a non-judgmental way, considered by peers, and used for improvement as well as for external accountability, they serve to balance pressure and support. This approach seems to work. After five years of flatlined results before beginning the program (1999 – 2003), the province's literacy and numeracy scores have climbed by some ten percentage points, with OFIP schools improving more than the average.

In England, schools and LAs can also track their performance through a data system called RAISE in which they can trace their performance over time.

— Fullan, 2008a

Secret Six: Systems Learn

Continuous learning depends on developing many leaders in the school in order to enhance continuity. It also depends on schools being confident in the face of complexity, and open to new ideas.

Systems Learn	The fact that Toyota can succeed over decades … and that the company shows no "leadership effects" — or changes from succession — speaks to building a robust set of interrelated management practices and philosophies that provide advantage above and beyond the ideas or inspirations of single individuals. *Pfeffer & Sutton, 2006*
Certainty	Some people I've encountered seem more certain about everything than I am about anything. *— Rubin, 2003*
Wisdom	Wisdom is using your knowledge while doubting what you know. *— Pfeffer & Sutton, 2006*
Leaders …	… Have to be more confident than the situation warrants. They have to develop leadership in others. Be specific about the few things that matter and keep repeating them. *— Pfeffer & Sutton, 2006*
Systems Learning	Confidence but not certitude in the face of complexity. Get comfortable with being uncomfortable. *— Fullan, 2008a*

Leadership	
Shackleton Video	What evidence did you see of Shackleton's leadership style?

Scott

- Ambitious
- Naïve technically
- Hierarchical
- Arrogant
- Wary of colleagues more able than himself
- Indifferent selector
- Poor trainer
- Bad safety record
- Gifted writer

Shackleton

- Single-minded
- Excellent in crisis
- Technically sensible
- Gregarious
- Excellent public speaker
- Broadly objective
- Good conceptual planner
- Effective selector and trainer
- Good safety record
- Bored by administration
- Politically astute

— *Morrel & Capparell, 2001*

On Leadership … Scott was dour, bullying and controlling; Shackleton was warm, humorous and egalitarian … Scott tried to orchestrate every movement of his men; Shackleton gave his men responsibility and some measure of independence. Scott was secretive and untrusting; Shackleton talked openly and frankly with the men about all aspects of the work. Scott put his team at risk to achieve his goals; Shackleton valued his men's lives above all else.

Scott's men died. All of Shackleton's men survived the wreck of their ship, Endurance in the crushing Antarctic ice, stranded twelve thousand miles from civilization with no means of communication. Isolated for almost two years on an Antarctic ice flow, Shackleton and a few of his men endured an eight-hundred-mile trip across the frigid south Atlantic in little more than a rowboat to get help for his men. All twenty-seven men in the crew survived in good health.

— *Morrel & Capparell, 2001*

Shackleton's Leadership Traits:	- Cultivate a sense of compassion and responsibility for others. - Once you commit, stick through the tough learning period. - Do your part to help create an upbeat environment at work — important for productivity. - Broaden your cultural and social horizons, learning to see things from different perspectives. - In a rapidly changing world, be willing to venture in new directions to seize new opportunities and learn new skills. - Find a way to turn setbacks and failures to your own advantage. - Be bold in vision and careful in planning. - Learn from past mistakes. - Never insist on reaching a goal at any cost; it must be achieved without undue hardship for your staff.

— *Morrel & Capparell, 2001*

What's Worth Fighting for in the Principalship: Guidelines for Principals	1. De-privatize teaching 2. Model instructional leadership 3. Build capacity first 4. Grow other leaders 5. Divert the distractors 6. Be a system leader

— *Fullan, 2008*

What's Worth Fighting for in the Principalship: Guidelines for Systems	1. Invest in the instructional leadership of principals 2. Combine direction and flexibility 3. Mobilize the power of data 4. Use peers to change district culture 5. Address the managerial requirements 6. Stay the course

— *Fullan, 2008*

Leadership Therapy

A. Rowley, 2007

The Leadership Circumplex

The circumplex is based upon two related dimensions of leadership behavior — conviction and connection.

*Conviction* measures the following behaviors:

- The ability to provide a compelling vision;
- The capacity to manage or lead change;
- Reality sense — the ability to grasp what is happening in the industry and a commitment to understanding and servicing the needs of the customer;
- The capacity to display passion, conviction, belief and authenticity; and
- A commitment to continuous learning.

Connection measures the following:

- Self-awareness — an understanding of how your behavior affects others and how to change it according to the person/situation;
- Effective communication — you demonstrate a sense of power and competence through communication;
- Developing people — you put developing people as a priority and ensure that people have personal development plans; and
- The capacity to revitalize the business values

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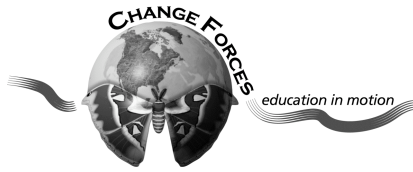
Michael Fullan is the former Dean of the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education of the University of Toronto. Recognized as an international authority on educational reform, Michael is engaged in training, consulting, and evaluating change projects around the world. His ideas for managing change are used in many countries, and his books have been published in many languages.

Michael Fullan led the evaluation team which conducted the four-year assessment of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategy in England from 1998-2003. In April 2004 he was appointed Special Advisor to the Premier and Minister of Education in Ontario.

RTI Fidelity of Implementation Rubric

The Response to Intervention (RTI) Fidelity Rubric is for use by individuals who are responsible for monitoring school-level fidelity of RTI implementation. The rubric is aligned with the essential components of RTI and the infrastructure that is necessary for successful implementation. It is accompanied by a worksheet with guiding questions and score points for use in an interview with a school's RTI leadership team.

Assessments—*Screening, progress monitoring, and other supporting assessments are used to inform data-based decision making.*			
Measures	**1**	**3**	**5**
Screening—*The RTI framework accurately identifies students at risk of poor learning outcomes or challenging behaviors.*			
Screening Tools	Insufficient evidence that the screening tools are reliable, correlations between the instruments and valued outcomes are strong, and predictions of risk status are accurate.	Evidence indicates that the screening tools are reliable, correlations between the instruments and valued outcomes are strong, and predictions of risk status are accurate, but staff is unable to articulate the supporting evidence.	Evidence indicates that the screening tools are reliable, correlations between the instruments and valued outcomes are strong, and predictions of risk status are accurate, and staff is able to articulate the supporting evidence.
Universal Screening	One or none of the following conditions is met: (1) screening is conducted for all students (i.e., is universal); (2) procedures are in place to ensure implementation accuracy (i.e., all students are tested, scores are accurate, cut points/decisions are accurate); and (3) a process to screen all students occurs more than once per year (e.g., fall, winter, spring).	Two of the following conditions are met: (1) screening is conducted for all students (i.e., is universal); (2) procedures are in place to ensure implementation accuracy (i.e., all students are tested, scores are accurate, cut points/decisions are accurate); and (3) a process to screen all students occurs more than once per year (e.g., fall, winter, spring).	All of the following conditions are met: (1) screening is conducted for all students (i.e., is universal); (2) procedures are in place to ensure implementation accuracy (i.e., all students are tested, scores are accurate, cut points/decisions are accurate); and (3) a process to screen all students occurs more than once per year (e.g., fall, winter, spring).
Data Points to Verify Risk	Screening data are not used or are used alone to verify decisions about whether a student is or is not at risk.	Screening data are used in concert with at least one other data source (e.g., classroom performance, curriculum-based assessment, performance on state	Screening data are used in concert with at least two other data sources (e.g., classroom performance, performance on state assessments, diagnostic assessment

		assessments, diagnostic assessment data, short-term progress monitoring) to verify decisions about whether a student is or is not at risk.	data, short-term progress monitoring) to verify decisions about whether a student is or is not at risk.

Progress Monitoring—*Ongoing and frequent monitoring of progress quantifies rates of improvement and informs instructional practice and the development of individualized programs. Measures are appropriate for the student's grade and/or skill level.*

Progress-Monitoring Tools	Selected progress-monitoring tools meet no more than one of the following criteria: (1) have sufficient number of alternate forms of equal and controlled difficulty to allow for progress monitoring at recommended intervals based on intervention level; (2) specify minimum acceptable growth; (3) provide benchmarks for minimum acceptable end-of-year performance; and (4) reliability and validity information for the performance-level score is available.	Selected progress-monitoring tools meet two or three of the following criteria: (1) have sufficient number of alternate forms of equal and controlled difficulty to allow for progress monitoring at recommended intervals based on intervention level; (2) specify minimum acceptable growth; (3) provide benchmarks for minimum acceptable end-of-year performance; and (4) reliability and validity information for the performance-level score is available.	Selected progress-monitoring tools meet all of the following criteria: (1) have sufficient number of alternate forms of equal and controlled difficulty to allow for progress monitoring at recommended intervals based on intervention level; (2) specify minimum acceptable growth; (3) provide benchmarks for minimum acceptable end-of-year performance; and (4) reliability and validity information for the performance-level score is available and staff is able to articulate the supporting evidence.
Progress-Monitoring Process	Neither of the following conditions is met: (1) progress monitoring occurs at least monthly for students receiving secondary-level intervention and at least weekly for students receiving intensive intervention; and (2) procedures are in place to ensure implementation accuracy (i.e., appropriate students are tested, scores are accurate, decision-making rules are applied consistently).	Only one of the following conditions is met: (1) progress monitoring occurs at least monthly for students receiving secondary-level intervention and at least weekly for students receiving intensive intervention; and (2) procedures are in place to ensure implementation accuracy (i.e., appropriate students are tested, scores are accurate, decision-making rules are applied consistently).	Both of the following conditions are met: (1) progress monitoring occurs at least monthly for students receiving secondary-level intervention and at least weekly for students receiving intensive intervention; and (2) procedures are in place to ensure implementation accuracy (i.e., appropriate students are tested, scores are accurate, decision-making rules are applied consistently).

Data-Based Decision Making—*Data-based decision-making processes are used to inform instruction, movement within the multilevel system, and disability identification (in accordance with state law).*			
Measures	**1**	**3**	**5**
Decision-Making Process	The mechanism for making decisions about the participation of students in the instruction/ intervention levels meets no more than one of the following criteria: The process (1) is data-driven and based on validated methods; (2) involves a broad base of stakeholders; and (3) is operationalized with clear, established decision rules (e.g., movement between levels or tiers, determination of appropriate instruction or interventions).	The mechanism for making decisions about the participation of students in the instruction/ intervention levels meets two of the following criteria: The process (1) is data-driven and based on validated methods; (2) involves a broad base of stakeholders; and (3) is operationalized with clear, established decision rules (e.g., movement between levels or tiers, determination of appropriate instruction or interventions).	The mechanism for making decisions about the participation of students in the instruction/intervention levels meets all of the following criteria: The process (1) is data-driven and based on validated methods; (2) involves a broad base of stakeholders; and (3) is operationalized with clear, established decision rules (e.g., movement between levels or tiers, determination of appropriate instruction or interventions).
Data System	A data system is in place that meets two or fewer of the following conditions: (1) the system allows users to document and access individual student- level data (including screening and progress-monitoring data) and instructional decisions; (2) data are entered in a timely manner; (3) data can be represented graphically; and (4) there is a process for setting/evaluating goals.	A data system is in place that meets three of the following four conditions: (1) the system allows users to document and access individual student-level data (including screening and progress-monitoring data) and instructional decisions; (2) data are entered in a timely manner; (3) data can be represented graphically; and (4) there is a process for setting/evaluating goals.	A data system is in place that meets all of the following conditions: (1) the system allows users to document and access individual student-level data (including screening and progress-monitoring data) and instructional decisions; (2) data are entered in a timely manner; (3) data can be represented graphically; and (4) there is a process for setting/evaluating goals.
Responsiveness to Secondary and Intensive Levels of Intervention	Neither of the following conditions is met: (1) decisions about responsiveness to intervention are based on reliable and valid progress-monitoring data that reflect slope of improvement or progress toward the attainment of a goal at the end of the intervention; and (2) these decision-making criteria are implemented accurately.	Only one of the following conditions is met: (1) decisions about responsiveness to intervention are based on reliable and valid progress-monitoring data that reflect slope of improvement or progress toward the attainment of a goal at the end of the intervention; and (2) these decision-making criteria are implemented accurately.	Both of the following conditions are met: (1) decisions about responsiveness to intervention are based on reliable and valid progress-monitoring data that reflect slope of improvement or progress toward the attainment of a goal at the end of the intervention; and (2) these decision-making criteria are implemented accurately.

Multilevel Instruction—The RTI framework includes a school-wide, multilevel system of instruction and interventions for preventing school failure. Commonly represented by the three-tiered triangle, multilevel instruction also is known as the multi-tiered system of support (MTSS).			
Measures	**1**	**3**	**5**
Primary-Level Instruction/Core Curriculum **(Tier I)**			
Research-Based Curriculum Materials	Few core curriculum materials are research based for the target population of learners (including subgroups).	Some core curriculum materials are research based for the target population of learners (including subgroups).	All core curriculum materials are research based for the target population of learners (including subgroups).
Articulation of Teaching and Learning (in and across grade levels)	Neither of the following conditions is met: (1) teaching and learning objectives are well articulated from one grade to another; and (2) teaching and learning is well articulated within grade levels so that students have highly similar experiences, regardless of their assigned teacher.	Only one of the following conditions is met: (1) teaching and learning objectives are well articulated from one grade to another; and (2) teaching and learning is well articulated within grade levels so that students have highly similar experiences, regardless of their assigned teacher.	Both of the following conditions are met: (1) teaching and learning objectives are well articulated from one grade to another; and (2) teaching and learning is well articulated within grade levels so that students have highly similar experiences, regardless of their assigned teacher.
Differentiated Instruction	Neither of the following conditions is met: (1) interviewed staff can describe how most teachers in the school differentiate instruction for students on, below, or above grade level; and (2) interviewed staff can explain how most teachers in the school use student data to identify and address the needs of students.	Only one of the following conditions is met: (1) interviewed staff can describe how most teachers in the school differentiate instruction for students on, below, or above grade level; and (2) interviewed staff can explain how most teachers in the school use student data to identify and address the needs of students.	Both of the following conditions are met: (1) interviewed staff can describe how most teachers in the school differentiate instruction for students on, below, or above grade level; and (2) interviewed staff can explain how most teachers in the school use data to identify and address the needs of students.
Standards-Based	The core curriculum (reading and mathematics) is not aligned with the Common Core or other state standards.	The core curriculum (reading and mathematics) is partially aligned with the Common Core or other state standards.	The core curriculum (reading and mathematics) is aligned with the Common Core or other state standards.

Exceeding Benchmark	Neither of the following conditions is met: (1) the school provides enrichment opportunities for students exceeding benchmarks; and (2) teachers implement those opportunities consistently at all grade levels.	One of the following conditions is met: (1) the school provides enrichment opportunities for students exceeding benchmarks; and (2) teachers implement those opportunities consistently at all grade levels.	Both of the following conditions are met: (1) the school provides enrichment opportunities for students exceeding benchmarks; and (2) teachers implement those opportunities consistently at all grade levels.
Secondary-Level Intervention **(Tier II)**			
Evidence-Based Intervention	Secondary-level interventions are not evidence based in content areas and grade levels where they are available.	Some secondary-level interventions are evidence based in content areas and grade levels where they are available.	All secondary-level interventions are evidence based in content areas and grade levels where they are available.
Complements Core Instruction	Secondary-level intervention is poorly aligned with core instruction and incorporates different topics, even though those topics are not foundational skills that support core program learning objectives.	Secondary-level intervention incorporates foundational skills, but these only occasionally align with the learning objectives of core instruction.	Secondary-level intervention is well aligned with core instruction and incorporates foundational skills that support the learning objectives of core instruction.
Instructional Characteristics	One or none of the following conditions is met: (1) interventions are standardized; (2) secondary-level interventions are led by staff trained in the intervention according to developer requirements; and (3) group size and dosage are optimal (according to research) for the age and needs of students.	Two of the following conditions are met: (1) interventions are standardized; (2) secondary-level interventions are led by staff trained in the intervention according to developer requirements; and (3) group size and dosage are optimal (according to research) for the age and needs of students.	All three of the following conditions are met: (1) interventions are standardized; (2) secondary-level interventions are led by staff trained in the intervention according to developer requirements; and (3) group size and dosage are optimal (according to research) for the age and needs of students.
Addition to Primary	Secondary-level interventions replace core instruction.	Secondary-level interventions sometimes supplement core instruction and sometimes replace core instruction.	Secondary-level interventions supplement core instruction.

Intensive Intervention—*Individualized with a focus on the academic needs of students with disabilities and those significantly below grade level* (Tier III)			
Data-Based Interventions Adapted Based on Student Need	Intensive interventions are not more intensive (e.g., no increase in duration or frequency, change in interventionist, change in group size, or change in intervention) than secondary interventions.	Intensive interventions are more intensive than secondary interventions based only on preset methods to increase intensity (e.g., sole reliance on increased duration or frequency, change in interventionist, decreased group size, or change in intervention program).	Intensive interventions are more intensive than secondary interventions and are adapted to address individual student needs in a number of ways (e.g., increased duration or frequency, change in interventionist, decreased group size, change in instructional delivery, and change in type of intervention) through an iterative manner based on student data.
Instructional Characteristics	None of the following conditions is met: (1) the intervention is individualized; (2) intensive interventions are led by well-trained staff experienced in individualizing instruction based on student data; and (3) the group size is optimal (according to research) for the age and needs of students.	Only one of the following conditions is met: (1) the intervention is individualized; (2) intensive interventions are led by well-trained staff experienced in individualizing instruction based on student data; and (3) the group size is optimal (according to research) for the age and needs of students.	All of the following conditions are met: (1) the intervention is individualized; (2) intensive interventions are led by well-trained staff experienced in individualizing instruction based on student data; and (3) the group size is optimal (according to research) for the age and needs of students.
Relationship to Primary	Neither of the following conditions is met: (1) decisions regarding student participation in both core instruction and intensive intervention are made on a case-by-case basis, according to student need; and (2) intensive interventions are aligned to the specific skill needs of students to help them make progress toward core curriculum standards.	Only one of the following conditions is met: (1) decisions regarding student participation in both core instruction and intensive intervention are made on a case-by-case basis, according to student need; and (2) intensive interventions address the general education curriculum in an appropriate manner for students.	Both of the following conditions are met: (1) decisions regarding student participation in both core instruction and intensive intervention are made on a case-by-case basis, according to student need; and (2) intensive interventions address the general education curriculum in an appropriate manner for students.

Infrastructure and Support Mechanisms—*Knowledge, resources, and organizational structures necessary to operationalize all components of RTI in a unified system to meet the established goals.*			
Measures	**1**	**3**	**5**
Prevention Focus	Staff generally perceives RTI as a program that solely supports the prereferral process for special education.	Some staff understand that RTI is a framework to prevent all students, including students with disabilities, from having academic problems.	All staff understand that RTI is a framework to prevent all students, including students with disabilities, from having academic problems.
Leadership Personnel	Decisions and actions by school and district leaders undermine the effectiveness of the essential components of the RTI framework at the school.	Decisions and actions by school and district leaders are inconsistent and only somewhat supportive of the essential components of the RTI framework at the school; support for RTI implementation is not very evident.	Decisions and actions by school and district leaders proactively support the essential components of the RTI framework at the school, and help make the RTI framework more effective; support for RTI implementation is a high priority.
School-Based Professional Development	The school has no well-defined, school-based professional development mechanism to support continuous improvement of instructional practice, data-based decision making, and delivery of interventions.	Some forms of school-based professional development are available, but most are not consistent or job embedded to ensure continuous improvement in instructional practice, data-based decision making, and delivery of interventions.	School-based professional development is institutionalized and structured so that all teachers continuously examine, reflect upon, and improve instructional practice, data-based decision making, and delivery of interventions.
Schedules	School wide schedules are not aligned to support multiple levels of intervention based on student need; inadequate time is available for interventions.	School wide schedules are partially aligned to support multiple levels of intervention based on student need; some additional time is built in for interventions.	School wide schedules are aligned to support multiple levels of intervention based on student need; adequate additional time is built in for interventions.
Resources	Resources (e.g., funds, programs) are not allocated to support RTI implementation.	Resources (e.g., funds, programs) are partially allocated to support RTI implementation.	Resources (e.g., funds, programs) are adequately allocated to support RTI implementation.
Cultural and Linguistic Responsiveness	One or none of the following conditions is met: Staff can articulate information and factors that they consider when adopting	Two of the following conditions are met: Staff can articulate information and factors that they consider when adopting	All three of the following conditions are met: Staff can articulate information and factors that they consider when adopting

	culturally and linguistically relevant (1) instructional practices, (2) assessments, and (3) intervention programs.	culturally and linguistically relevant (1) instructional practices, (2) assessments, and (3) intervention programs.	culturally and linguistically relevant (1) instructional practices, (2) assessments, and (3) intervention programs.
Communications With and Involvement of Parents	One or none of the following conditions is met: (1) a description of the school's essential components of RTI is shared with parents; (2) a coherent mechanism is implemented for updating parents on the progress of their child who is receiving secondary or intensive interventions; and (3) parents are involved during decision making regarding the progress of students receiving intensive intervention.	Two of the following conditions are met: (1) a description of the school's essential components of RTI is shared with parents; (2) a coherent mechanism is implemented for updating parents on the progress of their child who is receiving secondary or intensive interventions; and (3) parents are involved during decision making regarding the progress of students receiving intensive intervention.	All of the following conditions are met: (1) a description of the school's essential components of RTI is shared with parents; (2) a coherent mechanism is implemented for updating parents on the progress of their child who is receiving secondary or intensive interventions; and (3) parents are informed about decision making regarding the progress of students receiving intensive intervention.
Communication With and Involvement of All Staff	One or none of the following conditions is met: (1) a description of the school's essential components of RTI and data-based decision- making process is shared with staff; (2) a system is in place to keep staff informed; and (3) teacher teams collaborate frequently.	At least two of the following conditions are met: (1) a description of the school's essential components of RTI and data-based decision-making process is shared with staff; (2) a system is in place to keep staff informed; and (3) teacher teams collaborate frequently.	All of the following conditions are met: (1) a description of the school's essential components of RTI and data-based decision- making process is shared with staff; (2) a system is in place to keep staff informed; and (3) teacher teams collaborate frequently.
RTI Teams	Only one of the following conditions is met: (1) the RTI team is representative of all key stakeholders; (2) structures and clear processes are in place to guide decision making; and (3) time is set aside for the team to meet regularly.	At least two of the following conditions are met: (1) the RTI team is representative of all key stakeholders; (2) structures and clear processes are in place to guide decision making; and (3) time is set aside for the team to meet regularly.	All of the following conditions are met: (1) the RTI team is representative of all key stakeholders; (2) structures and clear processes are in place to guide decision making; and (3) time is set aside for the team to meet regularly.

Fidelity and Evaluation—*System for collecting and analyzing data to measure fidelity and effectiveness of the RTI model.*			
Measures	**1**	**3**	**5**
Fidelity	Neither of the following conditions is met: (1) procedures are in place to monitor the fidelity of implementation of the core curriculum and secondary and intensive interventions; and (2) procedures are in place to monitor the processes of administering and analyzing assessments.	One of the following conditions is met: (1) procedures are in place to monitor the fidelity of implementation of the core curriculum and secondary and intensive interventions; and (2) procedures are in place to monitor the processes of administering and analyzing assessments.	Both of the following conditions are met: (1) procedures are in place to monitor the fidelity of implementation of the core curriculum and secondary and intensive interventions; and (2) procedures are in place to monitor the processes of administering and analyzing assessments.
Evaluation	None of the following conditions are met: (1) an evaluation plan is in place to monitor short- and long-term goals; (2) student data are reviewed for all students and subgroups of students across the essential components to evaluate effectiveness of the RTI framework (i.e., core curriculum is effective, interventions are effective, screening process is effective); and (3) implementation data (e.g., walk-throughs) are reviewed to monitor fidelity and efficiency across all components of the RTI framework.	At least one of the following conditions is met: (1) an evaluation plan is in place to monitor short- and long-term goals; (2) student data are reviewed for all students and subgroups of students across the essential components to evaluate effectiveness of the RTI framework (i.e., core curriculum is effective, interventions are effective, screening process is effective); and (3) implementation data (e.g., walk-throughs) are reviewed to monitor fidelity and efficiency across all components of the RTI framework.	All of the following conditions are met: (1) an evaluation plan is in place to monitor short- and long-term goals; (2) student data are reviewed for all students and subgroups of students across the essential components to evaluate effectiveness of the RTI framework (i.e., core curriculum is effective, interventions are effective, screening process is effective); and (3) implementation data (e.g., walk-throughs) are reviewed to monitor fidelity and efficiency across all components of the RTI framework.

RTI Essential Components Worksheet

School: _____   District: _____   Date: _____

Person(s) Interviewed: _____

Interviewer(s): _____

Purpose:

The purpose of this worksheet is to provide a tool for collecting relevant information and for recording a school's rating on various items related to response to intervention (RTI) implementation. Descriptions of ratings for each item are provided on the RTI Essential Components Integrity Rubric (the Rubric).

Information about school-level implementation (Grades K–8) may be collected through interviews with school personnel and through observations and document review. After all of the information has been collected, use your notes and the Rubric to rate the school on each item. The Rubric provides a five-point rating scale and descriptions of practices that would score a 1, 3, or 5. Data collectors may assign the school a rating of 2 or 4 if the information collected suggests the school falls between the rubric descriptions. For example, if the reviewer judges a school to be performing at a level higher than the Rubric describes for a 3 rating but not quite at the level described for a 5, then the reviewer should rate the school as performing at a 4.

Assessments: Screening, progress monitoring, and other supporting assessments are used to inform data-based decision making.			
Item	**Sample Interview Questions**	**Comments/Remarks**	**Ratings**
Screening—The RTI system accurately identifies students at risk of poor learning outcomes or challenging behaviors.			
1. **Screening Tools**	What tools do you use for universal screening (probe across content areas)? How much attention was given to the vendor's evidence regarding the validity, reliability, and accuracy of the tools when selected? Does your school have documentation from the vendor that these tools have been shown to be valid, reliable, and accurate with subgroups in your school? Does staff understand how the tool is intended to be used? Can you or other staff provide evidence of the technical adequacy (i.e., reliability, validity, classification accuracy) of the tools?	Notes Evidence Sources Recommendations	Rating: ① ② ③ ④ ⑤ Justification for rating

2. Universal Screening	Describe the process for conducting screening in your school. To what extent is this process consistently followed? Are all students screened? How many times during the school year are students screened? Do you use a well-defined cut score or decision point to identify students at risk? How do you ensure that administration of screening assessments follows the developer's guidelines?	Notes Evidence Sources Recommendations	Rating: ① ② ③ ④ ⑤ Justification of Rating
3. Data Points to Verify Risk	Do you review other information to help verify that the results of the initial screening are accurate before placing a student in secondary-level or intensive intervention? If so, what other types of assessment data do you use?	Notes Evidence Sources Recommendations	Rating: ① ② ③ ④ ⑤ Justification of Rating

Progress Monitoring—Ongoing and frequent monitoring of progress quantifies rates of improvement and informs instructional practice and the development of individualized programs. Measures are appropriate for the student's grade and/or skill level.			
Item	**Sample Interview Questions**	**Comments/Remarks**	**Ratings**
Progress Monitoring Tools	What tools does your school use for progress monitoring (probe across content areas)? Did school or district staff consider the evidence from the vendor regarding the validity, reliability, and accuracy of the progress monitoring tool(s) when selecting it/them? Does your school have documentation from the vendor that the tool(s) have been shown to be valid, reliable, and accurate with subgroups in your school? Can staff articulate the evidence supporting the rigor of the tool(s)?	Notes Evidence Sources Recommendations	Rating: ① ② ③ ④ ⑤ Justification of Rating
Progress Monitoring Process	Describe the process used for monitoring progress. How often is the progress of students in secondary level interventions monitored? How often is the progress of students in intensive intervention monitored? Does monitoring occur with sufficient frequency to show a trend in academic progress over time? How closely does administration of the progress monitoring tool(s) follow the developer's guidelines? To what extent is this process	Notes Evidence Sources Recommendations	Rating: ① ② ③ ④ ⑤ Justification of Rating

| | | consistently followed? | | |

Data-Based Decision-Making—*Data-based decision-making processes are used to inform instruction, movement within the multilevel system, and disability identification (in accordance with state law).*

Item	Sample Interview Questions	Comments/Remarks	Ratings
Decision-Making Process	Describe how decisions are made to move students between tiers. Who is involved in decision making? What data are used to inform those decisions, and how are they used? What criteria and guidelines are used for making decisions? To what extent are the screening, progress monitoring, and other assessment data used to inform instruction at all tiers, including the core instruction?	Notes Evidence Sources Recommendations	Rating: ① ② ③ ④ ⑤ Justification of Rating
Data System	Is there a system for collecting and organizing student academic data, screening data, progress monitoring data, and other forms of data? If so, please describe. Is the system used consistently across school staff? Are instructional decisions made about students tracked in the data system or through another method (including movement between tiers)?	Notes Evidence Sources Recommendations	Rating: ① ② ③ ④ ⑤ Justification of Rating

| Responsiveness to Secondary and Intensive Levels of Intervention | Describe how decisions about responsiveness to secondary-level interventions or intensive intervention are made.

▪ Are progress monitoring data used?

▪ How is baseline performance established?

▪ What goal setting method is used? (e.g., end-of-year benchmarks, rate of improvement, intra-individual framework? Are rates or norms provided by the vendor/developer?

▪ What decision rules are used?

Are the criteria implemented accurately and consistently? | Notes

Evidence Sources

Recommendations | Rating: ① ② ③ ④ ⑤

Justification of Rating |

Multilevel Instruction—The RTI framework includes a school-wide, multilevel system of instruction and interventions for preventing school failure. Commonly represented by the three-tiered triangle, multilevel instruction also is known as the multi-tiered system of support (MTSS).			
Item	**Sample Interview Questions**	**Comments/Remarks**	**Ratings**
Primary-Level Instruction/Core Curriculum *(Tier I)*			
Research-Based Curriculum Materials	Describe primary-level instruction (core curriculum) materials. What is the research base? When your school selected its core instructional materials, how much attention was paid to the research base?	Notes Evidence Sources Recommendations	Rating: ① ② ③ ④ ⑤ Justification of Rating
Articulation of Teaching and Learning (in and across grade levels)	Describe the process that supports the articulation of teaching and learning from one grade to another. Describe the process that supports the articulation of teaching and learning among teachers in the same grade. How consistent is the learning experience among students in the same grade and subject with different teachers?	Notes Evidence Sources Recommendations	Rating: ① ② ③ ④ ⑤ Justification of Rating

Differentiated Instruction	To what extent do teachers in this school use student assessment data and knowledge of student readiness, language, and culture to offer students in the same class different teaching and learning strategies to address student needs? How consistent is this effort among the teaching staff?	Notes Evidence Sources Recommendations	Rating: ① ② ③ ④ ⑤ Justification of Rating
Standards-Based	To what extent is the core curriculum in reading and mathematics aligned to state standards? Are the instructional materials aligned to the standards? Are model or sample lessons and activities that demonstrate effective teaching of the standards available to teachers? Have teachers been trained in the content of the standards and in how to use that content within their lessons? Are teachers utilizing their training and aligning their instruction to these standards?	Notes Evidence Sources Recommendations	Rating: ① ② ③ ④ ⑤ Justification of Rating

Exceeding Benchmark	Are programs and activities provided to enrich or augment the curriculum for students exceeding benchmarks? If so, please describe.	Notes	Rating: ① ② ③ ④ ⑤
			Justification of Rating
	Are any of these programs and activities available above and beyond the core instruction?	Evidence Sources	
		Recommendations	

Secondary-Level Intervention **(Tier II)**			
Evidence-Based Intervention	What program(s) does your school use for secondary-level intervention?	Notes	Rating: ① ② ③ ④ ⑤
	How were these programs selected?		Justification of Rating
	Have these programs demonstrated efficacy with the target populations (e.g., has research shown that the interventions positively impact student achievement)?	Evidence Sources	
		Recommendations	

		Notes	Rating: ① ② ③ ④ ⑤
Complements Core Instruction	How do instructors of secondary-level interventions ensure that the content they address is well aligned and complements the core instruction for each student?	Notes Evidence Sources Recommendations	Rating: ① ② ③ ④ ⑤ Justification of Rating
Instructional Characteristics	Are the secondary level interventions always led by staff adequately trained to implement the interventions with fidelity? If not, who provides the secondary level intervention and what is their background? Are the secondary interventions always conducted with small groups of students? What is the maximum group size?	Notes Evidence Sources Recommendations	Rating: ① ② ③ ④ ⑤ Justification of Rating
Addition to Primary	Are secondary-level interventions (i.e., Tier II) always implemented as supplements to the core curriculum? If not, please explain.	Notes Evidence Sources Recommendations	Rating: ① ② ③ ④ ⑤ Justification of Rating

Intensive Intervention—*Individualized with a focus on the academic needs of students with disabilities and those significantly below grade level* **(Tier III)**			
Data-Based Interventions Adapted Based on Student Need	How are evidence-based interventions intensified or individualized at the intensive level? How are the interventions used at this level developed?	Notes Evidence Sources Recommendations	Rating: ① ② ③ ④ ⑤ Justification of Rating
Instructional Characteristics	Who provides intensive intervention? Can you describe their background and level of training in providing data-based individualized instruction? Does the group size allow for the interventionist to adjust and individualize instruction to address the needs of each student? Describe an example of a student experiencing intensive intervention.	Notes Evidence Sources Recommendations	Rating: ① ② ③ ④ ⑤ Justification of Rating

Relationship to Primary	Are intensive interventions always implemented as supplements to the core curriculum?	Notes	Rating: ① ② ③ ④ ⑤
			Justification of Rating
	If not, please explain.		
	How do you decide if a student receiving intensive intervention should remain in primary-level instruction?	Evidence Sources	
	How do you ensure meaningful connections between intensive intervention and the general education curriculum (e.g., the Common Core)?	Recommendations	

Infrastructure and Support Mechanisms—*Knowledge, resources, and organizational structures necessary to operationalize all components of RTI in a unified system to meet the established goals.*

Item	Sample Interview Questions	Comments/Remarks	Ratings
Prevention Focus	To what extent do you believe the teaching staff views the purpose of RTI as primarily to prevent students from having academic and/or behavioral problems?	Notes	Rating: ① ② ③ ④ ⑤
			Justification of Rating
		Evidence Sources	
	What portion of the teaching staff view RTI as primarily a means for special education identification?		
		Recommendations	

Leadership Personnel	To what extent are the school and district administrators aware of the RTI framework at your school?	Notes	Rating: ① ② ③ ④ ⑤ Justification of Rating
	To what extent do the actions taken and decisions made by district administrators improve the effectiveness of the RTI framework at your school?	Evidence Sources	
	To what extent do the actions taken and decisions made by school administrators improve the effectiveness of the RTI framework at your school?	Recommendations	
	Does your school have a designated person who oversees and manages RTI implementation? If yes, what percentage of that person's time is devoted to overseeing and managing RTI?		
School-Based Professional Development	Has the staff been trained on the RTI framework and essential components?	Notes	Rating: ① ② ③ ④ ⑤ Justification of Rating
	How often is refresher or new training provided?		
	Is RTI training provided to new teachers?	Evidence Sources	
	What ongoing professional development is made available for those who provide secondary-level and intensive intervention?	Recommendations	

Schedules	Does the schedule reflect additional time beyond the core for secondary-level and intensive intervention?	Notes	Rating: ① ② ③ ④ ⑤
			Justification of Rating
	Is there time scheduled for teacher collaboration on instruction and interventions?	Evidence Sources	
	Are all the pertinent teachers and interventionists available for these collaborative meetings?	Recommendations	
Resources	Are there adequate materials, programs, and resources allocated to support interventions, assessments, professional development, staffing?	Notes	Rating: ① ② ③ ④ ⑤
			Justification of Rating
	Do the programs and materials match the needs of the students at each tier?	Evidence Sources	
	Is there a process for monitoring the use of resources?	Recommendations	

Cultural and Linguistic Responsiveness	What efforts have been made to ensure that core instruction, secondary-level and intensive intervention, and assessments take into account cultural and linguistic factors? How are the demographic and academic data of subgroups represented in your school used to inform the RTI framework?	Notes Evidence Sources Recommendations	Rating: ① ② ③ ④ ⑤ Justification of Rating
Communications With and Involvement of Parents	Are parents knowledgeable about the RTI framework in your school? Describe how you communicate with parents about RTI and student performance. How are parents involved in decision making regarding the participation of their child in secondary-level or intensive intervention? How are parents of students at the secondary or intensive level informed of the progress of their children?	Notes Evidence Sources Recommendations	Rating: ① ② ③ ④ ⑤ Justification of Rating

Communication With and Involvement of All Staff	Are teachers in your school knowledgeable about the RTI framework? Describe how you communicate with teachers about the school's RTI plan. How are teachers of students at the secondary or intensive level informed of their progress in the intervention? What process does your school use to ensure teacher collaboration in implementing RTI?	Notes Evidence Sources Recommendations	Rating: ① ② ③ ④ ⑤ Justification of Rating
RTI Teams	Does your school have an RTI team? If so: ▪ Who composes that team? ▪ How often does the team meet? ▪ Are there established processes and protocols that help the team work effectively? What are they? How does the team communicate and collaborate with other staff?	Notes Evidence Sources Recommendations	Rating: ① ② ③ ④ ⑤ Justification of Rating

Fidelity and Evaluation—*System for collecting and analyzing data to measure fidelity and effectiveness of the RTI model.*			
Item	**Sample Interview Questions**	**Comments/Remarks**	**Ratings**
Fidelity	Are procedures in place to monitor the fidelity of implementation of the core curriculum? Of secondary-level and intensive intervention? Of screening, progress monitoring, and the decision-making process? If so please describe. Who is involved in monitoring the fidelity of implementation? Does the evidence indicate that instruction, interventions, assessments, and decisions are implemented with fidelity?	Notes Evidence Sources Recommendations	Rating: ① ② ③ ④ ⑤ Justification of Rating
Evaluation	How is RTI evaluated at your school? ▪ Is a plan in place for evaluation? ▪ Is a process in place for reviewing student-level data for all students and for subgroups of students? ▪ Is a process in place to evaluate implementation fidelity? How are evaluation data used? ▪ Are teachers and interventionists involved in giving and receiving feedback on the effectiveness of the programs and materials? Who is involved in evaluating RTI implementation?	Notes Evidence Sources Recommendations	Rating: ① ② ③ ④ ⑤ Justification of Rating