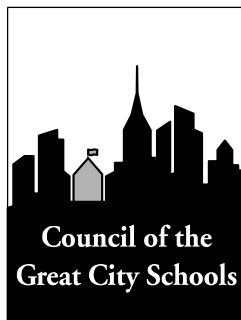# Review of the Instructional Program and Operations of the Kansas City (Missouri) School District

Submitted to the
Kansas City (Missouri) School District

By the
Council of the Great City Schools

Council of the
Great City Schools

Summer 2006

Review of Instruction and Operations of the Kansas City School District

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY OF FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Findings

The Kansas City (Missouri) School District is struggling. Its students are achieving well below their peers statewide, and their performance has not been getting much better of late. The number of parents enrolling their children in the city school system has been falling steadily over the years. And public confidence in the district appears to be fragile at best. The Kansas City school system is not alone, however.

Urban public schools across the country face many of the same challenges to one degree or another. Few institutions, public or private, in fact, are under the kind of pressure to improve that urban education is under. Urban public schools are being told to produce results on tighter budgets or get out of the way. We are being told to improve or see the public go somewhere else. We are being told to be accountable for what we do or let some one else do it. Some of the criticism is justified. Some of it is not. Either way, we are being challenged by the court of public opinion and by history to improve student achievement to levels that no nation has ever asked of its schools.

Many groups might have folded under the pressure, giving up in the face of mounting criticism. But urban school systems across the country are doing what a lot of people didn't think they were capable of doing. They are rising to the occasion and teaching their children in ways that many find surprising. Student achievement is increasing. Achievement gaps are showing signs of narrowing. Management and operations are improving. And public confidence shows signs of renewal. The gains have not stopped the criticism or muted the pressure, but the trend lines suggest that urban education is on the right track.

Kansas City, for its part, also has seen some progress over the last few years. The outgoing superintendent served for a longer period than did most of his immediate predecessors, adding a measure of stability to a system that was constantly changing its leadership. The school board is attaining a new sense of equilibrium under the leadership of its current president, has moved to sharpen its goals, and recently retained outside help to address some of the operational problems described in this report. The district implemented a number of important instructional strategies, improved its credentialing status, emerged from its long-running desegregation order, improved its accreditation ratings, and launched an ambitious new effort to reform its high schools. None of these were small steps forward.

Still, the school district faces substantial challenges. The district has a sketchy vision for where it is going and how—although the board is working on clarifying and strengthening that vision. The school board continues to waste too much time on administrative trivia rather than on strategic direction. The instructional program lacks cohesion and forward momentum. The district has put into place a number of strategies to improve instruction, but these strategies often lack quality, are poorly conceived, are weakly implemented, and fail to connect in any systemic fashion. No one is really accountable for results. Staff members have been locked in pitched battles about how to proceed. The reading program is not as strong as it needs to be. Professional development for teachers and staff is anemic. The interim assessment system doesn't tell the district what it needs to know in order to boost performance. No machinery exists for intervening with students as they fall behind. The school system lacks an effective way of monitoring program implementation or using its abundant data to make good policy or program decisions. And, the district's important high school reforms are probably not going to result in the kind of improvement that the public expects, given the way those reforms are structured.

On the operational side of the house, the district continues to experience high senior management-staff turnover. Its staff capacity is often weak, and personnel are poorly organized for maximum efficiency. The human resources office continues to struggle with timely hiring and has a flawed position control system. The budget does not align with strategic priorities—in part because there are no identifiable strategic goals— and has limited multiyear forecasting capacity. Operations often lack procedures manuals and clear reporting lines. The technology system has a number of identifiable security weaknesses and lacks standards. Facilities projects are poorly coordinated. Transportation is more costly than it needs to be and continues to rely heavily on manual routing procedures. Purchasing processes are inefficient in obtaining the best values for the district. And major contracts for support services are renewed continually without competitive bidding.

In general, the school system is highly fractured and operates mostly in separate silos that lack coordination and collaboration. Many senior staff jobs are held by interim managers, who are often not clear about what the system wants. Many good and talented people work in the school system, but their work is often done in isolation without much support or direction from the district's leadership. In short, the district is not working as a team on behalf of the city's children.

Some of this situation can be traced to a system that did not always control its own operations and functions. Over the years, the school district has been run or overseen by any number of outside groups and individuals—the courts, the state, business and foundation interests, external consultants of all kinds, and others. All of these groups have been well-intentioned and justified in their frustrations with the school system. But the years of external and fractured leadership have taken a toll in the sense that the district does not always have a clear sense of direction, does not trust outside intervention, will not act as a unit, cannot sustain momentum, and is not always confident that the goodwill shown by external groups and individuals will last.

There is good news, however. The school board leadership has reached out for help and has marshaled the resources of not only other big city school systems across the country but also of local and national foundations and organizations. The board has been working over the last six months to clarify its goals, is aggressively hunting for a new superintendent, and has retained outside consulting help to begin the process of fixing many of the operational problems identified in this report. It is clear that the leadership of the board is wide-awake and working to put the pieces together to turn around the system. The challenge now is to translate that determination into a coherent plan for moving forward.

The other piece of good news is that the task ahead is doable. Other big city school districts across the country are making important strides. They are raising student achievement, improving operations, and regaining some of the lost public confidence. We have attempted to bring to Kansas City expertise from urban colleagues across the country who are making headway in their own communities. The following is a summary of what these experts are proposing to improve public education in the Great City of Kansas City.

Recommendations

The Council of the Great City Schools and its Strategic Support Teams propose that the Kansas City (Missouri) School District make a number of instructional, organizational, management, and operational changes to improve achievement, effectiveness, and efficiency. These proposals are summarized below—

General

- Instill greater urgency in the district's reforms and the need to improve student achievement. Consider convening a citywide summit.

- Have the school board participate in some leadership development retreats or seminars to build capacity and teamwork.

- Continue revising and sharpening the board's strategic plan so that it includes measurable goals and objectives.

- Consider moving more school board agenda items onto the consent calendar to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of board meetings and allow more time to focus on achievement issues.

- Hire a new superintendent who can not only address the instructional and operating issues presented in this report but also can pull the staff together in a good working team.

- Put the new superintendent and all core senior central office staff members on performance contracts tied to districtwide achievement goals.

- Require senior managers of all operational divisions to focus, connect, align, and direct all activities, tasks, and functions to support the district's long-term direction.

- Fill key management positions with experienced personnel who have demonstrated success in large, complex organizations and are able and willing to address issues and concerns raised in this report; then, hold them accountable for results.

- Establish clear lines of authority, responsibility, and accountability for the various aspects of the district's operations

- Convene a task force of citizens and staff to examine the savings associated with closing small schools and developing new school attendance boundaries.

- Establish an audit committee of outside citizens to review the annual audit plan and priorities, review individual audit findings, and monitor the administration's corrective actions.

- Appoint an outside professional to fulfill the functions of district treasurer and appoint an investment advisory committee.

- Reorganize the district's administrative structure to reflect its mission and goals more appropriately and to improve the district's internal management controls over instruction, personnel, information, finance, and business services.

  - In the short term, reorganize the district's administrative structure and appoint a dynamic and experienced individual as chief operating officer to oversee the day-to-day responsibilities of personnel, information, finance, and business services; address the immediate issues and concerns raised in this report; and prepare the district to transition seamlessly to leadership under a new superintendent.

  - In the long term, flatten the administrative structure to ensure that the new superintendent has direct oversight and control over the reforms of all administrative units.

- Charge the communications director with developing an aggressive community outreach and communications plan for the district and upgrading the district's materials and Web site.

Curriculum and Instruction

- Signal a new sense of urgency for improving student achievement and closing achievement gaps in the Kansas City (MO) school district.

- Schedule a series of school board and staff site visits to improving urban school districts to see how they are reforming their instructional systems and improving student achievement, and convene a set of school board-senior staff retreats on best practices in urban school reform.

- Establish concrete, measurable goals and objectives for improving student achievement districtwide and school by school, and make sure that the goals include objectives to narrow various achievement gaps.

- Develop stretch goals for the improvement of student achievement that go beyond state and federal requirements.

- Evaluate principals explicitly on their ability to attain their school's achievement goals in exchange for more authority over hiring and budgeting.

- Further refine the new curriculum and the pacing guides to give them more detail so teachers are clearer about the amount of time and depth that they ought to be devoting to each instructional objective.

- Consolidate the curriculum, sample Missouri Assessment Program (MAP) items, and Grade Level Expectations (GLEs) into a single document so that teachers do not have to consult so many disparate documents, and develop sample lesson plans in areas of weakest student achievement.

- Replace the current reading program with a more research-based reading program, and conduct a gap analysis on the new program to know where it differs from state standards and tests. Supplement with targeted materials.

- Identify and adopt a series of Tier II and Tier III reading interventions to catch students as they are starting to fall behind.

- Retain the current Scott Foresman/*Investigations* and Glencoe math programs.

- Revamp the district's professional development plan by defining a new systemwide program around implementation of the reading and math programs, differentiate it by teacher experience level, and evaluate it for its effects on student achievement.

- Establish a districtwide leadership and principals training academy and expand the new-teacher professional development system.

- Overhaul the district's school improvement plans so that they clearly articulate steps each school is taking towards improvement.

- Revise the "learning walks" to include monitoring of reading and math program implementation but do not use them for personnel evaluation purposes.

- Evaluate the coaching program for its effects on student achievement.

- Replace the Direct Assessment Program (DAP) quarterly assessment system with a new interim testing system that is better aligned with the state's MAP test, and move its administration from the information technology unit to the research and assessment department. Eliminate the practice of having teachers predict MAP scores three times a year.

- Develop a districtwide monitoring system to assess district progress on attaining its goals.

- Transfer federal evaluation set-aside funds to the research unit so that it can secure additional staff members to handle the new data and evaluation demands.

- Assign an executive director to oversee the district's Focus Schools, the district's lowest performing, and charge the new director with developing an explicit plan for raising achievement in those schools. Target federal Title I monies on schools most in need of academic improvement, rather than spreading these funds so thinly across the district. And develop a system for predicting when schools are likely to fall into "improvement" status in order to prevent their failure.

- Implement a positive behavior program systemwide to prevent long-term student-discipline problems.

- Align pre-K programs with the district's early elementary grade programs, and reduce the pupil/teacher ratios in these early childhood programs to acceptable national standards.

- Broaden the criteria for access to gifted and talented programs in order to enlist students who have particular promise but who may not yet have strong test-taking or vocabulary skills.

- Retain the Achievement First initiative, but revamp it so that it places greater emphasis on improving student achievement broadly and building a stronger pipeline into advanced courses.

Human Resources

- Appoint a dynamic, experienced person who is willing and able to address the human resources (HR) issues and concerns raised in this report and is able to move the department to a more efficient, effective, and strategically positioned operation.

- Develop a business plan for the HR department that reflects the district's strategic plan, with measurable and achievable goals, timelines, performance measures, and a mechanism for monitoring and reporting progress.

- Establish a formalized mandatory training program for new HR employees and provide for continued professional development and cross-training of existing employees.

- Organize the HR department to support specific schools by assigning individual staff members as one-stop-shopping contacts for staffing and other issues.

- Establish "help desk" functions to assist employees and job applicants through the HR processes and to respond to questions and inquiries.

- Develop policies and procedures to ensure the placement of highly qualified and fully credentialed teachers in every district classroom.

- Designate a single individual in the budget office or the HR department as the position control "owner" and hold that person responsible for coordinating the process.

- Establish and maintain clear and easily understood procedural manuals to define HR responsibilities and workflows, and to document approved processes.

- Formalize more aggressive strategies to contain the rising cost of employee benefits.

- Develop a disaster recovery plan that uses an imaging system to document personnel records and other key documents and stores them off-site.

Budget and Accounting (Finance Operations)

- Reassign the "interim" chief business officer as the chief finance officer and hold that individual accountable for all fiscal aspects of the district, including budgeting and functions.

- Develop business plans in the budget and fiscal planning, and accounting and investment departments that reflect the district's strategic plan.

- Offer a formal mandatory entry-level training program for new employees and a continued professional development program for all existing district staff members who use the business and financial systems.

- Move the procurement-card (p-card) program from the accounts payable unit to the purchasing unit to improve internal controls and to ensure that the policies and procedures governing the card's use are in concert with the district's overall procurement strategies.

- Immediately reverse the district's pattern of spending more than it receives in income, and thus spending down its operating fund balance.

- Implement a multiyear forecasting mechanism to help guide financial decisions, including program additions or reductions, and collective bargaining negotiations.

- Develop a structured process for making student enrollment projections.

- Establish a staffing process that incorporates enrollment projections and approved allocation formulas to ensure that schools have adequate staffing and that the district is protected from the financial consequences of overstaffing.

- Assign a portion of the enrollment-driven, non-salary budgets to schools at the opening of the school year and adjust the final allocations after the actual enrollments have been determined.

- Hold principals accountable for overspending of their budget allocations for overtime and substitutes.

- Periodically use a modified zero-based budget-building process or similar process that requires a review of all activities and resource allocations to ensure that they are aligned with the district's goals and priorities.

- Assign the district's finance officer, rather than the internal auditor, as the administrative designee to respond to management letters and to ensure that recommendations are implemented in a timely manner.

- Process all grants through the grants office to ensure that they are in line with the district's instructional goals, and require that the budget office review all grant applications for fiscal impact and that these applications are presented to the board for approval prior to their submission to the funding agencies.

- Establish and maintain clear and easily understood procedural manuals and workflows to document approved processes and define responsibilities in the budget and fiscal planning, and accounting and investment departments.

Information Technology

- Appoint an experienced person to lead the information technology services (ITS) department who is able and willing to address the IT issues and concerns raised in this report, and is able to transition the unit into a highly effective, efficient, and strategically positioned operation.

- Align the technology plan with the district's strategic plan, with measurable and achievable goals, timelines, performance measures, and a monitoring and reporting mechanism to measure progress.

- Create an operational framework with standard procedures, processes, and methodologies for approaching and executing responsibilities.

- Strategically reposition the ITS department within the administrative structure and appropriately re-title its leadership to ensure senior management support for integrating technology into the district's instructional and business activities.

- Reorganize the ITS department along functional lines.

- Establish and enforce districtwide hardware and software standards.

- Revise the technology purchasing practices to leverage opportunities to reduce costs and improve the quality of products and services to its customers.

- Address the internal list of security weaknesses and specific system reliability issues.

Facilities

- Develop a business plan for the facilities department that reflects the district's strategic plan, with measurable and achievable goals, timelines, performance measures, and a mechanism for monitoring and reporting progress in achieving the goals.

- Embark on a comprehensive school utilization study, with the goal of reducing the number of small and underutilized schools.

- Establish stable and experienced leadership in the facilities department to address the facilities, maintenance, and operational issues and concerns raised in this report, and to transition the department into a more effective, efficient, and strategically positioned operation.

- Reevaluate the district's relationship with the management company contracted to oversee facilities operations.

- Formalize intra- and inter-departmental communications channels to improve the understanding of operational issues and the coordination and planning of various facilities projects with other departments.

- Establish a formal training program on facilities processes and procedures for district staff members, including a training program for entry-level departmental employees and a professional development and cross-training program for existing employees.

- Reorganize the facilities department along functional lines.

- Establish and maintain clear and easily understood procedural manuals and workflows that document approved processes, define responsibilities, and establish and clarify the authority for use of department budgets.

- Work with the information technology services and finance departments to implement an effective work order system to manage projects, schedule tasks, track costs, and monitor performance.

- Delegate authority for the approval of project change-orders up to predetermined amounts to ensure the flow of work, while maintaining reasonable controls.

- Invest in building automation systems for troubleshooting problems, controlling energy usage, and guiding preventive maintenance.

- Provide or encourage uniforms for custodial and maintenance personnel and establish guidelines for mandatory personal protective equipment.

- Establish a comprehensive program for the handling, disposal, and reporting of hazardous materials.

- Develop a personnel management program to define the training and promotion requirements of personnel in the maintenance and operations area.

- Establish procedures for providing architectural and engineering design services on an as-needed and expedited basis.

Transportation

- Designate a senior district employee to oversee, monitor, and manage the district's transportation contracts.

- Initiate a process to competitively bid the contract for Department of Transportation (DOT) management services prior to the expiration of the current contract in May 2008.

- Conduct a comprehensive school utilization study with the goals of reducing the number of small and underutilized schools and maximizing the number of students who can walk to school in order to control transportation costs.

- Use a computerized system to create routes and student rosters so that bus drivers know who is authorized to board school buses.

- Review the district's alternatives for transporting students, including public transportation.

- Implement a formal process for hiring bus attendants, with specific criteria for assigning and reassigning them as needed.

- Provide training for school-level personnel to ensure that student eligibility for bus services is based on current information about student needs.

Purchasing

- Develop a business plan for the purchasing department that reflects the district's strategic plan, with measurable and achievable goals, timelines, performance measures, and a mechanism for monitoring and reporting progress.

- Establish formalized intra- and inter-departmental communications channels to improve the understanding of the operational issues of the purchasing department by schools and the coordination of contracting efforts with other departments.

- Establish a formalized mandatory training program for new employees and provide for continued professional development and cross-training of existing purchasing department employees.

- Take advantage of the resources of the professional organizations to which the district and department belong and the expertise of other local agencies.

- Encourage and require the certification of buyers.

- Review and evaluate each of the department's operational processes and procedures to incorporate the use of automation and technology to expedite processing, improve efficiency, and enhance the quality of departmental services.

- Reorganize the staff of the purchasing department so that buyers are assigned by commodities to enable them to leverage purchases and develop product expertise.

- Augment the department staff with sufficient resources to monitor contract compliance.

- Develop job descriptions, performance appraisals, and organizational charts with clear lines of responsibility and authority that are consistent with the requirements of the departmental reorganization.

- Refine and augment current policies to address the board's role in the procurement process, provide a formalized avenue for vendor appeals, and incorporate a code of ethics for purchasing staff.

- Include data on the number of bidders and their relative ranking, minority business enterprise/women business enterprise (MBE/WBE) information, and specific information on why contract renewals have not been competitively bid in the formal reports presented to the board for approval of purchasing items.

- Restrict access to the department's bid box to one or two management personnel.

- Secure the purchasing records and files and institute a system for checking out files.

- Adopt modern procurement technologies and methodologies to enhance efficiencies and the effectiveness of the purchasing department.

- Institute a more aggressive outreach effort to potential MBE/WBE vendors, and collect MBE/WBE data on all purchases, not just those that are formally bid.

- Provide the list of identified MBE/WBE vendors, by commodity, to the purchasing department buyers.

- Establish quality assurance measures to evaluate vendor performance and product quality.

- Revise the district's contracting practices to leverage opportunities to reduce costs and improve the quality of services to its customers.

- Seek more direct vendor/manufacturer contracts, use "piggyback" contracts available from other governmental entities, obtain value-added propositions from vendors (such as extended warranties), and use multiyear contracts to help promote consistency and standardization.

- Streamline the hierarchy of requisition approvals and exercise budget controls on a spending-authority basis rather than an object-code basis.

- Ensure that the district has the skills and resources in place to execute and administer the recently contracted food service program effectively.

I. PROJECT OVERVIEW

A. Overview

The leadership of the Kansas City (Missouri) School District asked the Council of the Great City Schools to provide a high-level review of the system's overall organizational and administrative structure and to propose ways to improve it. The leadership also asked the Council to review and evaluate the school district's business operations and to develop proposals to improve their effectiveness and efficiency. And the leadership asked the Council to assess the district's overall instructional program and propose ways to improve it and raise student achievement.

In response, the Council assembled a series of Strategic Support Teams comprised of senior managers with extensive experience leading and managing instructional and operational functions in other large urban school systems across the country. To conduct their work, the Strategic Support Teams made site visits to the district, reviewed documents and data, interviewed staff members and others, and observed operating procedures. The Council and its teams assembled their findings and developed a series of proposals designed to assist the district in its efforts to improve its instruction, management, operations, effectiveness, and efficiency.[1]

B. Project Goals

In the fall of 2005, the Kansas City (Missouri) School District school board and the district's then-superintendent, Dr. Bernard Taylor, invited the CGCS to—

- Provide a high-level review of the school district's overall organizational and administrative structure and propose ways to improve it.

- Review and evaluate the school district's human resources, budget and accounting, information technology, facilities services, and transportation operations and develop proposals to increase their effectiveness and efficiency.

In the spring of 2006, the school board also asked the Council to—

- Assess the district's instructional program and make recommendations for improving it and boosting student achievement systemwide.

- Evaluate the school district's purchasing operations and to make recommendations for improvements.

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[1] The Council's peer reviews are based on interviews of staff and others, a review of documents provided by the district, observation of operations, and our professional judgment. The teams conducting the interviews rely on the willingness of those interviewed to be truthful and forthcoming, and make every effort to provide an objective assessment of district functions but cannot always judge the accuracy of statements made by all interviewees.

C. Strategic Support Teams

To conduct this review, the Council assembled six Strategic Support Teams of senior managers with extensive experience in curriculum and instruction, human resources, finance, technology, and business operations in other major big city school systems across the country. The teams were composed of the following members (See Appendix D for biographies of the Strategic Support Team members)—

- **Curriculum and Instruction**

  Ricki Price-Baugh
  Director of Academic Achievement
  Council of the Great City Schools

  Maria Crenshaw
  Instructional Specialist—Math
  Richmond Public Schools

  Katy Dula
  Executive Coordinator of Educational Services—Reading
  Charlotte-Mecklenburg Public Schools

- **Human Resources**

  Barbara Jenkins
  Assistant Superintendent, Human Resources
  Charlotte-Mecklenburg Public Schools

  Lee Nichols
  Executive Director, Human Resources
  Pittsburgh Public Schools

  André Pettigrew
  Assistant Superintendent/Administrative Services
  Denver Public Schools

- **Budget and Accounting**

  Richard Hinds
  Chief Financial Officer (Retired)
  Miami-Dade Public Schools

  James McIntyre
  Deputy Chief Financial Officer
  Boston Public Schools

Dennis Pool
Assistant Superintendent, General Administration
Omaha Public Schools

Lois Rockney
Executive Director, Business and Financial Affairs
St. Paul Public Schools

Leonard Sturm
Chief Financial Officer (Retired)
Houston Independent School District

- **Information Technology**

Mike Casey
Executive Director, Technology
San Diego Unified School District

Craig Honour
Chief Information Officer (Retired)
Duval County Public Schools

Tom Stevens
Chief Technology Officer (Retired)
Denver Public Schools

Lori Ward
Executive Director, Information and Education Technology
Dayton Public Schools

- **Facilities and Transportation**

Mike Contompasis
Chief Operating Officer
Boston Public Schools

Bill Koehn
Executive Director, Support Operations (Retired)
Albuquerque Public Schools

Mike Langley
Executive Director, Facility Management
Denver Public Schools

John Lombardi
Administrator, Transportation Services
School District of Philadelphia

Michael Turza
Director, Business Services
Milwaukee Public Schools

Patrick Quinn
Executive Director of Operations
St. Paul Public Schools

- **Purchasing**

Carol Bolen
Purchasing Manager
St. Paul Public Schools

Joseph Gomez
Assistant Superintendent of Procurement Management Services
Miami-Dade Public Schools

Richard Hinds
Chief Financial Officer (Retired)
Miami-Dade Public Schools

Christopher Steele
Senior Director, Department of Purchases and Supply
Norfolk Public Schools

Bob Watkins
Purchasing Agent
Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools

The following individuals participated in five operational team visits—

David Koch
Chief Administrative Officer (Retired)
Los Angeles Unified School District

Robert Carlson
Director of Management Services
Council of the Great City Schools

Accompanying the curriculum and instruction team were—

Michael Casserly
Executive Director
Council of the Great City Schools

Adriane Williams
Research Manager
Council of the Great City Schools

D. Project Activities

The Strategic Support Teams reviewed documents provided by district staff before visiting the Kansas City (Missouri) School District. The teams also examined additional documents and reports during their visits. (A complete list of documents reviewed by the team is presented in Appendix B.)

Fieldwork for this project was conducted by each of the teams during four-day site visits to Kansas City—September 27-30, October 11-14, October 25-28, November 6-9, 2005, March 26-29, 2006, and April 17-20, 2006. The general schedule for the site visits is outlined below. (See Appendix A for detailed Working Agendas.)

The first evening of each visit was devoted to orienting each team to the district's expectations and objectives for the review, and to making last-minute adjustments to the working agendas. The teams used the first two full days of each site visit to conduct interviews with key staff members, including school principals (see the complete listing of individuals interviewed in Appendix C). The final day was devoted to synthesizing the team's findings and recommendations, and debriefing the superintendent and senior staff.

The Council sent draft copies of the chapters of this report to each of the team members for review to ensure accuracy and obtain their concurrence with its recommendations. The final draft was then forwarded to the district's board and superintendent before the report was put in finished form.

E. This Report

This report organizes the findings and proposals from the teams' work into eleven chapters. The District Overview Chapter is devoted to describing the basic features of the school district, its governance, schools, finances, and academic performance. The General Chapter is devoted to major organizational and operational issues and is designed to provide the board and the superintendent with specific proposals for improving the management and organizational effectiveness of the school district. The remaining seven chapters are directed more specifically toward managers with line responsibilities for the district's instructional program, human resources, budget and accounting (finance), information technology, facilities, transportation, and purchasing operations. Within each of the operational chapters, each team's work is organized around these headings—

A. Introduction and Background
  1. Organization and Administration
  2. Budget and Staffing Data

B. Team Findings
  1. Commendations
  2. Leadership and Management Findings

      3. Organizational Findings
      4. Policies, Operating Procedures, and Systems Findings

   C. Team Recommendations

F. Project Benefits

The Council of the Great City Schools has conducted more than 130 instructional, management, and operational reviews in more than 35 big city school districts over the last seven years. The organization conducts these unique peer reviews using Strategic Support Teams of current and former senior managers with strong reputations for developing and promoting effective operations and best practices in major urban public school systems across the country. Our findings and recommendations are based on our interviews, our document review, our observations of department operations, and our professional judgment.

The reports generated by these reviews are often critical, but they also have been the foundation for improving the operations, organization, instruction, and management of many urban school systems nationally. In other cases, the reports are complimentary and form the basis for identifying "best practices" for other urban school systems to replicate.

This peer-review approach has three main benefits—

1. **Credibility**. The teams are highly credible because they are made up of subject-matter experts who understand the issues and challenges that urban school districts experience and know how to provide realistic recommendations that can be implemented in the real world.

2. **Collegiality**. By working with existing and former school administrators, the school district's staff members expand the list of colleagues with whom they can share ideas. This collegiality promotes the sharing of efficiencies, as administrators benefit from the lessons learned in other large school districts across the country.

3. **Cost-Efficiency**. Since the teams have first-hand knowledge of school district administration, they are able to identify issues and concerns quickly, knowing where and how to probe. This efficiency reduces the "learning curve" for team members and enables the Council to offer high-quality services at reasonable cost.

II. DISTRICT OVERVIEW

A. Introduction and Background

Kansas City, located on the western edge of the State of Missouri, is part of a metropolitan area of about 1.6 million people. The Kansas City (Missouri) School District (KCMSD) covers about 87 square miles and serves a population of 240,000 in Kansas City and the municipalities of Independence and Sugar Creek, Missouri.

Demographics

The KCMSD is the second largest public school system in the state. (The St. Louis city school system is the largest.) The district has seen its enrollment decline substantially over the years, although its enrollment of 27,097 students in the 2004-2005 school year was up by 158 from the prior year. (See Exhibit II-1.) However, preliminary reports indicate that enrollment declined again to 25,766 students in the 2005-2006 school year.

Exhibit II-1. Fall School Enrollment
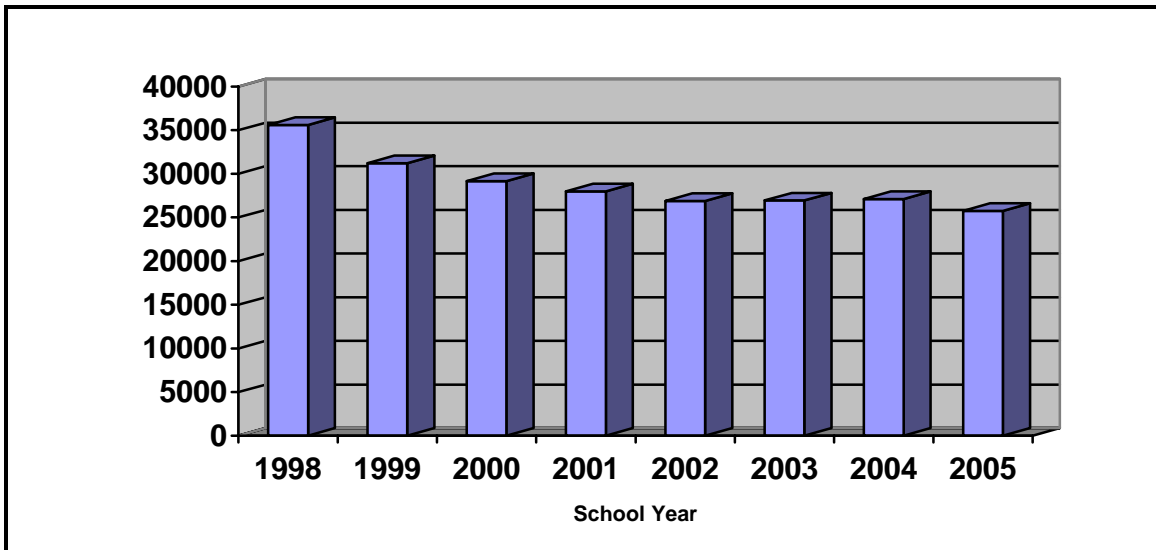
Source: Comprehensive Annual Financial Report, June 30, 2005

The district's enrollment is approximately 69 percent African-American, 13 percent white, 15 percent Hispanic, 2 percent Asian/Pacific Islander, and less than 1 percent Native American. Eighty percent of the district's students are eligible for a free or reduced price lunch subsidy.

Governance

The school district is governed by an elected, nine-member Board of Education. Six of the board's members represent specific areas of the district, while the other three, who are elected at-large, represent the district as a whole. The school board is a policy-making body whose primary function is to establish rules and regulations concerning organization, general policies, and major plans and procedures for the public schools. The board has four standing committees—executive, finance and audit, education, and government relation—and also appoints the superintendent, who oversees the district's administrative operations.

Status of Accreditation

In October 1999, the State Board of Education (SBE) withdrew the district's academic accreditation, an action prompted by the district's failure to meet the state's standards under the Missouri School Improvement Program (MSIP). In April 2002, the SBE granted the district "provisional accreditation," lifting the threat of a state takeover. In January 2004, the SBE completed a full-scale accreditation review after which the district retained its provisional accreditation status.

Status of Desegregation Program

The state also reached a settlement in 1998 to phase out desegregation funding for the district. At that time, the Kansas City (Missouri) School District was receiving $110 million in annual desegregation assistance; in 2000-01, the district received $28 million for this purpose. In August 2003, the U.S. District Court granted the district's request to end court supervision of the 26-year-old school desegregation case. The settlement agreement included a payment by the state of approximately $320 million over a two-year period. These funds were set aside for debt service, operating expenditures, capital maintenance, and technology.

District Schools

The district operates 73 schools and centers that are supported by administrative offices (See Exhibit II-2). In 1998, the district converted one-half of its magnet schools to neighborhood or comprehensive community schools. Two high schools, three middle schools, and 12 elementary schools remain as magnet schools.

Exhibit II-2. Kansas City, Missouri School District Schools

Type	Number
Elementary Schools	47
Middle Schools	9
High Schools	7
Early Childhood Schools	2
Alternative Schools	8
Total	**73**

Source: Comprehensive Annual Financial Report, June 30, 2005

Organization and Administration

The school board of the Kansas City (Missouri) School District appoints a superintendent of schools, who oversees the district's administrative operations. Reporting to the superintendent are a public information officer, a human resources officer, a deputy superintendent (who serves as the district's chief academic officer) and a chief business officer, who serves the role of chief operating officer. An internal auditor and general counsel report to the school board. (See Exhibit II-3.)

Exhibit II-3. District Administrative Organization
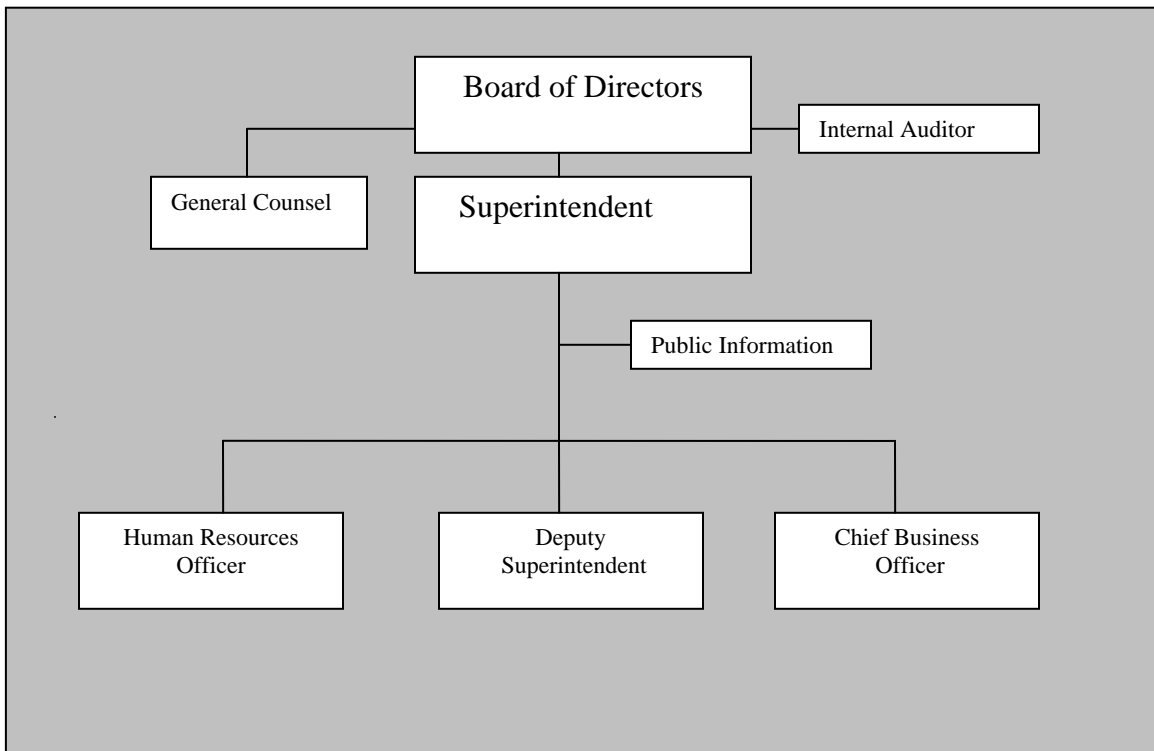
Source: KCMSD

Budget and Staffing

The Kansas City (Missouri) School District (KCMSD) has had trouble balancing its budgets for several years. Declining enrollments and the inability of the state to fund its foundation formula fully has resulted in shrinking revenues. In addition, levies have not increased in 30 years. Consequently, the district has balanced its budgets through a combination of expenditure reductions and ending balances. The district's budget for operating expenditures for FY 2006 is $340,856,425. About 85 percent of the budget goes for school-level services. (See Exhibit II-4 below).

Exhibit II-4. Operating Expenditure Budget. FY 2006
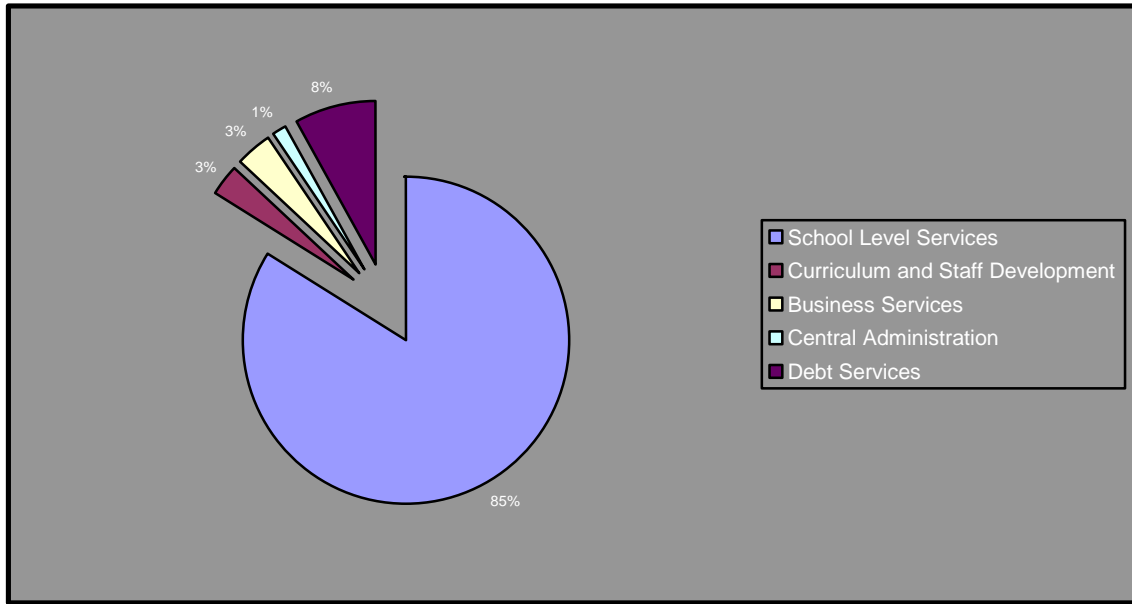
Source: FY 2006 Comprehensive Budget

The school district employed more than 4,300 people, some 2,600 (60 percent) of whom were teachers, in fiscal year 2004-2005. The ratio of students to all teachers was 12:1 and the ratio of students to classroom teachers was 17:1. Ninety-one percent of classes were taught by "highly qualified teachers" pursuant to the federal *No Child Left Behind* Act.

Student Achievement

Student achievement in the Kansas City School District is generally low and stagnant. The state administers the Missouri Assessment Program (MAP) to assess student performance. The test has been given in grades 3, 7, and 11 in communications arts, and in grades 4, 8, and 10 in math.

Districtwide results in 2005 indicated that about 18.2 percent of the city's third-grade children were scoring at or above the proficient level on the MAP communications arts test, compared with about 35.3 percent of St. Louis' third-graders and 35.1 percent of third-graders statewide. In the seventh grade, some 12.6 percent of the city's children were scoring at or above proficiency in communications arts, compared with 11.0 percent of St. Louis' seventh-graders and 32.5 percent of seventh-graders statewide. And in the eleventh grade, some 7.8 percent of the city's students were scoring at or above proficiency levels in communications arts, compared with 6.2 percent in St. Louis and 22.9 percent statewide. (See Exhibit II-5.)

Exhibit II-5. Percent of Students Scoring at or above Proficiency on the MAP Communications Arts Test

Grade 3	Communications Arts Percent Scoring at Proficient or Advanced					
	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
Kansas City	14.8	16.6	19.5	15.1	16.3	18.2
St. Louis	14.0	17.4	21.1	22.7	30.6	35.3
Missouri	31.7	31.6	35.4	34.1	34.7	35.1
Grade 7	Communications Arts Percent Scoring at Proficient or Advanced					
	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
Kansas City	10.7	12.7	11.5	13.2	12.9	12.6
St. Louis	12.8	11.7	15.5	12.6	12.1	11.0
Missouri	32.3	34.2	32.0	32.5	31.9	32.5
Grade 11	Communications Arts Percent Scoring at Proficient or Advanced					
	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
Kansas City	9.2	11.1	8.9	7.9	6.4	7.8
St. Louis	9.6	8.1	6.9	5.1	5.9	6.2
Missouri	22.8	22.6	23.7	21.8	22.5	22.9

Exhibit II-6. Percent of Students Scoring at or above Proficiency on the MAP Math Test

Grade 4	Math Percent Scoring at Proficient or Advanced					
	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
Kansas City	13.3	19.4	15.8	17.9	22.8	26.7
St. Louis	17.9	19.3	20.5	24.1	37.1	36.1
Missouri	36.7	37.7	37.6	37.2	40.3	43.0
Grade 8	Math Percent Scoring at Proficient or Advanced					
	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
Kansas City	2.7	4.7	4.2	5.2	6.7	6.4
St. Louis	4.3	6.3	5.3	6.2	6.1	8.2
Missouri	14.1	14.7	13.7	13.9	13.9	15.5
Grade 10	Math Percent Scoring at Proficient or Advanced					
	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
Kansas City	2.5	2.1	1.9	2.0	1.9	3.3
St. Louis	3.2	2.6	2.5	2.6	2.3	3.5
Missouri	10.3	12.7	10.7	12.3	15.2	16.6

The 2005 results also indicated that 26.7 percent of the city's fourth-grade students were scoring at or above the proficient level on the MAP math test, compared with about 36.1 percent of St. Louis' fourth-graders and 43.0 percent of fourth-graders statewide. In the eighth grade, some 6.4 percent of the city's children were scoring at or above proficiency in math, compared with 8.2 percent of St. Louis' eighth-graders and 15.5 percent of eighth-graders statewide. And in the tenth grade, some 3.3 percent of the city's students were scoring at or above proficiency levels in math, compared with 3.5 percent in St. Louis and 16.6 percent statewide. (See Exhibit II-6.)

Between 2000 and 2005, moreover, students in the Kansas City Schools made minimal gains in communications arts and slight improvements in math. The proportion of third-grade students in the city who were scoring at or above proficiency in communications arts increased by 3.4 percentage points in that period, compared with a third-grade gain of 21.3 percentage points in St. Louis and 3.4 percentage points statewide. In the seventh grade, city students improved by 1.9 percentage points between 2000 and 2005 in communications arts, compared with a drop of 1.8 percentage points in St. Louis and a slight gain of 0.2 percentage points among seventh-graders statewide. In the eleventh grade, the proportion of Kansas City students scoring at or above proficiency on the state communications arts test declined by 1.4 percentage points over the period, compared with a drop of 3.4 percentage points in St. Louis and a small gain of 0.1 percentage points statewide. (See Exhibits II 7-9.)

In math, the Kansas City Schools posted better gains than in reading between 2000 and 2005. The proportion of city fourth-graders scoring at or above proficiency on the state math test increased by 13.4 percentage points, compared with a gain of 18.2 percentage points in St. Louis and 6.3 percentage points statewide. In the eighth grade, city students improved by 3.7 percentage points between 2000 and 2005 on the state math test, compared with a gain of 3.9 percentage points in St. Louis and 1.4 percentage points statewide. And in the tenth grade, the proportion of city students scoring at or above proficiency in math increased by 0.8 percentage points, compared with a gain in St. Louis of 0.3 percentage points and statewide of 6.3 percentage points. (See Exhibits II 10-12.)

The data also indicate that Kansas City has substantial racially-identifiable achievement gaps. (See Exhibits II 13-14.) In general, white students in the city score above both African-American and Hispanic students, and score below white students statewide. Similarly, African-American and Hispanic students score below their racial counterparts statewide. African-American and Hispanic students, on average, scored at or above the proficiency levels at rates that were only about one-half the rate of white students in both communications arts and math.

Trends in reducing the gaps showed mixed patterns. White third-graders in Kansas City posted gains of 5.3 percentage points in communications arts between 2000 and 2005, compared with a 2.4 percentage-point gain among white students statewide over the same period. African-American and Hispanic students did not gain as fast as did their racial peers statewide, however. Moreover, all racial groups in the Kansas City school district improved their fourth-grade math scores at slightly faster rates than did fourth-graders statewide.

Exhibit II-7. Trends in the Percent of 3rd-Grade Students Scoring at or above Proficiency on the MAP Communications Arts Test

	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
Kansas City	14.8	16.6	19.5	15.1	16.3	18.2
St. Louis	14.0	17.4	21.1	22.7	30.6	35.3
Missouri	31.7	31.6	35.4	34.1	34.7	35.1
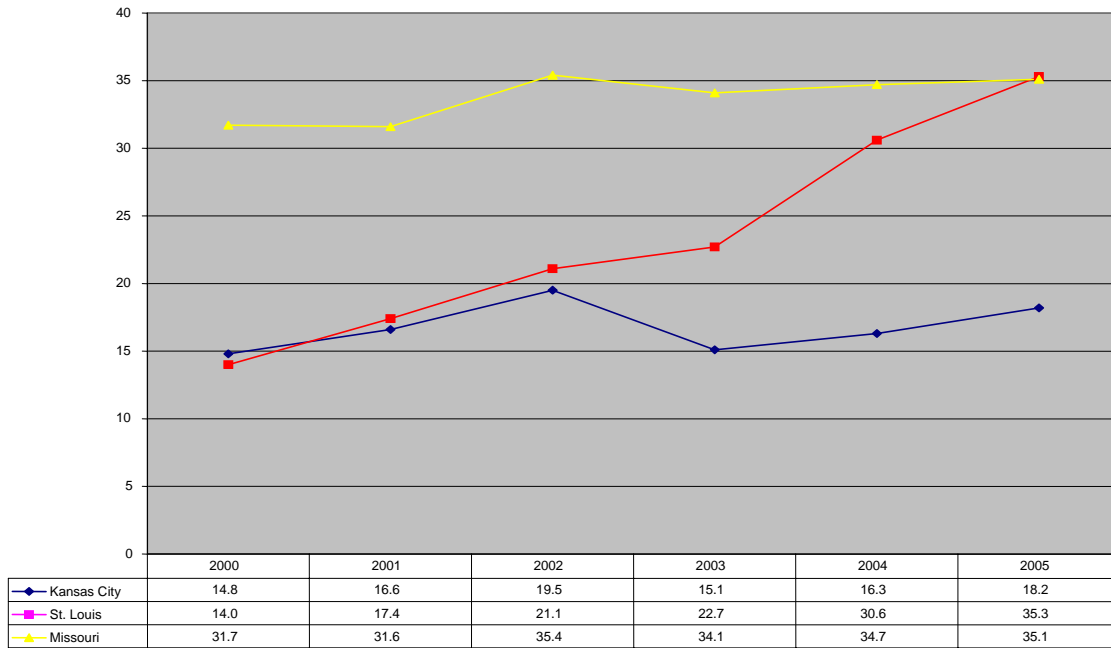
Exhibit II-8. Trends in the Percent of 7th-Grade Students Scoring at or above Proficiency on the MAP Communications Arts Test

	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
Kansas City	10.7	12.7	11.5	13.2	12.9	12.6
St. Louis	12.8	11.7	15.5	12.6	12.1	11.0
Missouri	32.3	34.2	32.0	32.5	31.9	32.5

Exhibit II-9. Trends in the Percent of 11th-Grade Students Scoring at or above Proficiency on the MAP Communications Arts Test

	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
Kansas City	9.2	11.1	8.9	7.9	6.4	7.8
St. Louis	9.6	8.1	6.9	5.1	5.9	6.2
Missouri	22.8	22.6	23.7	21.8	22.5	22.9

Exhibit II-10. Trends in the Percent of 4th-Grade Students Scoring at or above Proficiency on the MAP Math Test

	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
Kansas City	13.3	19.4	15.8	17.9	22.8	26.7
St. Louis	17.9	19.3	20.5	24.1	37.1	36.1
Missouri	36.7	37.7	37.6	37.2	40.3	43.0

Exhibit II-11. Trends in the Percent of 8th-Grade Students Scoring at or above Proficiency on the MAP Math Test

	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
Kansas City	2.7	4.7	4.2	5.2	6.7	6.4
St. Louis	4.3	6.3	5.3	6.2	6.1	8.2
Missouri	14.1	14.7	13.7	13.9	13.9	15.5

Exhibit II-12. Trends in the Percent of 10th-Grade Students Scoring at or above Proficiency on the MAP Communications Arts Test
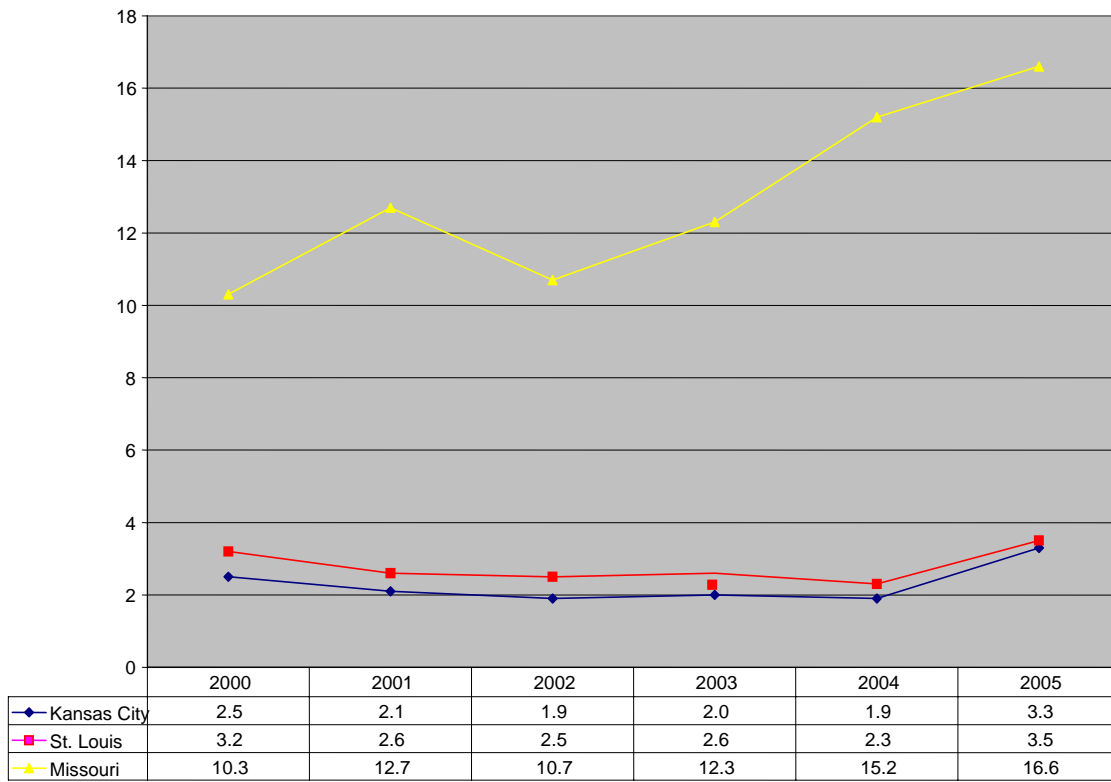
	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
Kansas City	2.5	2.1	1.9	2.0	1.9	3.3
St. Louis	3.2	2.6	2.5	2.6	2.3	3.5
Missouri	10.3	12.7	10.7	12.3	15.2	16.6

Exhibit II-13. Trends in the Percent of Students Scoring at or above Proficiency on the MAP Communications Arts Test by Grade and Race

Grade		Kansas City					
		2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
3rd	White	24.6	28.7	33.7	24.8	27.0	29.9
	Black	11.9	13.9	16.0	12.5	12.9	15.6
	Hispanic	15.1	12.9	14.9	14.4	16.3	17.3
7th	White	21.7	23.1	19.0	25.9	29.8	23.7
	Black	8.5	10	9.2	9.8	8.8	10.1
	Hispanic	7.4	11.3	10.8	12.6	11.6	10.1
11th	White	19.7	28.0	27.0	25.4	20.5	19.7
	Black	7.5	8.0	6.3	4.9	4.4	6.4
	Hispanic	4.5	5.6	1.4	11.3	0.0	6.0
		Missouri					
		2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
3rd	White	36.2	36.1	40.0	38.9	38.9	38.6
	Black	14.6	14.9	18.6	16.2	18.5	21.4
	Hispanic	20.4	19.0	21.5	21.9	21.0	23.1
7th	White	37.0	39.1	36.7	37.6	37.5	38.1
	Black	11	12.4	12.2	11.3	10.2	11.4
	Hispanic	21.5	25.4	21.9	24.8	20.2	21.9
11th	White	25.2	25.0	26.3	24.4	25.3	25.8
	Black	6.8	6.8	6.8	6.2	6.7	6.8
	Hispanic	14.4	15	16.8	14.6	14.6	16.3

Exhibit II-14. Trends in the Percent of Students Scoring at or above Proficiency on the MAP Math Test by Grade and Race

Grade		Kansas City					
		2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
4th	White	28.1	33.4	26.3	24.9	33.3	36.0
	Black	9.1	15.2	12.8	15.7	20.2	23.5
	Hispanic	16.0	19.0	15.9	16.1	20.6	29.4
8th	White	9.7	12.3	10.7	8.6	12.9	12.3
	Black	1.0	2.8	2.5	4.0	5.2	4.7
	Hispanic	1.2	5.6	5.3	6.8	2.9	5.9
10th	White	7.1	10.2	6.8	6.6	6.7	14.2
	Black	1.3	0.7	0.6	0.7	1.0	1.0
	Hispanic	0.0	1.7	3.3	2.1	0.8	1.8
		Missouri					
Grade		2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005

4th	White	42.5	43.6	43.4	42.5	44.7	47.6
	Black	12.8	14.9	15.6	17.7	24.2	24.9
	Hispanic	24.9	27.5	24.5	26.9	28.8	31.4
8th	White	16.4	17.2	16.1	16.4	16.5	18.3
	Black	2.0	2.8	2.5	3.0	2.9	3.9
	Hispanic	7.4	9.2	8.4	8.1	7.5	9.0
10th	White	11.9	14.6	12.3	14.4	17.8	19.6
	Black	1.2	1.5	1.2	1.7	2.0	2.5
	Hispanic	6.3	7.5	5.9	8.0	7.9	8.3

MAP data are also available on the performance of English language learners (ELL), students with disabilities (special education [SPED] students), and students who are eligible for a free or reduced-price lunch (FRPL). The results show that the performance of these groups was below the districtwide average in both communications arts and math, but that the percentage of third-grade English language learners scoring at or above the proficient level in communications and math had improved steadily between 2001 and 2005. Gains among students with disabilities were minimal over the period. And improvements in math among students who were eligible for a free or reduced priced lunch were strong. (See Exhibits II 15-16.)

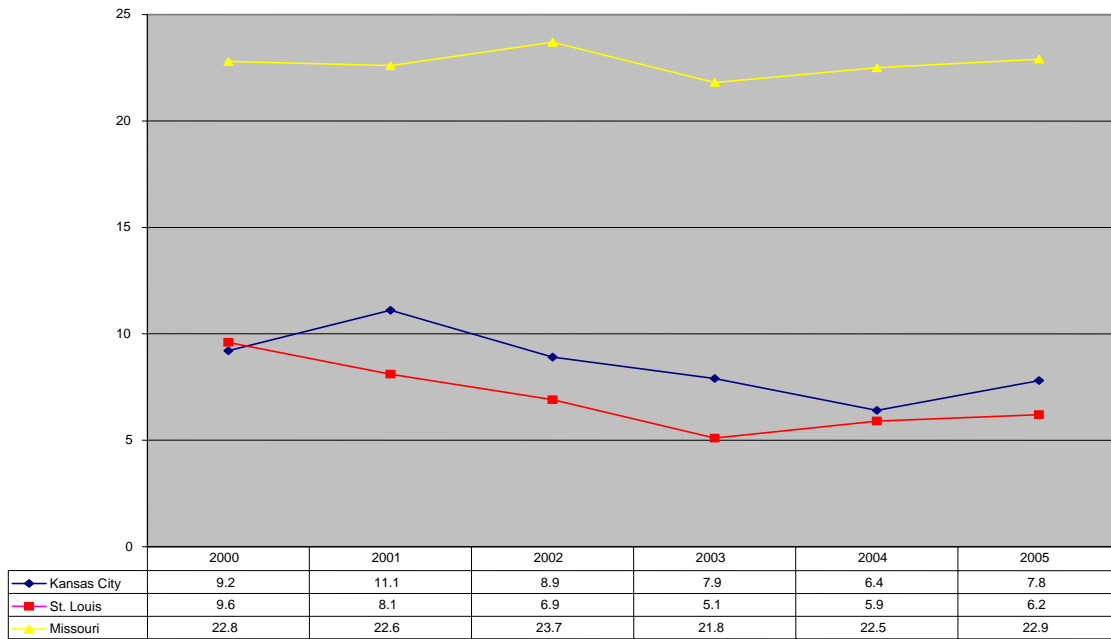In general, achievement of students with disabilities, English language learners, and those eligible for a free or reduced price lunch was low.

Exhibit II-15. Trends in the Percent of Students Scoring at or above Proficiency on the MAP Communications Arts Test by Grade, Year, Language Status, Disability, and Poverty Status
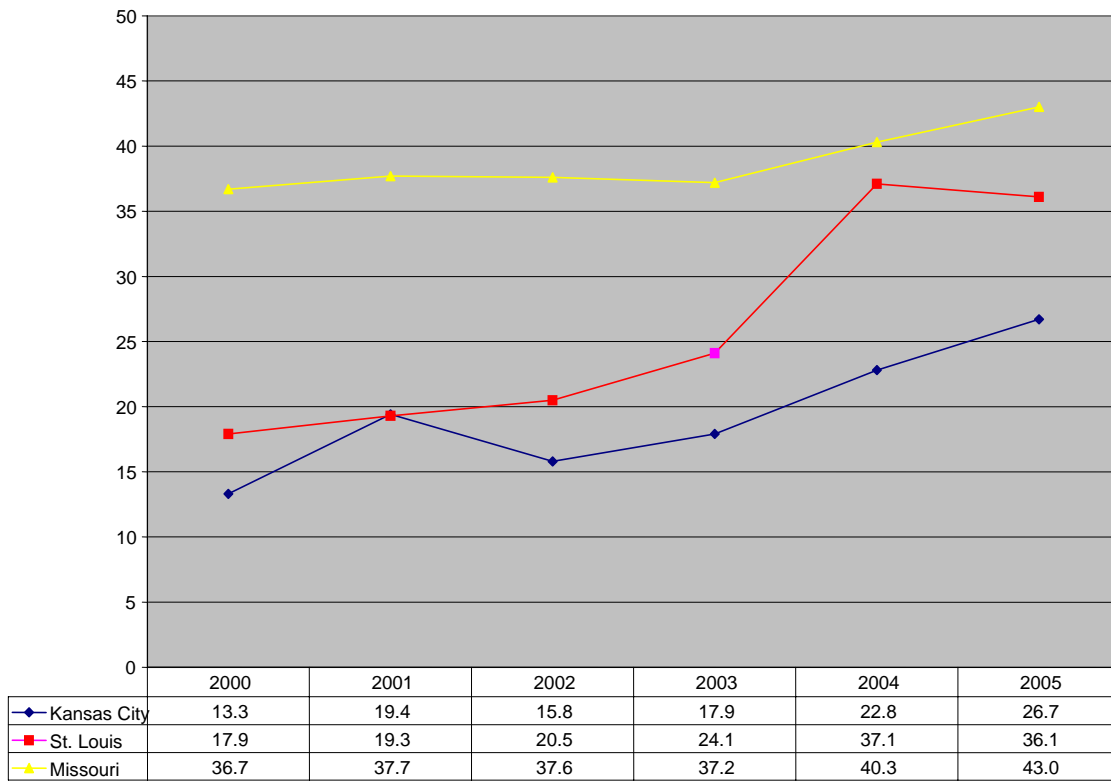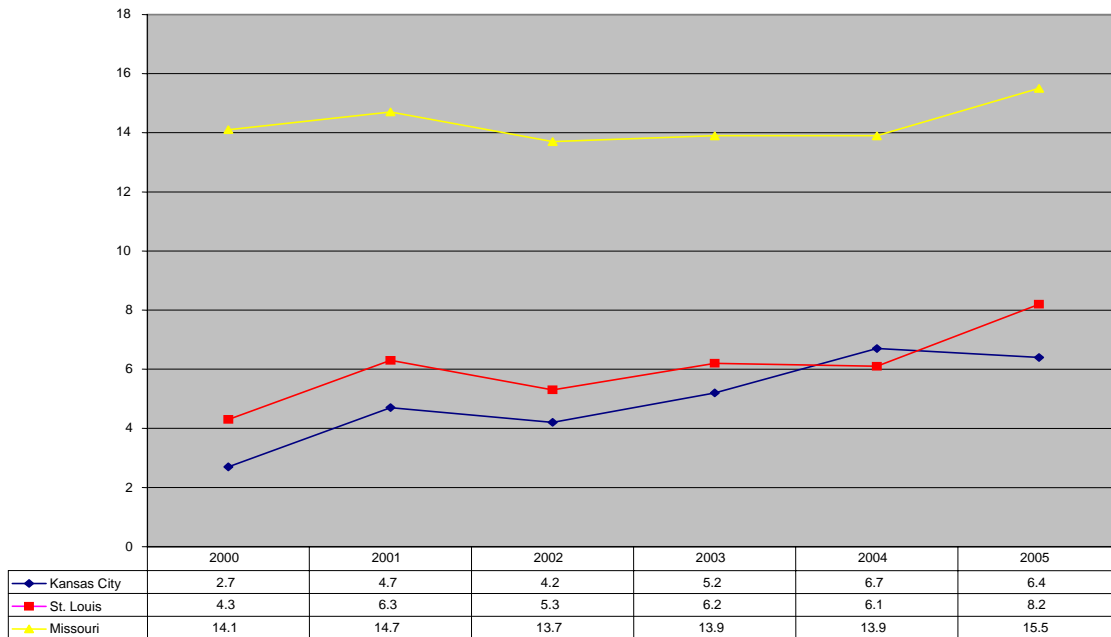
		Communications Arts					
Grade		2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
3rd	ELL	NA	5.3	3.8	12.5	16.4	13.7
	SPED	NA	11.6	13.9	8.9	9.9	10.6
	FRPL	NA	14.3	16.7	13.2	14.1	16.8
	All	14.8	16.6	19.5	15.1	16.3	18.2
7th	ELL	NA	0.0	2.2	2.0	4.9	4.8
	SPED	NA	8.2	5.2	4.1	4.9	8.3
	FRPL	NA	9.7	9.7	10.6	10.6	10.2
	All	10.7	12.7	11.5	13.2	12.9	12.6
11th	ELL	NA	NA	0.0	2.9	0.0	0.0
	SPED	NA	0.0	0.0	0.0	1.8	4.5
	FRPL	NA	10.8	7.5	5.0	4.3	5.7
	All	9.2	11.1	8.9	7.9	6.4	7.8

Exhibit II-16. Trends in the Percent of Students Scoring at or above Proficiency on the MAP Math Test by Grade, Year, Language Status, Disability, and Poverty

Grade		Math					
		2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
4th	ELL	NA	NA	9.5	12.7	12.5	29.6
	SPED	NA	NA	11.8	9.9	12.1	14.8
	FRPL	NA	NA	14.3	15.6	19.8	25.6
	All	13.3	19.4	15.8	17.9	22.8	26.7
8th	ELL	NA	NA	4.3	4.7	0.0	2.5
	SPED	NA	NA	1.8	0.6	1.0	2.1
	FRPL	NA	NA	3.2	4.7	5.8	5.6
	All	2.7	4.7	4.2	5.2	6.7	6.4
10th	ELL	NA	0.0	0.0	0.0	2.6	0.0
	SPED	NA	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.7	0.6
	FRPL	NA	1.7	1.3	0.8	1.4	2.3
	All	2.5	2.1	1.9	2.0	1.9	3.3

The district also administered the SAT-10, a national norm-referenced exam, in the second and ninth grades in the fall of 2005. (Until 2005, the school system had administered the test in grades 3-10.) Results of the 2005 testing showed that the average second-grader in the district scored at the 32.3 percentile in total reading and at the 35.9 percentile in total math. The average district ninth-grader scored at the 32.0 percentile in total reading and 34.4 percentile in total math. The national norm is at the 50th percentile.

Finally, performance on the ACT—the district's predominant college entrance exam—was generally low and had declined between 2001 and 2005. The districtwide composite score was 17.7 in 2001 and 16.9 in 2005, compared with the national average of 20.9. In addition, the percent of district graduates scoring at or above national averages dropped from 10.7 percent in 2001 to 8.2 percent in 2005. The district's ACT performance was highest in science in 2005—17.4—and lowest in English—16.3. About 536 students took the ACT in 2005, a low number but one that had increased somewhat from the 485 students who took the test in 2001. (Lincoln High School had 20.9 percent of all ACT test takers in the district.)

Exhibit II-17. Trends in ACT Results, 2001-2005

Year	# Taking	English	Math	Reading	Science	Composite
2001	485	17.1	17.0	17.9	18.1	17.7
2002	498	16.9	17.0	18.0	17.9	17.6
2003	482	17.2	16.8	17.8	18.1	17.6
2004	465	17.1	16.8	17.8	18.0	17.5
2005	536	16.3	16.4	17.2	17.4	16.9

A composite score of between 20 and 21 is generally considered to be college-ready. The district graduated about 1,496 students in 2005.

III. GENERAL FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Commendations

- **Political Courage –** The school district's leadership had the vision and courage to know that the school system was in trouble and the foresight to request a comprehensive review of its instructional and non-instructional operations.

- **Board Leadership –** The school board's leadership and members have worked hard over the last six months to revamp its January 2005 strategic plan, sharpen its goals, and articulate indicators of progress.

- **Provisional Accreditation –** The district's leadership and staff have worked diligently to restore the school system's accreditation and have obtained provisional accreditation from the state for the current school year.

- **Operational Reform –** The school board moved aggressively on many of the noninstructional recommendations made in this report by naming an operational advisor to begin addressing many of the district's most serious operational problems.

Leadership and Management

- **Theory of Action –** The school board does not have an agreed-upon theory of action yet about how it wants to reform the school district. This lack of consensus will—by default—leave it to the new superintendent to define how the system will advance. The risk faced by the school board in not having a consensus of its own is that individual board members may disagree with the new superintendent on his approach when they could have otherwise been pulling in the same direction.

- **Low Expectations –** The district and its personnel generally exhibit little sense of urgency for reforming the district and have very low expectations of themselves and their students. One can see evidence of this in how school board members sometimes treat each other in public sessions and how the administration often sets the lowest possible goals for student improvement.

- **Strategic Plan –** The strategic plan approved by the district in January 2005 is weak, largely incoherent, and incapable of driving staff behavior and district reform, or improving student achievement. The goals articulated in the plan call for continuously improving academic achievement in all K-12 programs; aligning goals of all programs, services, and departments with the vision and mission of the board; establishing spending priorities that ensure growth and continued development of fiscal responsibility and academic involvement; and advocating for all students in the interest of their academic success, well-being, special needs,

and safety. The strategic plan has no indicators, meaningful time frames, clearly defined strategies, or mechanisms to report progress. Finally, the old strategic plan was largely ignored by most of the district's various departments and not put into operation. It is this plan that the school board has been working to overhaul

- **School Board Micromanagement –** The school board has evolved positively under the leadership of its current president, but the board continues to devote consider time on minor operational issues that could be considered under a "consent calendar." In addition, a review of board agendas and minutes for a three-month period during the spring of 2006 indicated that the board spends little time actually considering issues relating to student achievement and how to raise it. Instead, the board spends substantial time on special interest concerns, pet programs, and political grandstanding.

- **Change Management and Problem Solving –** The district also has no strategy for managing the change process as the system works to improve or reform. The district, moreover, does not appear to have any coherent, systemwide process to predict problems or plan strategies for moving the system forward. For example, no district strategy exists for dealing with the school system's declining enrollment and diminishing resources, the emergence of charter schools, or the system's high student mobility rates. The district also lacks a mechanism to prevent or solve problems that the system knows it has. For example, the district is struggling with the academic performance of middle and high school students but has no middle school instructional programs designed to correct the deficits.

- **District Insularity –** The overall culture and demeanor of the district could be characterized as insular, self-protective, and defensive. Personnel often appear suspicious of outsiders and unfamiliar with the work of urban school colleagues across the country who are making stronger gains.

- **High Management Turnover and Interim Positions –** The constant turnover and the reliance on interim appointments at senior management levels have impacted the district's ability to operate efficiently and effectively. The district has excessive numbers of senior management positions filled on an "interim" or "temporary" basis, resulting in tentative decision-making, inconsistent priorities, and a general sense of organizational paralysis. Similar outcomes result from the frequent turnover in high-level positions. For example—

  o Over the years, the district has had a high turnover in superintendents.

  o The chief administrative officer's position was vacated and subsequently abolished in February 2005.

  o The chief finance officer assumed the "interim" responsibilities of the chief administrative officer and reports directly to the superintendent

- o The human resources officer is an "interim" appointee who reports directly to the superintendent.

- o The executive director of information technology has been an "interim" appointee for almost five years.

- o The facilities department has had four directors over the past seven years.

- **General Lack of Accountability –** Almost every group interviewed by the Strategic Support Teams, including leadership, recognized the general lack of accountability for district performance. This problem stems, in part, from policies that are not always enforced, benchmarks that are not always defined clearly, and the lack of consequences for inappropriate actions or the failure to take action or meet goals. For example—

  - o No one is held explicitly accountable for the continued low academic achievement of the district's students.

  - o School-site administrators hire staff members without central office approval.

  - o Employees begin work prior to the completion of TB tests and fingerprint checks.

  - o Deadlines are routinely not enforced or ignored.

  - o Schools and offices engage in maverick buying practices and the splitting of requisitions to avoid competitive bidding.

  - o Some district staff members do not embrace new technologies, instead perpetuating old practices, such as using paper requisitions (rather than online Enterprise Resource Planning [ERP] requisitions) and not using the procurement card for purchases under $1,000.

  - o Counterproductive behaviors or inefficient practices (such as resistance to the established purchasing procedures, circumvention of position-control structures, and the unilateral suspension of online receivers) have evolved from differences of opinion or lack of communication.

  - o Certain recommendations in the auditor's management letters have not been implemented on a timely basis, including the development of a "whistle blower" policy.

- **Small Schools and Underutilized Facilities –** The board's goal of providing high levels of instructional service in a cost-effective manner is undermined by the continued operation of very small schools and many underutilized schools. (This problem is discussed in detail in the facilities chapter of this report.)

- **Charter Schools** – The city has 17 charter schools that are authorized only in Kansas City and St. Louis. The board does not control any of the charters.

- **Rich Staffing Levels** – The district enjoys abundant staffing levels, compared with statewide averages. (See Exhibit III - 1 below.) In reviewing the district's staffing data, the teams noted an elementary school that had approximately 250 students and a full-time principal, an instructional coach, a librarian, an art teacher, and a music teacher who complemented a regular classroom teaching staff. Most large urban school systems would consider this staffing enviable.

Exhibit III – 1. Comparison of Missouri and KCMSD Staffing - 2004

	Missouri Schools	KCMSD	Percent of Average
Students to all Teachers	14	12	117%
Students to Administrators	207	154	134%
Students to Classroom Teachers	19	17	112 %

Source: Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education.

- **Finance and Audit Committee** – The Board of Education has a finance and audit committee that reviews expenditure information and reports from the internal auditor, but does not have an outside audit committee to review audit plans, workload, priorities, and findings.

- **Treasurer** – Unlike most other large urban school districts, the treasurer (a position established by state law) is selected by and is a member of the Board of Education rather than a staff member, independent agency, or individual who may report to the Board.

- **Investment Oversight** – The district has an excellent set of board-approved investment policies, but does not have an investment advisory group comprised of knowledgeable citizens who can provide advice about maintenance of these policies, identify additional investment opportunities, and monitor investment transactions.

Organizational

- **Structure** – The district's top-level organization is not structured to be a highly effective and efficient operation. As noted above, a number of key management positions, including some that report directly to the superintendent are in "acting" or "interim" status. Moreover, the superintendent does not have direct oversight of all key functions of the district, including finance, business, and technology

operations, which limits his ability to manage the organization effectively or to reform its operations.

- **Federal Programs and Grants –** The district fails to optimize the coordination and integration of federal entitlements and grant funds because it has an organizational unit for the application and administration of federal programs and a separate unit for the application and administration of other grants.

- **Alignment of Pupil Admissions Office**[2] **–** The director of public information was given responsibility for student placement and assignment functions of the admissions office following the departure of the chief administrative officer and the abolishment of that position in February 2005. The policies and procedures relating to these functions for which the director is responsible are especially important since they impact the number, types, and distances traveled by students.[3]

Policies, Operating Procedures, and Systems

- **Operational Bottlenecks –** District staff members and school principals reported three organizational units that they viewed as bottlenecks in getting things done. The three organizational units were—

  o **Legal Services –** Projects that were reported to the teams to be held up in the legal office included the initiation of an online employment application process, the annual Asbestos Hazard Emergency Response Act (AHERA) letter to schools, and the contract with the facilities management company. Further, people interviewed widely reported that the general counsel operates as the *de facto* chief of staff to the superintendent and actually makes many of the district's management decisions.

  o **Human Resources** – District and school-based personnel reported that the human resources department appears to focus more on process than results, causing substantial delays in filling positions with qualified people.

  o **Purchasing** – Operating units and schools reported unreasonable delays in obtaining goods and services that required bidding. The procurement department's focus on best buys through contracting appears to interfere with the timely delivery of goods and services.

- **Internal Audit** – The auditing department does not routinely audit the district's financial operations and business procedures (such as payroll practices), but focuses primarily on student activity funds.

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[2] This item also appears in the transportation chapter of this report.
[3] The director has commissioned two reviews of the operations of the office and is in the process of developing recommendations on organizational placement, admissions policies, and student assignment practices.

- **Staff Preparation for Board Meetings** – The superintendent does not assemble members of the senior staff prior to board meetings to review meeting agenda items. This lack of coordination and communication has resulted in confusion, embarrassment, and the unintended commitment of district resources.

C. General Recommendations

III. 1 **Instill Greater Urgency in the District's Reforms –** The district's leadership needs to breathe more urgency into the work of improving student achievement and reforming the school district. This could be done at a citywide summit, or at a meeting of city leaders, or a press conference announcing this report or the appointment of a new superintendent. A summit, moreover, might be useful in strengthening community ties and local partnerships.

III. 2 **Have the School Board Participate in Leadership Development Retreats –** The school board should strongly consider participating in leadership development retreats to help build teamwork and capacity. (The Council of the Great City Schools offers such retreats at its annual fall conference in conjunction with the Center for the Reform of School Systems or could recommend other consultants.)

III. 3 **Revise and Sharpen the Strategic Plan -** The Board of Education should clarify and focus its strategic plan and incorporate measurable objectives setting the direction for the district. The school board has started the process of revamping the goals in its strategic plan. Considerable progress has been made in the effort, and the board has now completed the process of determining indicators that it wants to use to measure district progress. The board should continue this effort and use the results as it considers candidates for superintendent.

III. 4 **Internalize the new Strategic Plan and Make It Operational** – Require senior managers of all operational divisions to focus, connect, align, and direct all activities, tasks, and functions to support the district's long-term direction articulated in the revamped strategic plan. All operational units should be required to develop action plans that set targets, benchmarks, performance metrics, and timelines, and identify responsibility centers that are linked to the district's overall goals, priorities, and major initiatives. The process should also include mechanisms to report results and accomplishments uniformly and routinely.

III. 5 **Consider moving more board items to the "consent calendar" –** To curtail the amount of time that the school board spends on administrative minutia, it should consider making more extensive use of its "consent agenda"—and placing more items on it. The board also should ask for more regular updates of instructional initiatives.

III. 6 **Charge the new superintendent with developing a sense of staff cohesion –** The district's central office staff is highly fractured over personal agendas and the

direction of the district. The board's completion of its goals will help clarify the district's agenda, but the new superintendent should be charged with creating a greater sense of teamwork and unity among senior staff members or letting them go.

III. 7 **Put the new superintendent and all core senior central office staff members on performance contracts tied to districtwide achievement goals** – Place the superintendent and the senior instructional staff on performance contracts tied, in part, to attainment of districtwide academic goals—including goals for subgroups. Job descriptions for these staff members should be realigned with the new academic responsibilities and evaluation procedures and should be revised accordingly. All senior staff members should also be held accountable for and evaluated on their ability to work in cross-functional teams

III. 8 **Fill Key Management Positions** – The district should move to fill key management positions with committed employees who have experience in large, complex organizations; the ability and willingness to address issues and concerns raised in this report; empower these managers to lead their respective departments; and hold them accountable for results.

III. 9 **Establish Accountability for Actions** – The district should establish clear lines of authority, responsibility, and accountability for the various aspects of the district's operations—from department directors to school principals to support personnel.

III. 10 **Consider Closing Underutilized and Small Schools**[4] – The district should begin the process of considering school closures by convening a task force of citizens and staff to examine the savings associated with closing small schools and developing new school attendance boundaries.

III. 11 **Establish an Outside Audit Committee and Review the Internal Audit Function** – The board should establish an audit committee of outside citizens to review the annual audit plan and priorities, review individual audit findings, and monitor the administration's corrective actions. The committee also should review and establish the workload of the internal auditor to ensure that this function is providing maximum support to ensure the district's financial health. The internal audit function also should be expanded to include reviewing and evaluating internal controls and security related to information technology.

III. 12 **Appoint an Outside District Treasurer and an Investment Advisory Committee** – The district should designate an outside professional (e.g., a banker, financial advisor, or investment analyst) to fulfill the functions of treasurer. This person should oversee the district's investment practices, with the assistance of an investment advisory committee of knowledgeable citizens who can provide their expertise to the district. The investment advisory committee should provide

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[4] See related recommendation, VII.2 Conduct a School Utilization Study, in the facilities chapter.

ongoing reviews of the status of the investment portfolio; make recommendations on investments and asset allocation; review the district's investment policy annually; and periodically report to the board on the district's investment program.

III. 13 Realign the District's Top-Level Organizational Structure – The district should reorganize its administrative structure to reflect its mission and goals more appropriately and to improve its internal management controls over instruction, personnel, information, finance, and business services.

a. In the short term, reorganize the district's administrative structure and appoint a dynamic and experienced person to oversee the day-to-day responsibilities of personnel, information, finance, and business services; address the immediate issues and concerns raised in this report; and prepare the district to transition seamlessly to a new superintendent. Reassign the "interim" chief business officer as the chief finance officer and hold the individual responsible for all financial aspects of the district, including budgeting and accounting functions. (See Exhibit III-2a below.) (The Deputy Superintendent would continue to function as the Chief Academic Officer.)

Exhibit III- 2a. Proposed Interim Organizational Structure
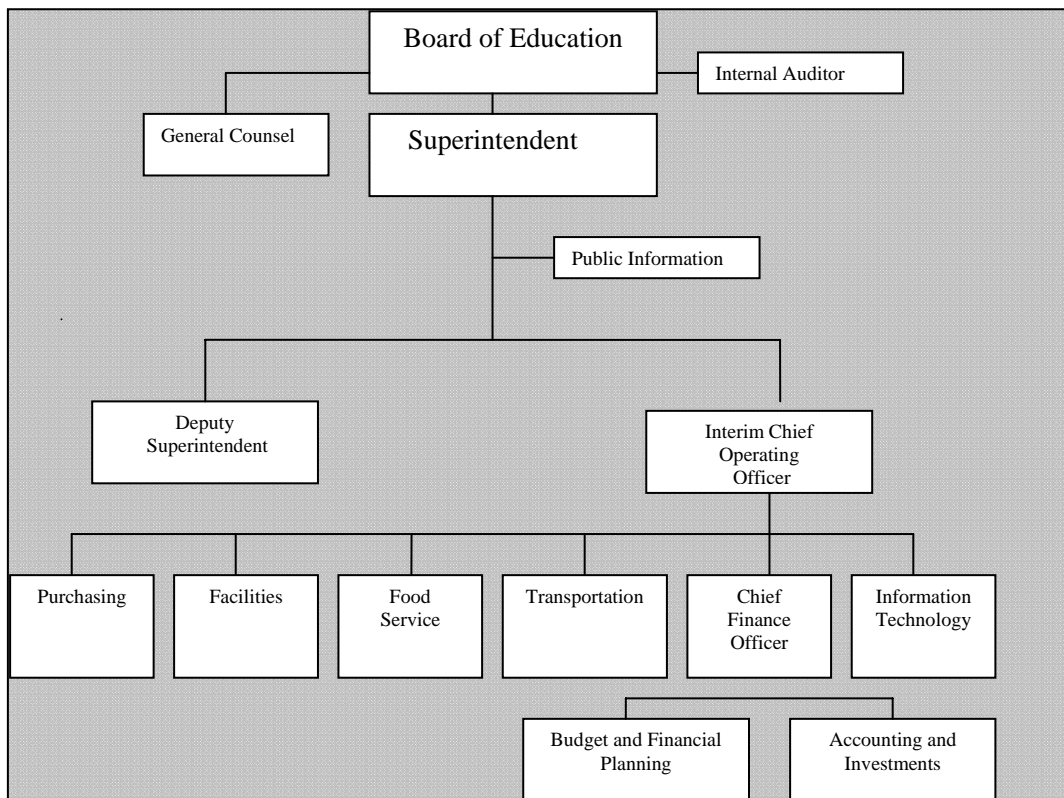
b. In the long term, the district should consider flattening the administrative structure to ensure that the new superintendent has direct oversight and

control over key functions of the district and their reform. (See Exhibit III-2b below.)

Exhibit III- 2b. Proposed Organizational Structure

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                        ┌─────────────────────┐
                        │ Board of Education   │
┌──────────┐            ├─────────────────────┤           ┌──────────┐
│  Legal   │            │   Superintendent    │           │ Internal │
│  Office  │            │                     │           │  Audit   │
└──────────┘            └─────────────────────┘           └──────────┘

┌──────────┐ ┌──────────┐ ┌──────────┐ ┌──────────┐ ┌──────────┐
│  Chief   │ │  Chief   │ │  Human   │ │  Chief   │ │  Chief   │
│ Academic │ │Information│ │Resources │ │ Business │ │Financial │
│ Officer  │ │ Officer  │ │ Officer  │ │ Officer  │ │ Officer  │
└──────────┘ └──────────┘ └──────────┘ └──────────┘ └──────────┘

┌──────────┐ ┌──────────────┐ ┌────────┐ ┌──────────┐ ┌────────┐ ┌──────────┐
│ Facilities│ │Transportation│ │  Food  │ │Purchasing│ │ Budget │ │Accounting│
│          │ │              │ │Service │ │          │ │        │ │          │
└──────────┘ └──────────────┘ └────────┘ └──────────┘ └────────┘ └──────────┘
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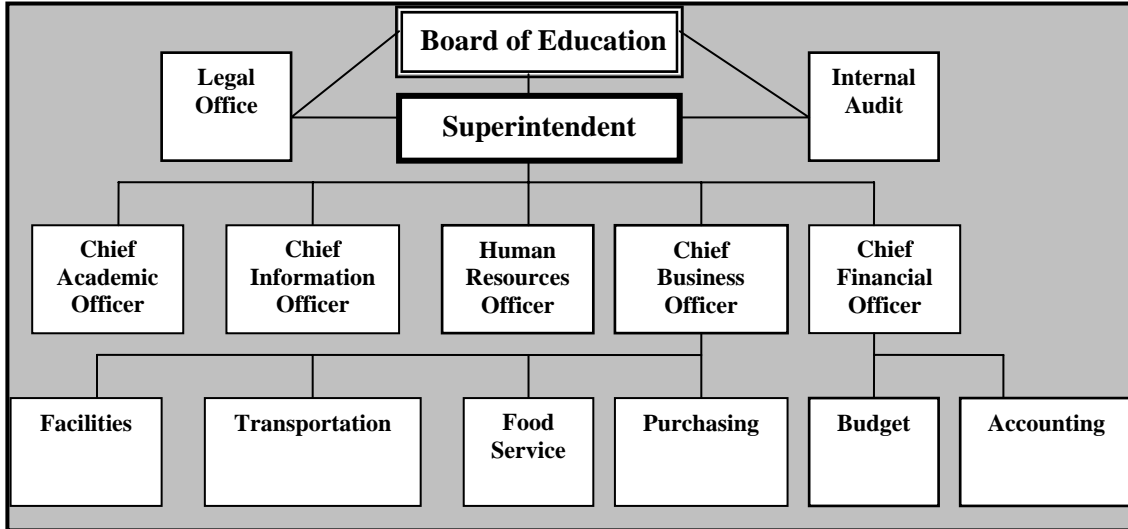
- o **The Chief Academic Officer** (currently the deputy superintendent position) would be responsible for schools and all instructional offices. The office of the chief academic officer also would include the research unit and the pupil admissions office. The office for federal programs would be combined with the office for other grants to help ensure appropriate coordination of these activities by the chief academic officer.

- o **The Chief Information Officer** would report directly to the superintendent and would have management responsibility for all information technology functions. The position should be filled by a person with experience with major management and financial computer systems and with the willingness and ability to act as a champion of the district's Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) systems.

- o **The Human Resources Officer** would be responsible for staffing schools with highly qualified and fully certified teachers and for filling other district positions on a timely basis with highly qualified candidates.

- o **The Chief Business Officer** would be responsible for the operational functions of food services, transportation, facilities, and purchasing.

- o **The Chief Financial Officer** would be responsible for all fiscal aspects of the district, including the accounting and budgeting functions. The accounting office would focus on controller and treasury functions and the budget office

would focus on financial planning functions. Each of these units would report independently to the chief financial officer.

o **The Internal Auditor** would receive day-to-day direction from the superintendent, but would report to board's audit committee.

o **The Legal Office,** under the direction of the general counsel, would be part of the district's support team in an advisory rather than managerial role, and would be responsible for the timely and responsive handling of staff inquires.

The district should also keep in mind, particularly during this period of budget cutting, that it is important to have the right complement of dynamic, professional leaders at the top of the system to maintain direction and forward movement.

III. 14 **Improve Coordination and Communication** – Formal efforts should be undertaken to enhance and improve communications and cooperation within the district. The superintendent's senior staff members should review all action and information items jointly prior to their presentation to the Board of Education.

IV. 15 **Charge the communications director with developing an aggressive community outreach and communications plan for the district** – The reputation of the school district across the community does not appear to be good, so the board might want to develop an aggressive, proactive plan for building better community and parent outreach, and more regular communications with community leaders and the media. The communications director also should be charged with developing a procedure for reviewing all documents released to the public and placed on the district Web site for correct grammar, usage, spelling, punctuation, and clarity of meaning. (Many district documents are marred by clerical errors.)

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IV. CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

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A. Introduction and Background

Organization and Administration

Exhibit IV-1. Curriculum and Staff Development Organization Chart

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                              Superintendent
                                   |
                           Deputy Superintendent
                                   |
    ┌──────────┬──────────────┬──────────────┬──────────────────────┐
    |          |              |              |                       |
Exceptional  Director of   Director of    Director of          Executive
Education    Research,     Curriculum &   Pupil Services       Director-
             Evaluation,   Instruction                         Cluster I
             & Testing
    |          |              |              |                       |
 Early      Evaluation    Professional   School-linked/       Executive
 Childhood  Associate     Development    School-based         Director-
                                         Services             Cluster II
    |          |              |              |                       |
 Career &   Senior        Communications Guidance &           Executive
 Vocational Technician     Arts           Counseling          Director-
                                                              Cluster III
 Higher                   Mathematics    Alternative
 Education                               Education
 Partnerships
                          Science        Truancy/ Dropout
 Athletics                               Prevention
                          Humanities     Admissions &
                                         Student Records
                          ESL

                          Textbook Coord.

                          JROTC

                          Assessment Coord.

                          Instruct. Tech.

                          Grants

                          Federal Programs
```

Budget and Staffing Data

The budgeted positions and expenditures of the curriculum and staff development department are shown in Exhibit IV-2 below.

Exhibit IV-2. Curriculum and Staff Development Budget[5]

	FY 06 FTE	FY 06 Budget
Salary Items		
Fringe Benefits		
Purchased Services		
Supplies and Materials		
Capital Outlay		
Total	**457.8**	**$50,919,409**

Source: FY 2006 comprehensive budget

B. Findings

This chapter summarizes the findings and recommendations of the Strategic Support Team on curriculum and instruction. The team devoted most of its attention to reading and math. We have subdivided our findings and proposals into a section on commendations and 10 subsections. These subsections are defined around themes that the Council of the Great City Schools has identified as critical to the academic improvement of urban school systems nationwide.[6] The themes include political preconditions and governance, goal setting, accountability, curriculum, professional development and teacher quality, reform press (or the ability to get reforms into the classrooms), assessments and use of data, low-performing schools, elementary schools, and middle and high schools.

Commendations

- **Determined School Board –** The district's Board of Education sees the need for reforming the school system and is determined to transform it into a premier school district. The school board is also working to overhaul its strategic plan to align with tighter instructional goals.

- **Accreditation and Academic Progress –** The school district attained provisional accreditation from the state in 2002, after having lost its accreditation in 1999.

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[5] Includes deputy superintendent, curriculum and instruction, curriculum development, assessment, instructional technology, humanities, IASA programs, ROTC, athletic activities, Parents-as-Teachers programs, language services, exceptional student services, gifted and talented services, pupil services, professional development, summer school, early childhood programs, vocational education, admissions, grants, alternative services, research and evaluation, truancy prevention, school leadership, and textbook coordination.

[6] Snipes, J., Doolittle, F., Herlihy, C. (2002). *Foundations for Success: Case Studies of How Urban Schools Systems Improve Student Achievement*. Washington, D.C.: MDRC for the Council of the Great City Schools.

The district met none of the state's 11 academic performance standards in 1999, but met four in 2002 and seven in 2006. The district recently has received full accreditation for its special education program. The district also made Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) in 51 of 53 elementary schools in math in the last testing cycle.

- **Community Partnerships** – The district has a number of substantive and important partnerships with local business and foundations that support instructional initiatives.

- **Emerging Accountability** – The district has placed its executive directors on performance contracts tied, in part, to the specific number of schools making AYP under their jurisdiction.

- **Revised Curriculum** – The district has recently revised its curriculum in four core areas to be better aligned with state content standards or Grade Level Expectations (GLEs) and state performance standards. The research unit of the district has done an analysis of gaps between the district curriculum and state standards. The district also has taken some steps to standardize its instructional offerings by using *Rigby* (reading) and the Scott Foresman/*Investigations* (math) programs. The district has made an effort to correlate the revised curriculum to classroom and online resources, and convenes "MAP Mondays" to discuss instructional strategies in reading and math for Missouri Assessment Program (MAP) testing. Despite these markers of progress, a number of individuals interviewed by the team indicated that the board, principals, and teachers had not been extensively briefed or trained on the revised curriculum.

- **Coaching and Monitoring** – The district has instituted a coaching model to support reading and math instruction (one-half day per week), particularly in Focus Schools, the district's lowest-achieving. Coaches provide professional development to teachers and others. The system also provides mentors for new teachers. The district selected coaches from people who expressed interest in the job and who had an 80 percent or higher score on two content tests (developed by the district and based on state standards and PRAXIS) and have gone through both district and school-level interviews. Finally, the district has implemented a series of supervisory and collegial "learning walks" developed by the Institute for Learning (IFL) to monitor classroom instruction.

- **Professional Development** – The district has a systemwide professional development plan and program, and provides release days for teachers to participate in professional development. Principals' meetings at the elementary school level also have an instructional component.

- **Low-Performing Schools** – The district has implemented Reading First in 15 of its elementary schools and uses instructional coaches in these schools. The district also uses Leapfrog for its Tier II interventions in its Reading First schools.

Schools are required to develop and submit "school improvement" plans describing how they will turn around poor performance. And, the district's Focus Schools, those with lowest achievement, have been designated for special attention.

- **Interim Assessments –** The district has developed its own interim assessments—District Assessment Program (DAP)—to monitor student progress over the school year. The district also uses DIBELS and Running Records to help monitor student progress. The district actually collects a fair amount of performance data and attempts to weave some of it into the professional development of principals.

- **English Language Learners –** The district has strong leadership in its English-as-a-Second Language (ESL) unit in order to serve the system's 3,121 students who are English language learners. The department has developed a procedural manual and drafted a strategic plan, which is tied to the core curriculum and state standards, for improving achievement among English language learners with specific goals and targets by year. The bilingual program uses the Idea Proficiency Test (IPT) to assess and place new students--rather than the Language Acquisition Scales (LAS)--and the Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol (SIOP) to assess and monitor language acquisition, and has linked the protocol to the district's use of its "principles of learning" and district instructional priorities. The district, moreover, uses the MAC II (required by the state) to assess each student's English proficiency in speaking, listening, reading, and writing.[7] Students are monitored for two years after they leave the program.

- **Special Education –** The district's exceptional education department appears to have made significant progress over the last several years, resulting in recent full accreditation by the state. The department has developed new procedural safeguards, improved identification of English language learners with disabilities, improved service delivery by region, and expanded professional development.[8] The state has indicated that the district is in full compliance with its special education requirements.[9] Finally, the district does not appear to overidentify students by race.

- **Early Childhood Education –** The district operates a fairly large early childhood program for three- and four-year-olds, which runs half day, as well as a universal, all-day kindergarten program. The district also uses a portion of its own funds to support its early childhood centers, so it is not reliant on outside funding. The district also sponsors a Parents-as-Teachers program to support early learning.

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[7] The Maculaitis Assessment (MAC) is the required English language proficiency test of six states across the country according to a 2002 survey by the Office of English Language Acquisition (OELA) in the U.S. Department of Education.

[8] The Council's review did not include extensive analyses of special education or ESL programming. The organization normally provides dedicated teams in these areas if more detailed analysis is desired. The state, however, has provided the district with separate compliance reviews of special education.

[9] Susan Borgmeyer (2006). Letter from the Missouri Department of Education to Superintendent Bernard Taylor. April 17.

- **Career and Technical Education** – The district also appears to have strong leadership in its career and technical education department. Programs appear to be driven by the labor market, to involve the local business community, and to have a strong marketing and placement component. Courses offered include agriculture, construction, cosmetology, culinary arts, fabric care, security, automotive technology, landscaping, broadcasting, child care, health services, digital printing, fashion design, and other areas. Some 2,143 students were enrolled in these courses in 2005-06. The unit has its own professional development and technology plans.

- **High School Reform** – The district has undertaken a sizable and substantial initiative to reform the system's high schools. The effort, begun in the 2003-04 school year, is funded by the Gates Foundation and has the backing of local foundations in partnership with an array of national and local organizations, e.g. Johns Hopkins University ("Accelerated Schools"), the Institute for Research and Reform in Education (IRRE), Talent Development, the University of Missouri-Kansas City, and others. The initiative includes a series of remedial math and reading courses at the ninth- and tenth-grade levels, and a series of career themes and courses. As part of this high school reform effort, the district also operates a number of alternative centers for students with special needs.

Political Preconditions

Urban school districts that have improved significantly over the last several years have a number of characteristics in common. These commonalities also set them apart from urban school systems that have not seen significant improvement. One of these key features involves the political unity of the school board, its focus on student achievement, and its ability to work with the administration on improving academic performance. In general, the team had a number of concerns—

- **Low Expectations** – The school district generally lacks a sense of urgency for improving student achievement, with low expectations for students reflected in the district's seeming acceptance of small incremental gains on state tests.

- **School Board Consensus** – The school board does not yet have an agreed-upon theory of action about how it wants to reform the district's instructional program. The board and the outgoing superintendent were not always in agreement about how to raise student achievement.

- **Strategic Plan** – The strategic plan approved by the district in January 2005 did not contain strategies that were likely to raise student achievement.

- **Staff Divisions** – The senior staff of the school district is substantially split on the nature of instructional reforms that the district is pursuing. Substantial levels of distrust, animosity, and division often mark staff relationships. The result is poor

staff collaboration, excessive silo-like behavior, and lack of cohesion as personal agendas take precedence over system goals. Staff turnover may also be a problem.

Goals

Urban school systems that have seen significant gains in student achievement often see this improvement because they have a clear sense of where they are going. This clarity is exhibited in academic goals for the district at large and for individual schools. These goals are measurable and are accompanied by specific timelines for when specific targets are to be attained. The Strategic Support Team looked specifically at the goal-setting process in the Kansas City Public Schools. Team members had a number of concerns—

- **District Goals –** The district lacks clear, concrete, measurable goals for improving student achievement as part of its strategic plan.[10] The significance of this void is that the system does not always have a clear sense of where it is going or what it is trying to attain. The lack of clear goals also may be exacerbating staff divisions since there is nothing concrete for them to rally around together. The district does have Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) goals under the *No Child Left Behind* federal law, but few people interviewed by the team knew what they were, and it was clear to the team that these targets did not drive district action.[11]

- **School Goals –** The district also lacks clear measurable goals for the improvement of academic performance school by school other than meeting AYP requirements. Most school improvement plans, moreover, don't include AYP goals. Many of the goals that are included in the school improvement plans are presented in terms of meeting "safe harbor" targets under *No Child Left Behind—* the lowest progress allowable under NCLB.

- **Subgroup Goals –** The district, furthermore, lacks goals for improving student performance in each of its racial, language, or disability subgroups. In addition, the school improvement plans lack subgroup data or goals. This void makes it hard to address issues related to closing achievement gaps.

- **Indicators –** The district's strategic plan includes no statistical indicators to show whether goals, as vague as they are, are being met.

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[10] The superintendent wrote a memo to all administrative staff on August 16, 2005, listing the district's goals for 2005-06. The goals included: "All students will achieve a minimum of one year's growth in academic achievement (measurement tool optional); We will continue to rely on best practices and professional development tied to increasing the level of academic rigor in classrooms and incorporating the Principles of Learning; We will continue to implement a system to use empirical data to assess and refine instructional practices that will improve student achievement; We will continue to move forward with Achievement First and Reading First; We will implement the Core Curriculum; and We will develop an arts revitalization plan."

[11] The AYP goal in 2006 for communications arts was 34.7 percent of students achieving at or above proficiency levels; the math goal was 26.6 percent.

- **Stretch Goals** – The school district also has no "stretch" goals, that is, goals beyond those set under *No Child Left Behind*. For instance, the district has no goals for reducing its dropout rate, improving its ACT scores, boosting its Algebra I course-taking rate, or increasing core course-taking sequences or Advanced Placement course participation. The lack of stretch goals is symptomatic of a school system with low expectations for student achievement.

- **Program Data** – Senior staff members interviewed by the team were surprisingly unfamiliar with the district's status under *No Child Left Behind* or what state performance targets were for the year. Staff members also often lacked command of the basic features, characteristics, and data behind their own programs. Staff members should be expected to know the basic facts about their respective programs (e.g., participation rates, number of affected schools and students served, and their performance data.)

Accountability

It is not sufficient for a school system to have goals if no one is held accountable for attaining them. Urban school systems that have seen substantial improvement have devised specific methods for holding themselves responsible for student achievement, usually starting at the top of the system and working down through central office staff and principals. The Strategic Support Team made the following observations about accountability in the Kansas City Public Schools.

- **District Accountability** – The district lacks any meaningful way of holding its people accountable for poor student achievement or teacher attendance and performance. There are no consequences if student achievement fails to improve, and staff members are not directly evaluated on the basis of systemwide gains or improvements.

- **School Accountability** – Principal evaluations are conducted by the executive directors and were first required by the state in 1985 as part of a performance-based principal evaluation (PBPE) process. (But these evaluations are not tied explicitly to improvements in student achievement. Principals are evaluated instead every other year on six interstate school leaders licensure consortium standards (ISLLC) built around developing and implementing a shared vision of learning; creating a culture of learning and staff growth; ensuring a safe, efficient, and effective learning environment; promoting parent and community interests and relations; acting with integrity and fairness; and understanding and responding to the larger social/political climate. Part of the evaluation process involves a self- evaluation and part involves the evaluation of one of the executive directors. Discussions of progress on school improvement plan goals and professional learning plans are also a part of the process. Sample portfolio write-ups provided to the team indicate that principal evaluations on the six ISLLC standards are very general, even in schools showing declining test scores. Finally, there was no component in the principals' evaluation system requiring use of the

"learning walks." In general, the principals interviewed by the team did not value the process used to evaluate them and did not believe it yielded useful information.

- **Teacher Accountability** – The district uses its performance-based teacher evaluation (PBTE) system to assess teacher performance and professional growth. The system, which was established in the 2000-01 school year, evaluates tenured teachers once every three years.[12] The process consists of a pre-observation conference with the principal, scheduled and unscheduled classroom observations, and a post-observation conference. Teachers are assessed on five standards: teacher preparation, teaching for learning, student assessment, creating an environment for learning, and professionalism—and are judged to exceed, meet, progress toward, or not meet a specified numbers of criteria under each standard. None of the criteria are explicitly defined around increases in student achievement.

- **Award System** – The school district does not appear to have a system for recognizing good performance or improving student achievement beyond the norm. The district has awards programs for longevity and service, but has no mechanism for rewarding performance.

- **Personnel Improvement** – The district's Personal Improvement Plan (PIP) does not appear to be an effective mechanism for improving individual performance. The PIPs reviewed by the team often suggested remedial actions that had little to do with the initiating problems or were not likely to result in much improvement either for the school or the person. The plans appeared to result in considerable paperwork and time but no real improvement in district performance or student achievement.

- **Staff Effectiveness** – The district also appears to lack a meaningful process for removing ineffective staff members or teachers at either the district or school levels.

- **Collaboration** – The team saw little evidence that staff members worked consistently in cross-functional teams to address districtwide goals or problems, or that staff supervisors were held accountable for collaborating across operating areas.

- **Organization** – The district has three executive directors, who report to the deputy superintendent and evaluate the principals. The directors oversee the schools and monitor the school improvement plans, but the schools that each director oversees are not necessarily in the same region of the city or have similar needs. The directors indicated to the team that there was little collaboration

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[12] A tenured teacher in Kansas City is defined as one who teaches five full academic years in the district and the first day of the sixth year.

between their operations and the curriculum units, and the responsibilities of the directors were not necessarily the same. Finally, the executive directors have no responsibility for any of the district's early childhood programs, and do not have special responsibilities for the Focus Schools, the district's lowest performing.

Curriculum and Instruction

Urban school districts that have seen substantial improvement in student achievement have a curriculum that is focused, coherent, and articulated clearly. Also, these districts have core supplemental and intervention materials that schools can use. The Strategic Support Team looked at the curriculum that the district was using, particularly to teach reading and math, and found a number of situations that were problematic.[13]

- **State GLEs** – The state's Grade Level Expectations (GLE) were developed in response to *No Child Left Behind*, were aligned to the state's "Show Me Standards," and are the basis for the Missouri Assessment Program (MAP) assessments. The GLEs are not the curriculum per se and are often too vague and open to interpretation to guide classroom instruction. They do not, for instance, tell teachers what level of depth or rigor students must attain. Page 55 of the third-grade material for communications arts, for example, indicates that a teacher should "follow a writing process" but says nothing about the components of the writing process. One of the math GLEs calls for teachers to "introduce and implement various problem solving strategies" but the teacher may not be clear about which strategies (e.g., draw a picture, act it out, use substitution, make a chart or table, or apply a concept) they should emphasize. Some GLEs, moreover, span an entire year (e.g., main idea in communications arts and problem solving in math). This makes it difficult for teachers to know how much time should be devoted to each standard or how much effort should be spent on all the facets of each concept that they must teach.

- **New Curriculum and Vertical Alignment** – The district has recently revised and implemented its curriculum (2005) to match the state's GLEs. District documents indicate that the new core curriculum is aligned with the state's GLEs; and state documents indicate that the GLEs are vertically aligned across grade levels. One can probably assume that the new curriculum is vertically aligned, but the team could not find any evidence that the district had checked to see if that was the case. The district should not assume that the process of aligning the curriculum with the state standards resulted in vertical alignment. In a district such as Kansas City's, which has no regular feeder patterns, the need for alignment from grade to grade and explicit, detailed statements of what students are expected to master are particularly critical.

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[13] The team did not extensively review the district's science or social studies programs.

Curriculum documents describe the big idea, concepts, and strand being taught, the actual GLE objectives, and resources and Web links—but do not contain sample assessment items or descriptions of rigor.

- **Balanced Literacy –** The district indicates that it uses a "balanced literacy" approach to reading and literacy (generally reflecting "principles of learning" developed by the University of Pittsburgh's Institute for Learning[14]), but it was clear from the interviews with staff members that the term meant different things to different people—despite progress in implementing the concept over the last six years.[15] The result is likely inconsistent implementation of the literacy philosophy, uneven teaching of reading and comprehension skills, and gaps in student skills.[16]

- **Reading Program –** The district uses *Rigby Literacy* to implement its balanced literacy philosophy. The program is rarely used in urban schools and does not have a strong research and evaluation base. It is a K-3 reading program used by some districts and teachers as a comprehensive instructional program in reading and writing. The program is composed of four main components: Shared Reading, Guided Reading, Word Works, and Wonder Writers—each with its own set of materials. The ordering of instruction is generally left to the individual teacher, but the program suggests a framework involving the whole class in work on Shared Reading and Word Works and small-group work with Guided Reading. The Shared Reading segment focuses on Big Book reading in which the teacher models fluent reading, offers explanations of the story's meaning, demonstrates think-aloud strategies, and encourages student participation. The Guided Reading segment has the teacher serving as facilitator of students' evolution into independent readers. The Word Works segment presents work in phonemic awareness and phonics instruction. And Wonder Writers is woven through the other segments.

  The program generally includes the instructional components of reading that were considered essential by the National Reading Panel, and is often praised for having strong comprehension strategies. But the program has not been evaluated extensively, and is viewed as lacking systematic phonics instruction and ignoring the developmental stages underlying reading acquisition. Finally, the program

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[14] Principles of Learning include "organize for effort, clear expectations, recognition of accomplishment, fair and credible evaluations, academic rigor, accountable talk, socializing intelligence, and learning as apprenticeship."

[15] The district has received onsite technical assistance from Research & Training Associates (RTA) to implement the balanced literacy program through a grant from the Ewing Marion Kauffman Foundation. (See "Balanced Literacy Program: Onsite Technical Assistance." Prepared for The Ewing Marion Kaufman Foundation by Research & Training Associates, Inc. September 30, 2005.

[16] This conclusion by the team is generally consistent with results of an evaluation of the balanced literacy program published by Policy Studies Associates in December 2005. The study showed gains in the third grade on the SAT-9 but few gains in the fourth and fifth grades. Results appeared to vary according to differing levels of program implementation and understanding.

gets poor marks for failing to link its various segments together to form cohesive literacy instruction.[17]

- **Math Program –** The district uses the Scott Foresman math program, paired with *Investigations*, for systemwide math instruction in grades K-5. Both programs are used extensively in other urban school systems and are generally well regarded. The district uses Glencoe (Applications and Connections-Course 1 & 2, and pre-Algebra and Algebra I) in grades 6-8, and McDougal Littell (Algebra I & II, geometry, probability and statistics, trigonometry, pre-calculus and calculus) in high school. Staff members interviewed by the team indicated that no independent analysis had been done comparing the GLEs with any of the math programs being used in the district.

  Achievement First high schools also use a remedial math curriculum developed by Johns Hopkins University for grades 9 and 10.

- **Pacing Guides –** The school district provides teachers a quarterly pacing system but the system lacks sufficient detail to guide classroom instruction or to provide help in how to sequence and time the teaching of the Grade Level Expectations (GLEs). The district's quarter-at-a-glance document for its communications arts curriculum, for example, provides GLEs, identifies strands, big ideas, and concepts, and lists resources for each GLE, but provides no indication of how deeply each GLE is to be taught. In addition, the resources listed in the timing chart sometimes reference the same pages and resources in all four quarters, providing little real guidance to teachers.[18] Moreover, the teacher may or may not find a specific lesson plan or specific information on the concept on the indicated pages. No other information is presented on how to use the resources to teach, re-teach, review, or plan. In general, the quarterly pacing system is meant simply to provide suggestions for when and what to teach. Schools are allowed considerable flexibility in implementation.

  Again, it is not clear for teachers how much time, depth, and rigor needs to be devoted to each skill taught, and little guidance for how teachers spiral or introduce concepts over the course of the school year. Teachers reported to the team that they rely mostly on personal experience to determine the amount of time they devoted to specific objectives.

  Finally, the timing or curriculum guides make no reference to students with disabilities, gifted students, or English-as-a-Second Language students.

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[17] See Florida Center for Reading Research: http://www.fcrr.org/FCRRReports/PDF/Rigby-Literacy-Report.

[18] The grade 3 curriculum arts document tells the teacher to turn to pages 70, 74, and 78 of *Rigby* and/or pages 50-52 in *Reading with Meaning* to teach the phonics GLE, but the same six pages are referenced in each of the four quarters for that same GLE.

- **Supplemental Materials** – Individual schools may purchase their own supplemental instructional material without determining whether these materials are clearly aligned with state standards or district goals. The district does not appear to have developed—or made available—a reference guide describing the strengths or weaknesses of potential supplemental materials. Unless school personnel are able to find information on their own, the school may not know whether it is investing its resources wisely.

- **Intervention Systems** – The district has a program for intervening with students when they begin to fall behind, but the program is new and not very well developed yet. Teachers reported to the team that they have relied to a great extent in the past on the use of "pull-outs" when students need extra help. The district made "Read 180" available in 2005-06 to students who were struggling with reading in upper-elementary and middle grades in 18 schools.[19] The program had not been implemented fully in all of the schools at the time of the team's visit, however. The district also uses the Scott/Foresman-Addison Wesley math diagnosis and intervention system at all sites in grades K-5—but it appears that the system is optional at the school level, as is the use of *Investigations*.[20] At the high school level, the system has put into place a series of reading and math remedial courses in the 9th and 10th grades (see high school section). However, the district had no Tier III intervention strategy in reading. It seemed apparent to the team that individual students could fall behind for years without any clear action by the district.

- **Instructional Strategies** – The district lacks a clearly articulated set of instructional strategies, relying instead on the individual literacy and math coaches at the building level to provide teachers with instructional strategies that will ensure that students master the unpacked standards.[21] There is nothing in the district that explicitly defines what good teaching is.

- **Inventory of Programs** – The district does not maintain any inventory of instructional programs or materials in use in each of its schools. In other words, the system has no way of knowing what schools are using what programs with which children or to what effect. The issue is particularly problematic since schools can purchase their own supplemental materials, and may be purchasing intervention programs on their own because the district has none.

- **Program Implementation** – Some programs appear to be dropped into schools after the district has secured one grant or another without adequate school buy-in.

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[19] Participating schools include Askew Elementary, Banneker Elementary, Franklin Elementary, James Elementary, Southeast K-8 Zoo Academy, Whittier Elementary, Central High School, Central Middle, J.A. Rogers Academy, Middle School of the Arts, King Middle, Northeast High School, Northeast Middle, Nowlin Middle, Thacher Annex, Southeast High School, Van Horn High School, and Westport Sr. Academy.

[20] One school—Malcolm X—also uses I CAN Learn as a math intervention.

[21] The level of detail needed to guide instruction is often referred to as "unpacking the standards."

For instance, the district purchased Voyager and ETA/Cuisenaire without adequate analysis of how they would fit into the broader instructional program and without broad staff collaboration or input. The result can be weak program implementation.

Professional Development and Teaching Quality

Another feature that improving urban school systems have in common is a high-quality and cohesive professional development program that is closely aligned with their instructional program. These programs are often defined centrally, but built around the district's articulated curriculum, delivered uniformly across the district, and differentiated in ways that address the specific needs of teachers. These faster-improving districts also find ways to ensure that some of their better teachers are working in schools with the greatest needs. The team had a number of concerns, however, about the professional development system in the Kansas City school district.

- **Professional Development Plan** – The district has a professional development plan, something that many urban school districts lack, but the plan often lacks specificity. For example, the plan includes a procedural objective under goal statement four indicating that "KCMSD instructional staff will provide coaching, mentoring, and feedback on research-based literacy strategies." But the list of possible activities lacks an explicit explanation of what will happen, when it will happen, and for whom. The plan also lacks any clear explanation of how student achievement data or the classroom observations will be used to shape or improve professional development. The plan, instead, was a listing of sometimes-disconnected activities. Participation in professional development, moreover, is largely voluntary. Finally, the plan does not describe how the efforts of Research & Training Associates, which provides support in 27 schools, is connected explicitly with the district's overall professional development efforts.[22]

- **Staff Capacity** – In general, staff capacity at the central office level was very spotty. Some staff members were very good; and some staff members did not have the knowledge or skills needed to define a coherent program of professional development for other personnel in the system that could help boost student achievement.

- **Central Office Staff Training** – There did not appear to be a regular program of professional development to upgrade the skills of central office staff in any area. Individual units sometimes allowed staff members to attend instructional conferences, but the units did not coordinate which members were trained in what skills or determine how that training was aligned with district challenges. There was also no ongoing program to assess the skills of central office staff or to provide any cross-functional training.

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[22] The district has had a contract with Research & Training Associates (RTA) to evaluate some professional development activities related to the IFL work and other program implementation (balanced literacy) and technical assistance activities.

- **Principal Training** – The district does not have a regular professional development program for principals or a principals academy as such. Principals do participate in teacher training—a good thing—and in regular principals' meetings where instructional issues are covered, but there is no training designed specifically for principals. In addition, principals appear to have received very little professional development on the new core curriculum and on the reading and math programs.

- **Regular Literacy and Math Training** – The district lacks any regular, ongoing professional development for teachers on the use of the *Rigby Literacy* program or Scott Foresman/*Investigations*. In general, the district lacked a systemwide professional development program despite having a professional development plan.

- **Job-Embedded Professional Development** – The district relies on job-embedded professional development as its main mechanism for providing training for teachers. Much of this professional development was provided by central office and building-level coaches, but the teachers interviewed by the team gave the quality and usefulness of the training low marks. The district, however, has conducted a number of surveys of teachers on what kinds of professional development they think would be helpful. In general, it appeared to the team that the district's professional development program was too weak and too undefined to provide much help in boosting student achievement.

  Each school also has a professional development committee (PDC) that meets monthly. These committees are required by state law to define and implement a school-based professional development effort. The team saw little evidence that this school-by-school professional development was aligned with a districtwide training program (or vice versa) or that the individual school professional development efforts were aligned consistently with district priorities.

  The district also does not have a process or mechanism for tracking or evaluating what individual schools do with the 10 percent set-aside funds under Title I that are supposed to be devoted to professional development. Each school's professional development committee independently decides on the use of the funds.

- **Differentiation of Professional Development** – The district does not differentiate its professional development according to teacher experience level, expertise, or student achievement levels. Each teacher—except those with life certification—is required to write his or her own professional development plan.

- **Monitoring of Professional Development** – The district has no convincing centralized mechanism to track the nature or quality of professional development provided to principals, teachers, and staff, other than tracking who attended what meetings so that participants could be paid. Teachers post their own professional

development units online. But the district apparently does not use these or other data to analyze how many teachers districtwide received professional development and in what content or pedagogical areas as a way to assess its effects or to identify weaknesses. The team also saw no evidence that the district strategically scheduled its professional development in a way that aligned with the pacing guides.

- **Evaluation of Professional Development** – The district does not appear to have used the results of its contracted professional development evaluations to any great extent to shape or modify its training programs and their effects on teacher classroom instruction or student achievement. Evaluations of the contracted professional development were done largely on the basis of teacher and administrator ratings of effectiveness and classroom observation scales.[23]

- **Induction** – The district has a districtwide professional development program for its new teachers, something that not all urban districts have. But this program appeared to be too weak and too short (at four one-half days) to provide new staff members with the complex understanding of what they were required to teach or what instructional skills and tools they would need in the classroom. Part of the induction program involves the assignment of a mentor to first-year teachers—a program initially established in 1988 by the state. Each mentor is assigned five beginning teachers. Stipends are provided.

- **Certification** – The state's general qualifications for certification include a baccalaureate degree from a state-approved teacher education program, a recommendation, a 2.5 grade-point average, and a passing score on the PRAXIS.

- **Substitutes** – Staff members interviewed by the team indicated that the district made extensive use of long-term substitute teachers to fill instructional vacancies. The team could not find data to quantify the number of subs being used. The team was concerned not only about the extensive use of substitute teachers, but also about the apparent exclusion of these teachers from the district's professional development efforts and the disproportionate placement of these teachers in the poorest-performing schools.

- **Title II Program** – The district uses most of its federal Title II funding to reduce class sizes and support the district and instructional coaching program. Some 54 district schools get 21 full-time and 61 part-time Title II teachers. A smaller portion of Title II funds are used for professional development purposes.

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[23] The team was in general accord with the description of key challenges faced by the district that was presented in the September 2005 RTA report to the Kauffman Foundation. See pages 64-65.

Reform Press

Urban schools that are improving student achievement are not waiting for their leadership-initiated reforms to trickle down into the schools and classrooms. Instead, they have figured out specific ways to drive instructional reforms into the schools and classrooms, and they find ways to monitor the implementation of reforms to ensure their integrity and comprehensiveness. The Strategic Support Team looked at how the Kansas City Public Schools were pressing their reforms into the schools, and had a number of concerns—

- **Curriculum Monitoring** – The district does not appear to have a mechanism for monitoring whether and how well the *Rigby Literacy* and Scott Foresman/*Investigations* math programs are being implemented classroom by classroom, school by school.

- **Walk-Throughs** – The district has a walk-through system used by executive directors, principals, central office and school-based coaches (and some others), but school system personnel did not have a clear strategy for making use of the results of the process. The walk-through process also lacked components dealing with fidelity of program implementation, pacing, feedback, and next steps. The classroom observation forms for each subject used by the executive directors of school leadership, principals, and coaches did have "principles of learning" indicators relating to classroom organization, expectations, rigor, and other areas.[24] Rubrics related to "accountable talk," however, were largely jargon in the opinion of the team.

- **School Improvement Plans** – The district requires each school to complete a school improvement plan but the plans reviewed by the team were of uneven quality and seemed incapable of spurring student achievement.[25] The plans were vague about strategies for improving classroom teaching; none of the plans had a needs assessment that involved anything more detailed than a presentation of the previous year's test scores; none had an explicit description of their professional development needs or strategies; none presented data or strategies involving any subgroups or special populations; none contained any evidence that the school had thought about "vertical planning" across grade levels; and none had any more than superficial analysis of their data. One plan, in fact, proposed using two very different math textbooks for the same grade and subject. The process of developing the plans, moreover, was not viewed as useful by the principals interviewed by the team. And there was little evidence that the plans were thoughtfully reviewed and critiqued by the central office, or that the plans formed the basis for substantive action at the school level. The school improvement plan review completed by the executive directors, in fact, was mostly a checklist of accomplishments.

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[24] Executive Director of School Leadership. Teaching Practices that Support the Principles of Learning.
[25] The team was given school improvement plans from Sugar Creek Elementary School, Westport Middle School, Longfellow Arts Academy, and E.F. Swinney.

- **Coaches** – The district has a considerable number of coaches and relies heavily on their effectiveness. But the district has no mechanism for determining whether the coaches are doing what the district wants or what the impact of the coaches is on teacher practice or student achievement. It did not appear that the coaching program had been evaluated for its effects. Instead, coaches are evaluated on the regular teacher evaluation form. (Coaches report to principals and are evaluated by them.) Individuals interviewed by the team also indicated that teachers do not have to accept help from coaches. Finally, principals, coaches, and teachers reported to the team that some coaches are used for administrative duties or serve as substitute teachers when regular teachers are absent.

Data and Assessments

One of the most noticeable features of faster-improving urban school systems involves their regular assessment of student progress and their use of data to decide on the nature and placement of intervention strategies and professional development before the end of each school year. These districts use data, moreover, to monitor school and district progress and hold people accountable for results. The Strategic Support Team looked specifically at the Kansas City Schools' student assessment program, how it linked with the state testing effort, and how the district was using data to improve achievement. The team had a number of concerns—

- **Main Assessments** – The district administers the Missouri Assessment Program (MAP) in April in grades 3-8, 10, and 11.[26] Communications arts and math are tested on MAP in grades 3-8. Math and science are tested in grade 10, and communications arts is tested in grade 11. The district also administers the nationally norm-referenced test SAT-10 in grades 2 and 9 in late September. The district, moreover, periodically administers Running Records in grades K-5 and recommends the use of the Scholastic Reading Inventory (SRI) on a quarterly basis.[27] Finally, the district administers ACT Explore in grade 8 and the ACT Plan in grade 10. It was not clear to the team how the SRI and the District Assessment Program (DAP) interacted, what the district did with the SAT-10 data, or how the ACT was used to encourage more rigorous course taking among high-scoring students.

- **Interim Assessments** – The district uses a set of homegrown interim assessments—District Assessment Program (DAP)—to measure student progress over the course of the school year. The assessment was developed using state release items. The DAP is given in mid-September as a pre-test, again in mid-January, and in mid-May as a post-test. But, the test appears to be of low quality, is said to contain errors, may not be aligned with the state's MAP test, and lacks any predictive validity with MAP. The local tests also are not always in the same format or idiom as the state tests; that is, they do not have the same portion of

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[26] MAP data are not available from the state in a way that would allow year-to-year comparisons.

[27] The state requires that students reading below grade level be tested within 45 days of the last day of school. The district uses Running Records and the SRI for this purpose.

extended response items as the state test does. In sum, it is not clear what the DAP results, which are implemented by the instructional technology (IT) unit rather than the research and testing unit, are actually telling district personnel about student performance.

- **Use of DAP –** It does not appear that the district's curriculum unit uses DAP results to modify the curriculum, instructional strategies, or professional development. For instance, there was no indication that DAP results were used to shape instructional strategies on how students could improve performance on constructed response items or on items asking them to compare or contrast examples.

- **Accessibility of Data –** Building principals and staff have access to student achievement data for their schools online from the state, but are not able to query the data in a way that could answer specialized questions posed by principals or teachers. However, disaggregated data reports can be generated on scores by building, standard, teacher, subgroup, and student. The district had no data on usage of the Web site.

- **Data Management –** The district appears to lack a centralized data warehouse with longitudinal student achievement data. And the system apparently does not have a regular mechanism by which it checks the accuracy and quality of its data. District staff members reported to the team that they often lacked confidence in the quality of the school system's data.

- **Training on Data –** Central office staff members reported to the team that they provided student performance data to schools and professional development on its use, but staff members at the building levels indicated that they often had no clear sense about how to interpret and use these data.

- **Data Reports –** A number of data reports provided to the team had very confusing and poorly labeled tables, making it difficult for both the team and staff members being interviewed to interpret what the data meant. Examples included reports on special education and English as a Second Language (ESL).

- **Performance Predictions –** The district apparently puts its teachers through an exercise three times a year in which they are asked to predict which students were most likely to pass the MAP—the MAP Projection. This exercise is intended to predict "bubble" kids—i.e., those closest to the proficiency bar—and to spur discussion among teachers about instructional needs, but the exercise struck the team as a waste of time and teachers assessed it as totally unproductive.

- **Research and Evaluation Staff –** It appears from the staffing charts and team interviews that the size of the staff in the research and evaluation unit is too small to provide the kind and quality of data that the district needs to spur student

achievement. At the same time, central office staff members generally gave the research unit good reviews for its helpfulness and responsiveness.

- **Program Evaluations –** The State of Missouri requires that its districts review or evaluate programs every other year. The Kansas City school system is one of the few urban school districts that has a program evaluation plan, a calendar of program reviews, criteria for how programs are to be assessed, and an ongoing partnership with higher education organizations to help conduct reviews. However, most of the reviews are self-evaluations, a situation that is understandable given the limited number of staff members but this state of affairs may compromise school board confidence in results.

- **Reporting to the School Board –** The school board has indicated that it sometimes asks the administration for data reports and does not receive them or receives them in a form that board members cannot understand or that contain little analysis of results. For its part, however, the board has never really made it clear what kinds of data it really wants and in what form. It appeared to the team that the board was getting a fair amount of data, but that it did not contain the kind of analysis that a policy-making group could use.

- **State Data –** District staff indicated that the system does not obtain final state test results and final Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) determinations until about the third week in November each year, making it difficult to send out timely notices about the availability of transfer options or supplemental services.

Low-Performing Schools and Special Populations

Finally, urban school systems that are seeing substantial improvement in student performance have a targeted strategy to intervene in and boost achievement in their lowest-performing schools. This is often done differently from city to city, but it is done in almost every case. The Strategic Support Team looked at the Kansas City school district's strategies to boost achievement in its lowest-achieving schools. The team had the following concerns—

- **Schools Not Making AYP –** The district has no clear strategy for dealing with schools that are in AYP status III and IV. It also has no clear system for predicting which schools are likely to move into this level of sanctions under the federal *No Child Left Behind* law. Finally, the district has made no move to implement some of the law's intervention options early as a way of forestalling further deterioration in school performance. For instance, the district has not moved to reconstitute or restructure any of its lowest-performing schools.

- **Focus Schools –** The district has identified some 18 elementary schools for the 2005-06 school year that have not made AYP in communications arts, that have had 50 percent or more of their third-graders scoring at the bottom two levels of the MAP, and have had trouble moving students out of the two lowest academic

categories.[28] The district also has identified five middle schools as Focus Schools using similar criteria. One other elementary school—Banneker—was identified as a Focus School in math. There appears to be little difference between the instructional intervention in the district's Focus Schools and the interventions in other schools in the district, unless the Focus Schools are also Reading First Schools. The Focus Schools appear to attract somewhat more attention from district coaches than do other schools, but the amount of time coaches devote to these schools amounts to only about one-half day a week. These coaches did not appear to receive any special direction to help them address the special needs of these schools. It was also clear that the district did not concentrate its available assistance very well on its Focus Schools (see Table IV-3). Finally, the district lacks any incentives to attract its best principals and teachers to work in Focus Schools.

- **Reading First Schools** – The district has secured a federal Reading First grant of about $4.3 million and has applied the resources to 15 of its elementary schools.[29] The program uses Harcourt's *Trophies* and *Leap Frog* as a Tier II intervention. MAP data on the 15 schools indicate that communications arts scores have increased in eight of the schools over the last four years, and decreased in seven schools. The team did not see any evidence that anyone had attempted to coordinate the use of *Rigby* and *Trophies*.

Exhibit IV-3. Reading Assistance to Low-Performing Schools

Focus Schools	AYP-CA	Reading First	Read 180	RTA Support-60 hrs
ACE Meservey	No			
Attucks	No	Attucks		
Bryant	Yes			Bryant
East K-8	Yes	East K-8		
Faxon	Yes			
Garfield	Yes	Garfield		
Franklin	No		Franklin	Franklin
James	No	James	James	
King Middle	No		King Middle	
Knotts	Yes			Knotts
Melcher	No	Melcher		
Milton Moore	No			
Northeast Middle	No		Northeast Middle	
Phillips	No			
Pinkerton	No			Pinkerton
Richardson	No			

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[28] Elementary schools in focus status in 2005-06 included Wendall Phillips Elementary, Wheatley Elementary, Attucks Elementary, Richardson Elementary, Melcher Elementary, Troost Elementary, Southeast K-8, C.A. Franklin Elementary, Pinkerton Elementary, Whittier Elementary, James Elementary, Garfield Elementary, Woodland Elementary, East K-8, Milton Moore Elementary, Knotts Elementary, Faxon Montessori, and Bryant Elementary. Middle schools in focus status included Westport Middle School, Southeast K-8, Martin Luther King Middle, Northeast Middle, and ACE Meservey Middle.

[29] Nine of these Reading First schools are also Focus Schools: Attucks, East, Wheatley, Melcher, Richardson, Troost, Garfield, James, and Woodland.)

Focus Schools	AYP-CA	Reading First	Read 180	RTA Support-60 hrs
South K-8	No		South K-8	South K-8
Troost	No	Troost		
Westport	No			
Wheatley	No	Wheatley		
Whittier	No		Whittier	
Woodland	No	Woodland		
	No	Banneker	Banneker	
	Yes	Blenheim		
	Yes	Fairmont		
	Yes	Garcia		
	No	Richardson		
	No	Trailwoods		
	Yes	Weeks		
	Yes		Askew	
	No		Central H.S.	
	No		Central Middle	
	No		J.A. Rogers	
	Yes		Middle Sch/Arts	
	No		Northeast H.S.	
	No		Nowlin	
			Thacher Annex	
	No		Southeast H.S.	
	No		Van Horn H.S.	
	No		Westport Academy	
	Yes			Graceland
	No			Ladd
	Yes			Longfellow
	No			NRC/Korte
	No			Mt. Washington

- **English as a Second Language** – The district relies mostly on sheltered English classes for students who have almost no knowledge of English. Students attending schools that do not offer sheltered English are bused to those that do. Elementary students remain in these classes for about a year after which they are placed in regular classes. The new core curriculum is provided in English, with individual teachers making special adaptations for students, although the pacing guides have no reference to these students. Students are then pulled out of these regular classes (including communications arts classes) for English language instruction about an hour a day, each day.

- **Special Education** – The district has made considerable progress with its special education program over the last several years. The team was concerned, however, about the lack of a clear articulation between the use of *Voyager* and *Trophies*, particularly in mainstreamed classes.

- **Supplemental Services** – The district's after-school Title I supplemental services program does not appear to be tied to or aligned with the regular-day instructional program and lacks a clear strategy for intervention. (The district's after-school program does have an ESL component, however.) In addition to the district's own

Title I supplemental services, external service providers serve some 1,060 children.[30] There did not appear to be an explicit effort to tie services directly to the district's regular-day instructional program.

- **Title I Program** – The district allocates its federal Title I funds across the district, including to its high schools, using a uniform per pupil allocation (about $325 per student). The result is that the system is not taking advantage of the opportunity to target monies in a way that could provide extra help to the district's lowest-performing schools. The program funds 145.5 instructional staff members, and supports the district's after-school academy, the before and after-school program, tutoring, Saturday classes, summer school programs, and various parent activities. Each school also decides on how to use its Title I funds. No Title I funds are used to support early childhood efforts.

- **Student Discipline** – The district appears to have a high suspension rate, and teachers reported an uneven application of the student code of conduct. The district has an alternative placement system but no positive behavior programs.

- **Title IV Programs** – Federal Title IV funds are used for safe and drug free schools efforts, the district's student assistance program (SAP), student and family supports, a community resource directory, peer mediation, bullying prevention, and other such activities.

Early Childhood and Elementary Schools

It is often difficult for urban school districts to improve everything at once. Urban districts experiencing success in improving student achievement often do not take on all grades simultaneously. Instead, these districts started their reforms at the early elementary grades and worked up to the middle and high school grades. The Strategic Support Team looked at the sequence of reforms in the Kansas City schools and their special focus on the elementary schools. The team's concerns included—

- **Early Childhood Program** – The district's early childhood program, serving about 1,400 pupils, uses the state's Project Construct: The Early Childhood Framework for Curriculum and Assessment. The program uses a constructivist theory of learning, which assumes that pupils construct their own learning through their interactions with the environment. As a result, the early childhood program is not tied explicitly to the school system's K-5 reading and math programs, although program documents claim that the program is aligned with the district's core curriculum. Staff members were clearly reluctant to have such articulation for fear that it would undermine the developmental nature of the pre-K initiative, but there are a number of ways to nurture developmentally appropriate oral-language and hands-on math skills without turning early childhood into a scripted experience.

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[30] External supplemental service providers included Education Station (Sylvan), Newton Learning (Edison), Club Z, Bright Sky, Leatherwoods, Brainfuse, Strategic Education, Kumon, and Babbage.

- **Student-Teacher Ratio –** The head of the early childhood unit indicated to the team that the program had a student-teacher ratio of about 22:1. If correct, this ratio is unusually high and beyond standards set by the National Association of the Education of Young Children.

- **Kindergarten Enrollments –** The district has full-day kindergartens for all pupils. It does not have a formal process or program, however, by which it proactively enrolls pupils in Head Start and other nondistrict early childhood programs directly into Kansas City district schools.

- **Program Evaluation –** The district's early childhood program has not been evaluated recently for its effect on student achievement in the later years. Teachers report that there is a difference in students who have participated and those who haven't, but the program needs to be assessed formally.

- **Gifted and Talented –** The district does not conduct a general screening of students for gifted and talented potential. Instead, students are referred by parents or teachers, and then given the WISC to determine eligibility.

Secondary Schools

While many urban school systems seeing gains in student performance focus initially on their elementary schools, they do not ignore their middle and high schools. There is no national consensus on how to improve high schools, particularly in the nation's urban school districts. But the faster moving districts have put a number of tactics in place to ensure that students who did not learn the basic skills in the elementary schools do so before they graduate from high school. The team had a number of concerns—

- **Accreditation –** The areas in which the district has not yet met state accreditation requirements are largely in the secondary school area: middle and high school MAP scores, seventh-grade reading, college placement, and attendance.

- **Advanced Placement Courses –** The district has Advanced Placement (AP) or International Baccalaureate (IB) courses in only three of its seven high schools— Lincoln, Paseo, and Southeast. Lincoln has a wide array of both AP and IB courses (31 courses in all) but Paseo has only AP biology (60 students) and English (55 students), and Southeast has only AP English (about 46 students). About 124 students at Lincoln took an AP exam, scoring an average of 3.9 (out of five), but only nine students at Paseo took an AP exam—scoring an average of 1.7—and three students at Southeast took an AP exam—scoring an average 2.0.[31] About 70 students at Lincoln also took the IB exam, scoring an average 28. (No other school offered the IB.) The system also lacks a mechanism to identify

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[31] A score of three on the AP test is usually sufficient to gain college credit for the test taker. A passing score on the IB is 24.

students capable of doing advanced work or a pipeline to move students into AP courses.

- **College Attendance –**State data indicated that the district sent about 41 percent of its graduates to college in 2004 and 33.0 percent in 2003. These levels are well below national averages. The state figures also indicate that 7.4 percent of the district's graduates in 2004 went on to some other form of postsecondary training than college; 19.7 percent went immediately into employment; and 2.7 percent entered the military.

- **End-of-Course Evaluations –** The district has no mechanism for assessing student performance at the end of core courses other than the MAP in reading and math at the end of the 10th and 11th grades.

- **High School Reform –** In collaboration with the Gates Foundation, the Institute for Research and Reform in Education (IRRE), Talent Development High Schools (TDHS) at Johns Hopkins University, PREP-KC, and others, the district launched an effort to reform the school system's high schools in 2002-03—Achievement First.[32] The goal of the program is to improve student achievement (measured by improved teaching and learning, increased attendance and graduation rates, improved MAP and SAT-10 test scores, and decreased dropout rates) by strengthening relationships between students and adults, improving teaching and learning, and focusing available resources.

  Program strategies call for small learning communities (SLCs) of between 150-350 students and 15-30 teachers that are organized around career themes (such as business and technology, health and fitness, arts and media, and human services) chosen by the students when they enter the schools. Students are meant to stay together in their SLCs for core instruction across their high school careers. The program includes instruments to track the percent of time students stay in their SLC for classroom instruction.

  The program also calls for a family advocate system, which teams students and families with an advocate from the SLC and is designed to provide support and encouragement. Each advocate is assigned 15-17 students and their families, and stays with these students over a number of years. Advocates meet individually with each student at least once a week and with families at least once a month. Family advocates also receive benchmark and other performance data about the students in their advocacy group.

  Finally, the program calls for improved teaching and learning to help teachers improve instruction with TDHS and IRRE English and math courses. The effort focuses on three main goals—engagement, alignment, and rigor (EAR). The classroom observation form includes examination of the objective being taught

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[32] The model is similar to the Kansas City (Kansas) model, "First Things First," except that the Kansas City (Kansas) model uses a K-12 approach and does not have a Talent Development component.

and its alignment to the pacing guide, state standards, and level of rigor. The team was not presented with evidence, however, of how the findings of these observations were used to improve instruction or intervene to improve pacing.

The instructional component of the program involves a freshman seminar on study skills and career planning; a Strategic Reading (SR) program for ninth graders reading two or more years below grade level; a Transition to Advanced Mathematics (TAM) program offered in conjunction with Algebra I for ninth graders; a Reading and Writing in Your Career (RWYC) program offered in conjunction with tenth-grade English; and a Geometry Foundations (GF) program offered in conjunction with tenth-grade geometry that emphasizes conceptual understanding and Algebra review.

Teachers have common planning periods each day and two additional hours of professional development on Wednesdays, when students are sent home early.

The effort is now in its third year and involves five of the district's high schools (Central, Northeast, Paseo, Southeast, and Van Horn). Preliminary program data indicate progress on some indicators, but little headway on others—

° Participating schools have seen only marginal improvements in student attendance between 2002-03 and 2004-05.

° Persistence rates (students staying in the same school) from 9th to 10th and from 10th to 11th grades improved in one school but decreased in all others. Persistence rates between 11th and 12th grades decreased in all schools.

° High school graduation rates appear to have increased only slightly in the first three years of the program.

° Students in participating schools gained an average of seven-tenths of a year on the CTBS. There have been no appreciable gains on the MAP or the ACT, however.

° Passing rates in Algebra and English improved modestly between 2002-03 and 2004-05.

° Surveys of students and teachers in participating schools showed that attitudes improved.

° The number of students with either an in-school or out-of-school suspension increased substantially between 2002-03 and 2004-05 in all participating schools.

Achievement First represents an important and laudable effort, but the program continues to have a number of weaknesses—

° The consistency and strength of the district's leadership and commitment to the program has been tenuous. A number of senior staff members have actively fought the reforms. Part of the success of a similar program in Kansas City (Kansas) was that it had the strong and unilateral backing of all members of the senior administrative team. The lack of strong support from the administration has probably been undermining the consistency of program implementation and clarity of goals.

° The small learning community (SLC) strategy used in the program relies heavily on keeping the same students together for an extended period on the assumption that the smaller, more personal settings will increase "bonding," attendance, and graduation rates. But the "purity" rates (the term used to describe the ability of the schools to keep students in the same SLC with the same teachers) attained by the program appear to be in the neighborhood of 33 percent rather than the 75 percent program target. Program officials attribute the problem to scheduling problems, and have sought to address the issue with IRRE consultants. It was not clear to the team, however, that scheduling was the core problem since the initiative did not have a strategy to deal with the district's unusually high mobility rates or teacher certification issues.

° The need to downsize the participating schools into smaller learning communities appears to exacerbate teacher and staff shortage problems since more staff with the necessary credentials are needed in each building to implement the initiative. The school board needed to approve the hiring of 22 more teachers to staff the program.

° Collaboration between outside program staff and district staff is sporadic and uncertain. Some members of the school board appear to have a stronger program buy-in than do many members of the administrative staff. Some outside program staff came to the district with little confidence in the knowledge and skills of district administrators, and some administrative staff viewed outside program personnel as an alien force. Other district staff members appear to have simply relinquished any responsibility for the effort, a situation that does not bode well for the long-term viability of the program should the sponsors ever pull out.

° The program uses a remedial reading and math course in the first semesters of ninth and tenth grades to help students who don't have the skills to do high school work to catch up. The second semesters of those two years are used to teach the full course in each subject. The team was concerned that the remedial courses came too late and were not sufficiently strong to compensate for years of poor instruction, and that the second semester portion of the courses were not aligned with the MAP in a way that could spur higher state test results. It did not appear that the district or the high schools had planned the second-semester courses in such a way as to teach the required content and build in review time for math concepts eligible for MAP testing. The result

could be a misalignment of math remedial courses and 10th-grade state testing (algebraic thinking, geometry, number sense, measurement, probability, and statistics). Finally, it appeared that the remedial courses were not connected strongly to the district's elementary school *Rigby Literacy* or Scott Foresman math programs.

° Each of the participating high schools has a series of career themes that correspond to elective courses. A number of efforts have been made to monitor the quality of these courses using personnel from the Institute for Research and Reform in Education (IRRE) and the business community. The team was concerned, however, about the effect of the district's overall low expectations for its students and how the project kept those expectations from "bleeding" into the career courses and turning them into all-too-typical low-skills vocational education offerings. We saw no strategy for dealing with this possibility, and worried that the process of selecting themes of varying rigor could lead to greater stratification in student outcomes.

° The level and amount of professional development received by teachers in the participating schools appeared to be inadequate for meeting the program's goals. In addition, it did not appear that the regular instructional coaches in the Achievement First high schools were well-integrated into the reform program.

° The effort has not produced any discernible gains in student achievement on the MAP, although each of the remedial courses appears to have had at least short-term effects.

° The district appears to lack a strategy for conducting any kind of ongoing evaluation of the program.

° The initiative did not have a broad strategy for improving the academic performance of the high schools beyond the current remedial strategy. In other words, the initiative lacked a strategy for improving the achievement of all high school students.

° It appeared to the team that the Achievement First initiative was still a work in progress some three years after being launched. Parts of the program's strategies often appeared *ad hoc* and reactive rather than deliberate and strategic. The effort is worth continuing, but it could be strengthened.

C. Recommendations

IV. 1 Schedule board and staff site visits to improving urban school districts – It appears to the team that many school board members and staff have not seen what good instruction looks like in an improving urban school district. The Council encourages the board and staff to visit districts such as Charlotte-Mecklenburg, Boston, Norfolk, Richmond, Long Beach that are making substantial gains in student achievement. The board also might want to schedule itself annually to

attend the Council's fall conferences at which scores of promising practices are presented.

IV. 2 Convene a series of board-senior staff retreats on best instructional practices – To improve its awareness of what produces results and what is considered best practice and why, the board might consider convening a series of workshops—in conjunction with senior staff—to hear invited speakers present the latest developments from research, *No Child Left Behind,* Missouri School Improvement Program (MSIP) standards, and best practices from other urban school districts across the country. State officials might also be invited to speak. The school board and staff in the Dayton (Ohio) and Denver school systems have excellent models for this kind of senior leadership professional development.

IV. 3 Charge the new superintendent with upgrading the skills of the school system's instructional staff – The technical capacity and expertise of the district's central office instructional staff generally is not good. The new superintendent should be charged with upgrading their skills through professional development and/or recruiting new staff. Senior staff retreats might be organized around district direction, change management (e.g., Drucker, Deming, Fullan, Senge), the state standards, instructional content, characteristics of high-quality curriculum guides, pacing systems, alignment, model lesson plan development, and how to use data to guide curriculum development and professional development.

IV. 4 Establish concrete measurable goals and objectives for improving student achievement districtwide and school-by-school – The district's new superintendent should be charged with translating the goals and objectives that the school board is setting into concrete academic goals and targets for the district and each school. The goals of individual schools should align with district goals in a way that allows both sets of goals to be met. And the superintendent and senior staff should be placed on performance contracts tied to meeting the districtwide achievement goals.

IV.5 Ensure that goals are specified by subgroup – The academic goal-setting process should include separate targets for the academic achievement of each of the subgroups identified by the state under *No Child Left Behind*. These targets should not reflect lower expectations for students of color, poor students, student with disabilities, or English language learners.

IV. 6 Develop stretch goals for the district that go beyond state requirements – Be sure to develop long-term and short-term goals that go beyond what is required by a single statewide test in order to meet Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) targets, and design additional objectives for such important instructional indicators as advanced course participation rates, dropout rates, college attendance, Algebra I passage, and the like.

IV.7 **Evaluate principals explicitly on their ability to attain their schools' achievement goals –** Revamp how principals are evaluated to give more weight to attaining their academic achievement goals—including goals for subgroups. Job descriptions and evaluation forms will need to be redone. In exchange, principals should be given more latitude to hire and fire their own staffs and determine how they set and spend their budgets.

IV.8 **Consider creating incentives for achievement and attendance –** The district might consider the development of incentives or bonuses for teachers with excellent attendance records. A number of urban school districts have developed models for how to do this. In addition, the district should consider establishing a series of awards for schools that meet or exceed their respective academic goals.

IV.9 **Revise the PIP process –** The Personnel Improvement Process (PIP) should be revamped to more clearly articulate deficiencies, processes, and timelines for improvement. The process also should be more explicit about when removal of an employee is warranted. And PIP goals should be tied more convincingly to district and school goals.

IV.10 **Further refine the new curriculum to give it more detail –** The new curriculum needs to be further augmented with additional specificity and detail on the degree of depth or rigor required to meet each objective. The revisions should include teaching strategies and the approximate amount of time that teachers should devote to each objective by content area and grade to indicate the relative importance of the concept or skill. The district might want to work with the state on the revisions. Finally, district staff should review the curriculum for vertical alignment across grade levels.

IV.11 **Consolidate the curriculum, sample MAP items, and GLEs into a single document –** It was clear to the team that the district's teachers had to juggle a variety of documents to guide their instruction. The materials, including the revised curriculum, the sample Missouri Assessment Program (MAP) items, and Grade Level Expectations (GLEs) could be consolidated into a single reference tool for teachers.

IV.12 **Develop sample lesson plans in areas of weakest student achievement –** The district does not have a regular bank of lesson plans and does not necessarily need to have one, although many districts do. What might be more useful would be to acquire or develop a set of lesson plans to help teachers in areas in which student achievement was consistently low on the MAP. *These plans should include specific concept-development activities rather than just practice activities that assume students already know the concepts.* The plans might also include sample assessment items reflecting the rigor that the district has set for that subject and grade level.

IV.13 **Revise the district's quarterly pacing guides** – The district's current guides do not provide sufficient detail to direct classroom instruction. The revision should include time frames for each topic within the quarter; time for spiraling in the review of concepts; the sequence or order by which skills are taught, particularly in math, science, and social studies; specific references to variations in the pacing for English-as-a-Second Language, special education, and gifted and talented students; sample assessment items; and revisions based on the results of quarterly exams and MAP data. The guides should also take into account holidays, snow days, and testing days.

IV.14 **Replace the current reading program** – The team proposes that the district replace its current reading program—*Rigby Literacy*—with a more scientifically-based reading program that is well aligned with state standards. The program should have the support of teachers but be structured enough to guide classroom instruction, and should be implemented districtwide at the elementary grade level with a careful roll-out plan, use of change management processes, and clear support and monitoring. Finally, the district should ensure that the program is explicitly aligned with state standards and assessments, comes with materials to accelerate learning for students at or above grade level, and strong and extensive professional development from the publisher.

IV.15 **Place a moratorium on the purchase of other reading materials** –The district ought to put a temporary hold on school-to-school purchasing of additional materials after a new basal reading program is put into place. This moratorium should probably be in effect for about two years. In the meantime, the district should conduct a detailed inventory of programs and materials being used in schools and decide which ones to phase out and which ones to retain based on their alignment with state standards and data on effectiveness—if such data exist. (The district has no inventory of materials being used to teach reading across the district.)

IV.16 **Conduct a gap analysis on the selected reading program** – A new reading program should be chosen in part on its alignment with state standards. But no program is aligned perfectly. The district ought to analyze the selected program and determine where there are gaps between the program and state standards. The district should use the information on the nature of the gaps to inform decisions about which supplemental materials to purchase, develop, or allow schools to purchase.

IV.17 **Identify and adopt a series of Tier II and Tier III reading interventions** – The district currently does not have a well-defined intervention program for students who have fallen behind, except in Reading First schools. The interventions should be aligned with state standards, should complement the selected reading program, and should be used districtwide and evaluated closely for their ability to raise student achievement. The district might want to look at the Long Beach and

Charlotte-Mecklenburg school districts for examples of effective intervention strategies.

IV.18 Retain the current Scott Foresman/*Investigations* and Glencoe math programs – These math programs are proving to be effective in raising math performance in urban schools and should be retained in Kansas City. The district needs to conduct the kind of gap analysis on the two programs that was suggested for the selected reading program. Gaps should be filled with additional supplemental materials. In addition, the district should secure additional professional development for its teachers from the publishers of these programs, which the team heard had not been done adequately when the programs were initially published.

IV.19 Establish a district leadership and principals training academy – Institute a district leadership and principals training academy to provide professional development on the state standards, the revised curriculum, the supplemental materials and intervention systems, the use of model lesson plans, program alignment, the interpretation and use of student achievement data, change management techniques, and community outreach techniques.

IV.20 Revise the district's professional development plan – The district should revamp its current professional development plan so that it focuses its training priorities on student achievement data (disaggregated); how training will be differentiated by teacher experience level and expertise, student achievement results, grade, and subject; how professional development will be tracked; which professional development will be offered systemwide and which will remain as job-embedded; how quality and consistency will be maintained in both districtwide and job-imbedded training, how centrally delivered professional development will be scheduled and repeated; which student learning objectives will be covered in each districtwide and each job-imbedded session; and how the effects of the professional development will be used to modify the curriculum and the pacing guides.

IV.21 Define the districtwide professional development around the implementation of the reading and math programs – The district should structure and design its systemwide professional development around implementation of the new reading adoption and the current math programs, the supplemental materials (identified by the gap analysis), and the identified intervention systems. The districtwide professional development also should include information on the system's goals, objectives, priorities, and strategies.

IV.22 Expand the new teacher professional development program – The district has a training program for new teachers but the professional development offered is not extensive enough. The team proposes that the district expand the new teacher training effort to span three years. The initiative should include a mentor component, team teaching, model teaching, and network support. The district

might look at new teacher training programs in the Clark County (Las Vegas), Houston, Charlotte-Mecklenburg, and Richmond school districts.

IV.23 **Evaluate the effects of the professional development program** – The district should establish a regular schedule of evaluations of the centrally provided and the job-imbedded professional development on student achievement.

IV.24 **Revamp the district's school improvement plans** – The district's school improvement plans are currently too weak and unspecific to serve as true planning guides. The team proposes that the template and process of the plans be overhauled and that the revised plans include schoolwide and subgroup academic achievement goals, a needs assessment that examines possible reasons for current student achievement levels, and required Title I schoolwide program components. The district also should establish a process by which draft plans are reviewed and approved. The district might look at the school improvement plans in the Columbus school system as a template. Finally, the school improvement plans should "roll up" in a way that the overall district goals can be met.

IV.25 **Revise the "learning walks"** – The current learning walks are used mostly to assess various Institute for Learning (IFL) "principles of learning." The team proposes that the district modify the learning walks or develop a new format to focus on classroom implementation of the new reading program, the current math program, and use of professional development and the pacing guides. The district should develop a procedure by which the results of the new "walks" are used to modify the curriculum, ensure teacher reflection on results, and focus professional development. The learning walks should not be used for personnel evaluation purposes.

IV.26 **Evaluate the coaching program** – Revamp the procedures for evaluating building coaches to better reflect their coaching responsibilities. The district also should conduct an external evaluation of the effects of the coaching program on student achievement.

IV.27 **Replace the DAP quarterly assessment system** – The district should revise or replace the District Assessment Program (DAP) with a new quarterly assessment tool that is more explicitly aligned with the Missouri Assessment Program (MAP) and has high predictive validity with MAP. The new quarterly system also should have the same format as the MAP and contain the same mix of multiple choice and constructed response items.

IV.28 **Place administration of the new quarterly test under the research unit** – The team proposes that development or selection and administration of the new quarterly assessment system be placed under the research and testing department rather than the information technology unit. The research and curriculum units should be charged with working together on the selection and training on the tests.

IV.29 **Eliminate the practice of having teachers predict MAP scores** – The district has teachers trying to predict the MAP scores of their students three times a year, but the team saw no useful purpose for the activity if the quarterly assessment had the predictive validity it should have. The team proposes that the district eliminate the practice.

IV.30 **Develop a district dashboard**– The district does not have a data dashboard by which the system can gauge its overall progress and status. The team proposes that the superintendent convene a team of cross-functional district administrators, principals, and teachers to determine the data that the district needs to monitor its steps forward. (The team might also include a state representative.) The data dashboard should be capable of answering a variety of policy questions of interest to the board, as well as program effectiveness data. The district may want to look at the dashboard systems used in the Charlotte-Mecklenburg, Houston, and Broward County (Fla.) school districts. The district team also should develop and implement a set of procedures for conducting regular checks on the accuracy of data at various data-entry points. Checks should be performed on all data released to the public and used by the board for policy decisions.

IV. 31 **Transfer federal evaluation funds to the research unit** – The district's research and evaluation unit needs additional staff to handle the data systems and evaluation responsibilities proposed in this chapter. The Council team proposes to transfer the set-aside funds from the district's various federal grants meant for evaluation purposes into the research and evaluation department. This would allow the unit to hire additional staff to follow through on the proposed activities.

IV.32 **Assign an executive director to oversee the district's Focus Schools** – The district has a number of executive directors that oversee a disparate variety of schools in differing regions of the city. The school system, however, does not have anyone assigned to oversee the improvement of its Focus Schools, the district's lowest performing. The team proposes to assign an executive director solely to lead the improvement of these schools. The director should report to either the superintendent or the deputy superintendent.

IV.33 **Develop an explicit plan for the improvement of Focus Schools** – Charge the executive director responsible for the Focus Schools with developing a plan for the improvement of student achievement in these schools. The plan should be measurably different from the plan to improve student achievement in other schools and should include the nature of the instructional program, number of coaches, funding levels, materials, intervention programs, staff quality, bonus and performance pay, parent involvement strategies, outreach efforts, and continuous improvement strategies.

IV.34 **Develop a system to predict schools that are likely to fail** – The district apparently does not have a system to predict and prevent schools from failing to meet Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) requirements. The team proposes that the

district develop a system for predicting which schools are heading for sanction status and developing strategies to prevent them from failing. The district might consider a similar system used in the in Toledo (Ohio) school district

IV.35 **Target federal Title I monies on schools most in need** – The district currently spreads its Title I funds evenly across the vast majority of its schools. The team proposes that the district alter this allocation method in order to put more money per student in schools that need the most help in raising student achievement. The new allocation system should be used to support interventions and other strategies in Focus Schools and other low-performing schools.

IV.36 **Align supplemental services with proposed district intervention strategies** – The district provides supplemental services pursuant to Title I through numerous private providers. It also provides its own program of supplemental services, but there is no clear strategy that these services use to raise student achievement. The team proposes that the district align its proposed Tier II and Tier III intervention strategies explicitly with its after-school supplemental services—and that both be tied to the regular day instructional program and the Missouri Assessment Program (MAP).

IV.37 **Implement a positive behavior program systemwide** – The district has no system or program through which it works to teach students positive behavior as a way to address persistent discipline issues. The team proposes that the district put into place a positive behavior interventions and supports (PBIS) program.

IV.38 **Align pre-K programs with the district's early elementary grade programs** – The team proposes that the district vertically realign its early childhood programs with the proposed new reading program and current math programs used by the school system. The team believes that this alignment can be done in a way that is developmentally appropriate, particularly in the areas of oral language and math concepts, without turning the early childhood programs into a mechanistic "drill-and-kill" exercise. The district might want to look at the Bright Beginnings program in the Charlotte-Mecklenburg school district.

IV.39 **Reduce the pupil/teacher ratios in the district's early childhood programs** – The district has a very high pupil/teacher ratio in its early childhood programs at 22:1. The team proposes that the district reduce this ratio over time to 10:1—the standard used by the National Association for the Education of Young Children. The district might consider redeploying some of its otherwise rich teacher resource levels into the early childhood program after appropriate re-training.

IV.40 **Establish a procedure for enrolling pre-K pupils in district schools** – The team proposes that the district set up a procedure for enrolling pupils in early childhood programs into district schools. The team would also propose to develop a cooperative arrangement with local Head Start and other pre-K programs to enroll those students on-site into district schools.

IV.41 **Conduct a formal evaluation of the district's early childhood program** – The team proposes that the district conduct a formal evaluation of the district's early childhood program and its impact on student achievement in subsequent grades. The Council of the Great City Schools is a strong advocate of early childhood programs and would like to see the Kansas City program become more effective.

IV.42 **Broaden the criteria for access to gifted and talented programs** – The district currently determines eligibility for gifted and talented programs after parent or teacher references and testing on the WISC. The team proposes that the district broaden its procedures for identifying students for gifted and talented programs by using a screening device such as the "Naglieri" and extending eligible WISC scores to the 80th percentile. Following these suggestions would help identify promising students who do not necessarily have strong test-taking skills. (The district might also consider establishing a talent pool of students who are near the cut-off points in order to form a core group that could be nurtured and moved into more advanced courses.)

IV.43 **Retain the Achievement First initiative, but boost course rigor overall** – The district has taken an important step in moving to reform its high schools, but the nature of the reforms may not produce the kind of increases in student achievement that the system and the public wants. There is little reason to believe that secondary school academic performance can improve using two one-semester remedial classes in the ninth and tenth grades and a series of career-theme courses. The team, instead, would propose a series of new steps that would involve—

° Reviewing, upgrading, and articulating the reading, math, and science programs used with students in grades 5-8, so that they link with the skills that students will need to achieve in core courses in the 9th grade.

° Backmapping from grade 12 down to at least the seventh grade the course rigor necessary to graduate with the skills necessary for gaining entry into a competitive college or university or other postsecondary career training program.

° Incorporating some Advanced Placement (AP) courses in every high school in the district.

° Bringing in a program such as AVID into the district's middle and high schools to build a pipeline for students to participate in more advanced courses and college prep classes.

° Revamping secondary school counseling programs to encourage students to take more core courses at the high school level.

° Administering the PSAT or ACT-equivalent to all district ninth or tenth graders and using the results to encourage more students to take more advanced courses.

° Assessing the rigor of current secondary school courses and then boosting that rigor with better materials and professional development for teachers.

° Exploring the possibility of instituting end-of-course exams in core courses— aligned with MAP—to better assess content mastery

IV.44 Reassign the district's executive directors – The team proposes that the current executive directors have their schools realigned so that one director is assigned solely to middle and high schools, two directors to the elementary schools, and one to the Focus Schools. The team also suggests charging the high school director with the responsibility of overseeing the high school reform program, improving graduation rates, and developing a clear plan for boosting secondary school course rigor.

IV.45 Conduct a formal evaluation of the Achievement First program – The team proposes that the district conduct a formal evaluation of its high school initiative and its effect on student achievement.
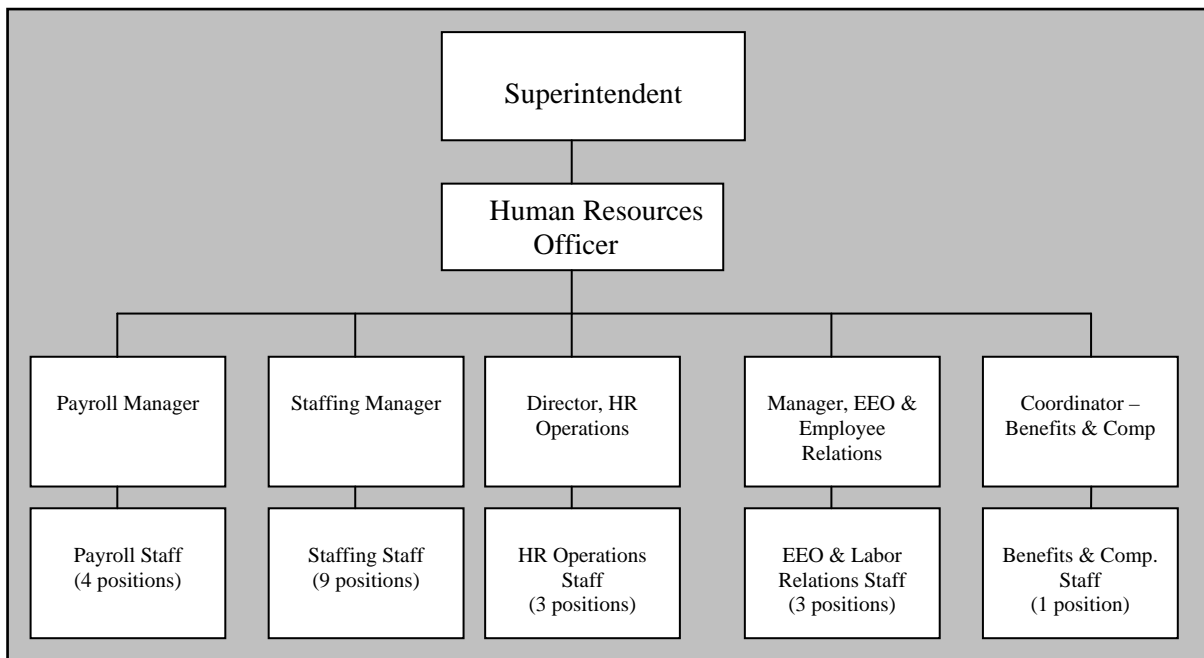
	V. HUMAN RESOURCES

A. Introduction and Background

Organization and Administration

The human resources department is led by a human resources officer who serves as executive director and reports directly to the superintendent. A contract employee currently fills the position on a temporary basis. Five units headed by directors or managers report to the human resources officer. (See Exhibit V-I below).

Exhibit V-1. Human Resources Organization Chart

Source: KCMSD Human Resources Department

Budget and Staffing Data

The budgeted positions and expenditures of the department are in Exhibit V-2.

Exhibit V-2. Human Resources Operating Budget

	FY 06 FTE	FY 06 Budget
Salary Items	26.0	$1,282,418
Fringe Benefits		354,585
Purchased Services		395,400
Supplies and Materials		43,500
Capital Outlay		135,000
Total	**26.0**	**$2,210,903**

Source: FY 2006 comprehensive budget

B. Findings

Commendations

- **Hardworking and Dedicated Employees –** The human resources staff is dedicated and hardworking in spite of a number of leadership, organizational, and procedural obstacles. The payroll staff and the individual responsible for personnel records management are particularly noteworthy in this regard.

- **Payroll and Employee Benefits –** While it is somewhat uncommon in large urban school systems for payroll and employee benefits functions to fall under the aegis of a human resources (HR) department, this reporting relationship seems to be working reasonably well in the KCMSD.[33] For example—

  o Payroll staff members report that problem resolution and receipt of timely information have improved since the function was placed in the HR department.

  o The payroll department processes compensation payments to all district employees on 12 payroll calendars.

    ▪ Salaried employees are paid on an annual 24-check cycle. The payroll system is based on "exception time reporting" for salaried employees, supported by school-level sign-in sheets submitted to, and reviewed by, the payroll unit.

    ▪ Hourly employees are paid biweekly. Time reporting for hourly employees is done on a "positive" time reporting basis.

- **Substitute Teacher Internal Controls –** The process for paying substitute teachers has good internal controls that require a match between the regular position that is vacant temporarily and the substitute teacher who is filling the position.

- **Collective Bargaining –** The current collective bargaining process, which engages an outside consultant to conduct the process with appropriate district staff support, appears to be working well.[34]

Leadership and Management

- **Strategic Planning –** The HR staff is not knowledgeable about the district's strategic plan, and the department does not have a business plan linked to the

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[33] It is more common in large urban school systems to have the payroll unit report to the finance department and the employee benefits unit report to a risk management department.

[34] While Missouri is a "right to work" state, the KCMSD union contract is not unlike those found in most large urban school systems.

district wide plan. Although the department has established annual goals, it has no performance metrics and little way of reporting progress in meeting these goals.

- **Vacant and Temporary Positions –** The HR department, as with other departments, has an excessive number of position vacancies and employees in temporary positions. In addition to lacking a permanent human resources officer, the department had seven other temporary employees and three vacant positions in the clerical and technical ranks at the time of this review. At that time, 11 of the department's 26 budgeted positions were either vacant or filled with temporary employees, leaving only 15, or 58 percent, of the authorized staff positions filled with regular permanent employees. (Exhibit V-3 displays HR's budgeted positions for 2005-06 broken down as filled, temporary, and vacant.)

Exhibit V- 3. 2005-06 HR Staffing as of 10/13/05

Positions	Budgeted 2005-06			
	Permanent	**Temporary**	**Vacant**	**Total**
Managerial/ Supervisory	5	1	0	6
Clerical/ Technical	10	7	3	20
Total Staffing	15	8	3	26

Source: Human Resources Department, KCMSD

Employees report having worked for six or seven HR directors in the past 10 years. The turnover in top management, the vacant positions, and the number of employees in temporary positions have impaired the department's ability to operate effectively, have lowered employee morale, and have contributed to ill-defined roles and the lack of clear responsibilities. A sense of paralysis is pervasive in the department because of uncertainties related to personnel and positions. And failed attempts to "clean up" the department have further compounded the frustration of customers and staff alike.

- **Communications –** There is a general lack of communications both within the department and with other departments in the district. For example—

  o No regular departmental staff meetings are held.

  o While the HR department does communicate payroll, employee benefits, and worker compensation information to district staff, a number of significant HR programs and procedures are not communicated to the rest of the district on any regular or systematic basis. For instance, the team was surprised to find a general lack of awareness of district staffing formulas – from the executive directors of instruction to the HR staff.

- **Coordination of Efforts** – The team found no evidence that cross-functional teams were used to address intra-departmental issues. The lack of teamwork and coordination reflects a department that operates in "silos" rather than as a whole. The payroll staff, for example, does not believe that the rest of the department shares its sense of urgency in processing information so that people get paid on time and accurately.

- **Staff Training** – Generally, training is lacking within the HR department, as is training on HR procedures and processes throughout the district. For example—

  o The department lacks a formalized training program for new employees or staff development opportunities for existing employees.

  o Little cross-training is available for employees to ensure continuity of work when absences or staff turnover occur.

  o School principals are not trained in HR procedures or in the use of basic HR documents such as the e-sheet (the primary personnel transaction tool).

- **Administrative Support** – The team found little evidence that the school board or the district administration supports the HR department or its director. Staff members reported, for example, that outside influences such as the school board, parents, and special interest groups affect their ability to do their jobs by countermanding, undercutting, or ignoring middle management decisions.

- **Systems Approach to Work** – The HR department staff does not have a systematic project management approach to organizing its work. For example, while staff members have a general awareness of how they will fingerprint all new and existing employees on a school-by-school basis, there are no timelines, assignments, or leadership to ensure that the project will be completed on a timely basis.

- **Utilization of Technology**

  o Technology is underutilized in the HR department. For example—

    ▪ No online employment application process is in place.[35]

    ▪ No automated applicant tracking system is in place. As a result, the district reportedly does a poor job of keeping applicants informed about where they are in the hiring process.

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[35]The team was advised that these particular system improvements were delayed because they were awaiting approval by the general counsel's office.

- The principal personnel transaction document (the e-sheet) has not been automated.[36] Consequently, the document is passed from desk to desk for processing and approvals, including being signed off by the departmental director.

Organizational

- **Organizational Alignment** – The HR department is not organized to manage and support schools. Staffing and assignments, for example, are processed on an *ad hoc* basis because there is no designation of responsibility for the staffing of individual schools to specific HR staff members. And field staff members are uncertain about where to go for resolution of specific HR issues.

- **Help Desk** – The HR department lacks a "help desk" or call center to handle inquiries from potential, new, or current employees efficiently. And no automated call monitoring or measuring system has been set up to gauge the volume and nature of incoming calls to HR.

Policies, Operating Procedures, and Systems

- **Placement and Retention of Qualified Certificated Staff** – District practices and procedures have resulted in a relatively high percentage of classroom teachers who are not fully credentialed.[37] (See Exhibit V-4, which compares the district's staffing with the rest of school systems in the state.) Factors that contribute to this situation include the following—

  o The district fails to recruit adequate numbers of qualified teachers to replace retiring, resigning, and terminated teachers. At the beginning of the 2005-06 school year, for example, approximately 60 teaching positions remained unfilled with fully credentialed teachers.

  o It is district practice to retain teachers in classrooms for the remainder of the school year after their credentials have expired. In Missouri, teacher credentials expire on the anniversary date of their issuance, which can occur any time during the year.

  o The district fills vacant permanent regular classrooms with less qualified substitute teachers on ongoing basis.[38]

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[36] The team was advised that these particular system improvements were delayed because they were awaiting approval by the general counsel's office.

[37] It is significant to note that the staffing of classrooms with fully credentialed teachers is an important factor in the district's re-accreditation.

[38] Substitute teachers are only required to have 60 hours of college credits.

o HR staff members told the team that from time to time they are directed to hire and place non-credentialed, not fully qualified, teachers in regular teaching positions.

o It is district practice to fill a large number and variety of non-classroom credentialed positions (such as principals, vice principals, librarians, counselors, visual and performing arts teachers, in-school-suspension teachers, and instructional coaches) before ensuring that all regular classroom positions are filled with fully credentialed teachers.

Exhibit V- 4. Certification Status of Teachers
KCMSD and Missouri -2004

Category	Missouri	Kansas City
Teachers with Regular Certification[39]	97.0%	90.4%
Temporary or Special Assignment Cert.	1.5	5.6
Substitute, Expired, or No Certificate	1.5	4.0
Total	100%	100%
Classes Taught by "Highly Qualified Teachers"[40]	95.6%	91.1%

Source: Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education Core Data

• **Position Control –** Inadequate leadership, teamwork, communication, and accountability severely compromise the district's ability to manage its position control system effectively. The district's position control process routinely "over-allocates" positions by allowing the entry of more than one employee to an authorized position. This flaw in the position control system requires substantial effort to reconcile and creates a financial liability for the district.[41] It also enables unauthorized "maverick" hiring and salary payments. (See below.)

Collaboration, data sharing, and communications between HR, budget, and instructional staff in the budget development and future-year staffing process is also inadequate. This situation results in filled but "unbudgeted" positions and a potential financial liability for the district.

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[39] Regular Certificates – Includes life certificate, professional Class I & II certificate, continuous professional certificate (CPC), and provisional certificate.

[40] "Highly Qualified Teacher" is a category defined by the state to meet the requirements of the federal *No Child Left Behind* Act. Such an individual has the appropriate certification for his/her teaching assignment.

[41] Position control should begin with a budget unit that establishes positions based on the projected enrollments and approved staffing formulas. The HR department, working with school-site administrators and the instructional organization management, should assign staff members to the uniquely numbered positions created by the budget unit.

The unclear and diffuse responsibility for resolving allocated and unbudgeted positions, coupled with the fact that there is no designated "owner" of the process, has led to a pervasive lack of accountability in position management.

- **"Maverick" Hiring –** The team learned that maverick employees are hired and placed in positions prior to the completion of TB tests and fingerprint checks.

- **Recruitment and Hiring –** The HR department has no formalized systematic approach to analyzing retirements, resignations, enrollment changes, or instructional program changes in order to determine the number and type of teachers that need to be recruited and hired. While there is some "on the spot" contracting of new teachers in known hard-to-staff areas (such as math, science, and special education), many new teacher-hiring opportunities are missed due to delays in staffing decisions.

- **Late Hiring –** Teachers are required to indicate that they will not be returning to the district by June 1, but the requirement is not enforced. The result is that the district has to scramble to hire teachers close to or after the beginning of the school year. It also means that highly qualified teachers that might apply to the district are turned down or go elsewhere before the district knows that vacancies will occur.

- **Standard Operating Procedures –** The district lacks comprehensive HR standard operating procedures, process workflows, desk manuals and handbooks, which hampers department operations. While some procedures manuals do exist, the application of existing rules and standard processes is inconsistent. For example, school principals expressed frustration with differing interpretations of policies and processes from the HR department.

- **Employee Discipline and Grievances –** Unresolved or appealed discipline cases and grievances are processed through the HR department in a timely and equitable manner in accordance with the provisions of collective bargaining agreements, board policies, and state law. But these cases and grievances often face lengthy delays when they reach the general counsel's office for disposition that may include litigation or adjudication.

- **Workers' Compensation Program -** A fully insured workers' compensation program, which the district has recently taken a more proactive role in managing, lacks adequate follow-up on incident/accident reports, does not include an "early return to work" program, and lacks an accident prevention training program.

- **Employee Benefits –** The district lacks a cost-containment strategy for employee health and medical benefits. The most recent data indicated that district benefits costs had increased by 12 percent over the prior year.

- **Verification of Personnel Data –** The district lacks a process to verify personnel data when new employees are entered into the district's data system. This shortcoming results in errors that, if detected, must be corrected during the payroll process, potentially causing delays in the pay process.

- **Personnel Record Retention –** The district has no provisions for off-site storage of duplicate records or any other provisions for disaster recovery. Personnel records are maintained exclusively on paper for the first five years, after which they are transferred to microfiche.

C. Recommendations

V. 1 **Establish Leadership in Human Resources (HR) -** The district needs to appoint a dynamic, experienced person to lead the HR department and address the HR issues and concerns raised in this report. The person should be able to transition the HR department into a more effective, efficient, and strategically positioned operation, and—

   o Ensure the staffing of schools with highly qualified and fully certified teachers.

   o Improve customer service and build confidence.

   o Establish an organized and systematic approach to fulfilling the responsibilities of the department.

   o Improve communication both within the department and with the board, administration, schools, and the public.

   o Champion the use of technology to improve productivity.

V. 2 **Embrace Strategic HR Planning –** The HR department should develop a business plan that reflects the district's strategic plan, with measurable and achievable goals, timelines, performance measures, and a mechanism for monitoring and reporting progress.

V. 3 **Establish HR Training Programs –** The HR department should establish a formalized mandatory training program for new HR employees and provide for continued professional development and cross-training of existing employees.

V. 4 **Align Organization to Support Schools –** The HR department should be organized to support specific schools by assigning individual staff members as one-stop shopping contacts for staffing and other HR issues.

V. 5 **Create a Help Desk –** The HR department should establish "help desk" functions to assist employees and job applicants through the HR processes and respond to

questions and inquiries. The "help desk" should monitor and track the frequency and nature of calls to help direct future training and communication activities.

V. 6 **Ensure Qualified Certificated Classroom Teachers –** Policies and procedures should be established to ensure the placement of highly qualified and fully credentialed teachers in every district classroom. These policies and procedures would include—

a. **Development of a Recruitment Plan –** Working with the instructional leadership and the budget office, the HR department should create an annual recruitment plan that incorporates—

✓ The number of anticipated vacancies, by grade level and subject, created by retiring, resigning, and terminated teachers.

✓ The anticipated changes in staffing due to estimated enrollment changes.

✓ The changes in staffing needs driven by changes in the instructional program.

b. **Authorization of Early Contracting –** Based on the recruitment plan, the HR department should be authorized to contract teachers early in the year and to offer on-the-spot contracts to exceptional teaching candidates.

c. **Removal of Teachers Without Credentials –** The district should establish a policy of removing from regular classroom assignment teachers whose credentials have expired or teachers who have been assigned without being fully credentialed.

d. **Make Classrooms the First Staffing Priority –** The district should staff instructional stations with fully credentialed and qualified teachers before filling supplementary non-classroom positions.

V. 7 **Strengthen Position Control –** The district should designate a single individual in the budget office or the HR department as the position control "owner" and hold that person responsible for coordinating the process. Further, the district should assign specific responsibility for resolving position variances, over-allocations, and unbudgeted positions to appropriate individuals in the budget, HR, and instruction departments. The district should evaluate these individuals and hold them accountable based on the results.

The district needs to strengthen cross-functional collaboration, communication, and data sharing in the budget development and future-year staffing process, with specific attention paid to position control. And the district should impose significant penalties or consequences for individuals who engage in maverick hiring.

V. 8   **Establish HR Operating Procedures –** The HR department should establish and maintain clear and easily understood procedural manuals to define responsibilities and workflows to document approved processes. Procedures should ensure that information entered into databases is accurate.

V. 9   **Formalize Employee Benefits Cost Control Strategies –** The district should formalize more aggressive strategies to contain the rising cost of employee benefits. In the area of workers' compensation, the district should establish an early return-to-work program; expand the districtwide accident prevention training programs; and investigate clusters of claims and potential fraud. In the area of health and medical benefits, the district should pursue cost containment techniques that include comprehensive employee wellness programs, chronic disease management, plan design modifications, coverage limitations, and employee contribution changes.

V. 10   **Establish Record Retention and Disaster Recovery Plans –** The HR department should establish a disaster recovery plan that uses an imaging system to document personnel records and other key district documents and stores them in multiple off-site locations.
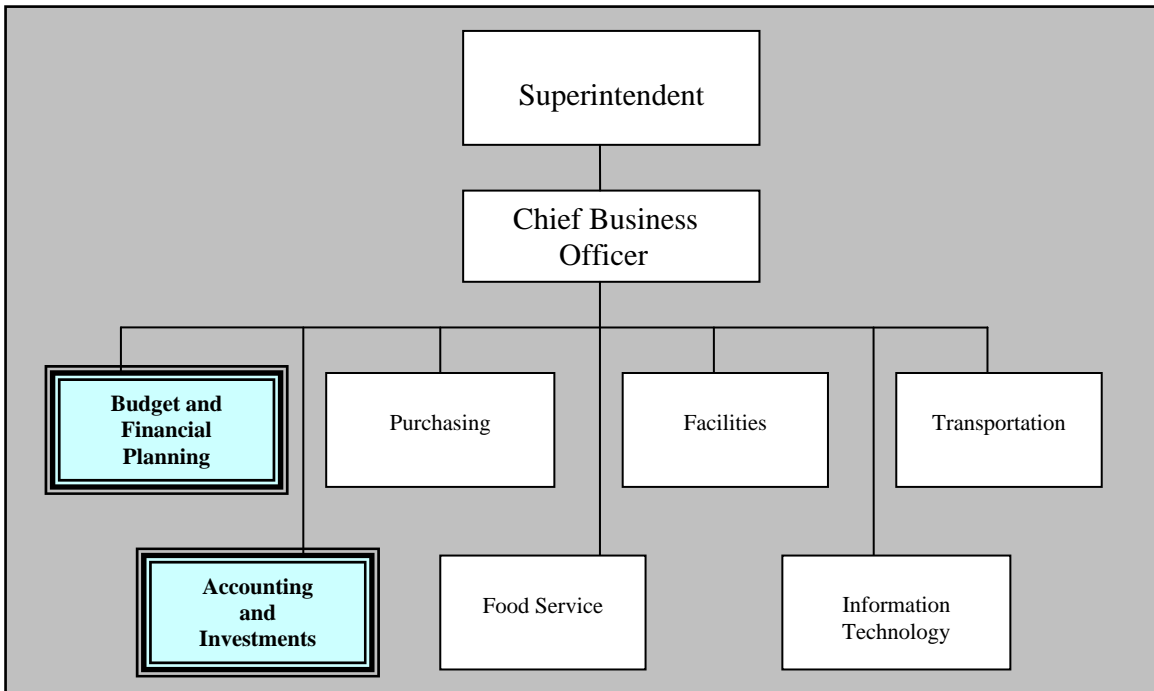
VI. BUDGET AND ACCOUNTING

A. Introduction and Background

Organization and Administration

The chief business officer has a wide span of control that includes information technology, facilities and maintenance, transportation, purchasing, and food services. (Exhibit VI-1 depicts the organization of the financial and business operations of the district.) The chief finance officer currently fills this position on a temporary basis.

Exhibit VI-1. Business and Finance Division Organization

Source: KCMSD, Division of Business and Finance

This chapter of the report focuses on the budget and financial planning, and the accounting and investments departments (finance departments). Chapter VII of this report is devoted to the review of the information technology services department. Chapter VIII covers facilities and maintenance. Chapter IX deals with transportation. Chapter X reports on the purchasing department. While there is no chapter of this report specifically devoted to food services, the proposed RFP for the outsourcing of food service management is addressed in the purchasing chapter.

Exhibits VI-2 and VI-3 show the organization of the budget and financial planning, and the accounting and investments departments, respectively.
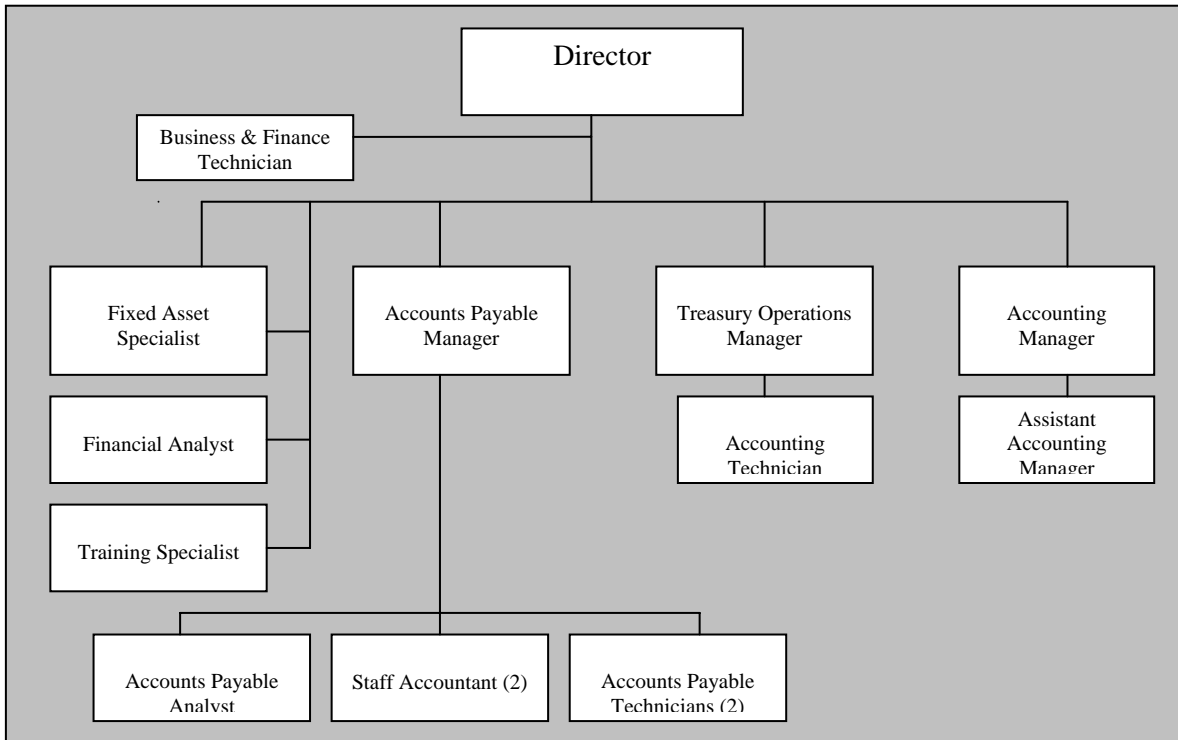
Exhibit VI-2. Budget and Fiscal Planning Department

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                          ┌─────────────────┐
                          │  Budget Officer │
                          └─────────────────┘
   ┌──────────────┬──────────────┬──────────────┬──────────────┐
┌──────────┐ ┌──────────┐ ┌──────────┐ ┌──────────┐ ┌──────────┐
│ Budget   │ │ Budget   │ │ Special  │ │ Revenue  │ │Technician│
│Specialist│ │Specialist│ │ Revenue  │ │Specialist│ │  Office  │
│ Position │ │  Budget  │ │Specialist│ │          │ │ Support  │
│ Control  │ │Develop-  │ │          │ │          │ │          │
│Secondary │ │  ment    │ │          │ │          │ │          │
│ Schools  │ │Elementary│ │          │ │          │ │          │
│          │ │ Schools  │ │          │ │          │ │          │
└──────────┘ └──────────┘ └──────────┘ └──────────┘ └──────────┘
                          ┌──────────┐
                          │  Budget  │
                          │ Analyst  │
                          └──────────┘
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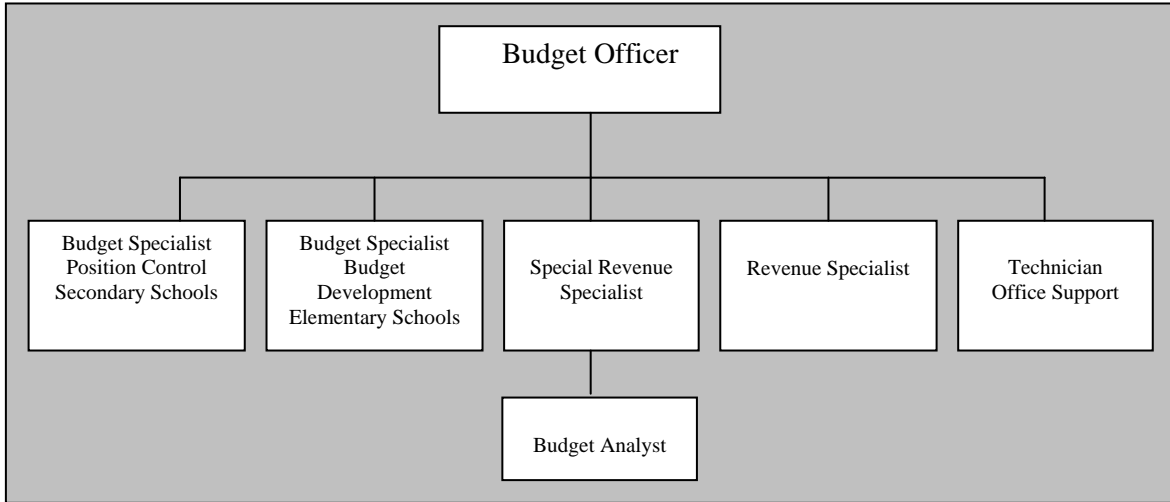
Source: KCMSD, Division of Business and Finance

Exhibit VI-3. Accounting and Investments Department

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                          ┌─────────────────┐
                          │     Director    │
                          └─────────────────┘
┌──────────────────┐
│ Business & Finance│
│    Technician    │
└──────────────────┘
   ┌──────────────┬──────────────┬──────────────┐
┌──────────┐ ┌──────────┐ ┌──────────┐ ┌──────────┐
│  Fixed   │ │ Accounts │ │ Treasury │ │Accounting│
│  Asset   │ │ Payable  │ │Operations│ │ Manager  │
│Specialist│ │ Manager  │ │ Manager  │ │          │
└──────────┘ └──────────┘ └──────────┘ └──────────┘
┌──────────┐              ┌──────────┐ ┌──────────┐
│Financial │              │Accounting│ │Assistant │
│ Analyst  │              │Technician│ │Accounting│
└──────────┘              └──────────┘ │ Manager  │
┌──────────┐                           └──────────┘
│ Training │
│Specialist│
└──────────┘
┌──────────┐ ┌──────────┐ ┌──────────┐
│ Accounts │ │  Staff   │ │ Accounts │
│ Payable  │ │Accountant│ │ Payable  │
│ Analyst  │ │   (2)    │ │Technicians│
└──────────┘ └──────────┘ │   (2)    │
                          └──────────┘
```

Source: KCMSD, Division of Business and Finance

Budget and Staffing Data

Exhibits VI-4 and VI-5 show the 2005-06 budget and authorized full-time equivalents (FTE) positions for the budget and financial planning, and the accounting and investment departments, respectively.

Exhibit VI- 4. Budget and Financial Planning Operating Budget

	FY 06 FTE	FY 06 Budget
Salary Items	7.0	$446,970
Fringe Benefits		116,037
Purchased Services		10,480
Supplies and Materials		7,514
Capital Outlay		0
Total	**7.0**	**$581,001**

Source: KCMSD, FY 2006 Comprehensive Budget

Exhibit VI- 5. Accounting and Investments Operating Budget

	FY 06 FTE	FY 06 Budget
Salary Items	14.0	$748,627
Fringe Benefits		202,382
Purchased Services		68,500
Supplies and Materials		51,500
Capital Outlay		14,000
Total	**14.0**	**$1,085,009**

Source: KCMSD, FY 2006 Comprehensive Budget

B. Findings

Commendations

- **Excellence in Budget Presentations** – The district has received certificates of achievement in financial reporting from the Government Finance Officers Association and the Association of School Business Officials for its Comprehensive Annual Financial Report and annual budget document. These awards show external parties, such as bond-rating agencies, investors, and the general public, that the district meets high standards established by professional organizations to ensure accurate and meaningful financial reporting.

- **Implementation of GASB 34** – The accounting and investment department showed initiative and leadership as a first-year implementer of the Governmental Accounting Standards Board (GASB) Rule 34, which required major revisions to the preparation of annual financial reports for public entities.

- **Financial Reports to the Board of Education –** The budget and fiscal planning department provides more detailed monthly and quarterly financial reports than do most other large urban school districts. The board's finance and audit committee reviews these reports at its regular meetings.

- **Investment Guidelines –** The accounting and investment department has developed detailed and useful guidelines for the investment of district funds. The guidelines minimize the risk of loss of principal and represent state-of-the art practice in public-sector investment procedures.

- **Property Management –** The fixed asset unit has itemized more than 105,000 items and is comprehensive and up to date in this area. The unit has developed processes to ensure the tagging of new property and has held annual equipment losses to a minimum. The unit also has overseen the physical inventory of equipment for every school in the district during the past three years.

- **Pursuit of Grant Funds –** The grants unit actively pursues grant funding to support the district's instructional goals. In the last three years, the district has been awarded $91 million in grants. The largest amount of grant funding has come from the e-rate program.

Leadership and Management

- **Interim Management –** The district's chief financial officer is filling the position of chief business officer on a temporary basis, as noted previously. Vacancies at the senior management level have left lower-level staff to make mission-critical decisions. The mid-level staff is dedicated and hardworking but lacks appropriate leadership and direction.

- **Strategic Planning –** Members of the financial staff are knowledgeable about the district's strategic plan and have developed some specific objectives that are linked to the districtwide plan. However a comprehensive business plan for all elements of the financial organization is missing.

- **Communications –** Although staff members of both the budget and fiscal planning, and accounting and investment departments seemed to be aware of their own departmental activities, the team noted a general lack of communications between the departments and with other departments in the district.

  o The departments' staff members lack cross-functional understanding of interdepartmental issues.

  o Other than the development of the annual budget document, the departments do not communicate their plans, programs, or procedures to the rest of the district on a regular or systematic basis.

- **Coordination of Efforts** – The team found little evidence that cross-functional teams are used to address interdepartmental issues. Meetings of information technology, accounts payable, and purchasing staff members were convened to resolve issues relating to electronic receiving documents and online requisitions.

- **Staff Training** – Training within the budget and fiscal planning, and accounting and investment departments is generally lacking, as is mandatory training on business processes throughout the district.

  o There is no formalized training program for new employees and no staff development opportunities for existing employees.

  o Although annual training sessions are provided on business and financial systems, the training is generally only for school principals and is not mandated.

- **Utilization of Technology** – Staff members in the budget and fiscal planning, and accounting and investment departments are generally proficient in the use of technology. In some specific areas, however—such as budget transfers—the departments continue to be dependent on paper.

Organizational

- **P-Card Administration**[42] – The district's procurement card (p-card) program was designed to be used by schools and offices for purchases of less that $1,000 and is administered by the accounts payable (AP) unit. This unit issues the p-cards, establishes limits and parameters for each card, and processes all payments.

  The placement of all p-card administrative functions in the AP unit creates a weakness in internal controls and limits the card's full implementation as a procurement tool. Furthermore, the policies and procedures governing use of the p-card are not synchronized with the district's minority/women-owned business programs or the purchasing department's master contracts.

Policies, Operating Procedures, and Systems

- **Erosion of Fund Balance** – The district's net fund balance has declined by almost one-half from $66.1 million in the year ending June 30, 2002, to $34.5 million in the year ending June 30, 2005. (Exhibit VI-6 displays the decline in the fund balance.)

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[42] This finding also appears in the purchasing chapter of this report.

Exhibit VI-6. Ending Balances FY 2002 – FY 2005
(in Millions)
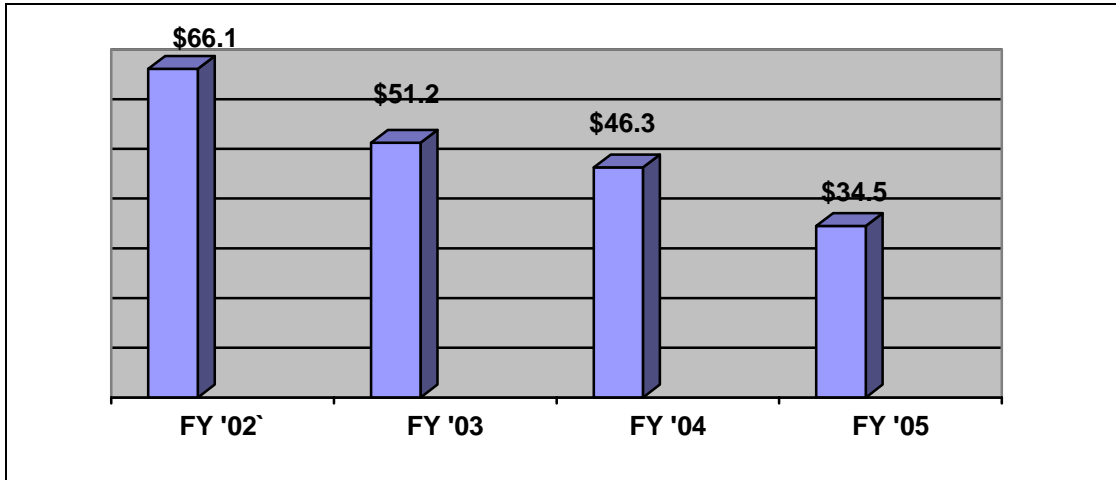
Source: KCMSD FY 2006 Comprehensive Budget

- **Multiyear Forecasts –** The district has, on occasion, used a multiyear financial forecast in its budget preparation, but does not prepare a multiyear fiscal plan. This planning activity is especially critical in light of the district's continued loss of enrollment (see Exhibit II-1 in chapter II), declining ending fund balance (see Exhibit V-6 above), and the multiyear nature of the district's goals and strategic plans.

- **Enrollment Projections –** The budget and fiscal planning department currently makes enrollment projections without adequate input from the research unit. The district wide enrollment decline by 1,000 students more than was anticipated for the current year

- **Staffing Projections and Allocations –** The district staffs schools and provides non-salary allocations based on projected enrollments by school. Generally, the district adjusts school staffing to reflect actual school enrollments as of the September membership date. Some schools, however, are allowed to be staffed in excess of approved formulas. The number and severity of budget cuts in the 2005-06 school year could have been reduced if staffing allocations had been adjusted for the actual enrollment at all schools.

- **Control of Overtime Expenditures –** The district has no automated mechanism for controlling overtime, which can be incurred and paid without regard to the budget line-item authority allocated to school sites.

- **Budget Building Process –** The district's budget is prepared on a continuation basis; that is, it is developed using the prior year's budget as the starting point for building the new budget. This approach does not analyze and reevaluate ongoing

activities in light of changing priorities or their alignment with the district's strategic plan.

- **Management Letters –** The internal auditor reports directly to the Board of Education and coordinates the district's response to the independent auditors' management letters containing recommendations for improvements. The team reviewed the management letters and the district responses for three years, as well as the management letter as of June 30, 2005, which had just been released. The review indicated that some critical recommendations have not been implemented fully. The lack of urgency in addressing concerns raised repeatedly by the external auditors, especially in the area of setting expectations for employee behavior, is troubling. For example—

  o Problems persist with the reconciliation of cash accounts, which was cited in the management letters for the fiscal years ending June 30, 2002, and 2003 (but not 2004 or 2005).

  o The absence of a code of ethics was cited in the management letters for June 30, 2003, 2004, and 2005. The internal auditor's review of the administration's corrective actions, dated August 25, 2005, however, indicated that little has been accomplished in this area.

  o The absence of a whistle-blower policy has been cited for the past three years, but the internal auditor's review in August 2005 found that no action has been taken.

  o The most recent management letter reviews the implementation of management's corrective action plan developed in response to the 2003 audit. The letter cites a number of areas in which management has failed to enforce existing procedures, provide oversight, or establish policies as recommended in the audit.

- **Approval of Grants –** The board approves the acceptance of grants, but does not approve the applications for grants prior to their submission. Some grants are submitted to the board for approval without review by the district financial staff for matching fund requirements or continuation of funding commitments.

- **School District Foundation –** The district does not have an active not-for-profit foundation to act as a conduit for private grant funds and to assist in fundraising activities.

- **Cash Accounts –** The district maintains a large number of cash accounts, each of which must be reconciled individually on a monthly basis. The reconciliation process is further complicated by the fact that some banks do not provide the details of reconciling items.

- **Fixed Assets Accounting** – The district uses a threshold of $5,000 for financial reporting purposes but has a policy that provides for tagging and accounting all equipment with a value in excess of $300. This threshold level for fixed asset accounting is considered very low by most large organizations.

- **Timely Payments for Goods and Services** – A high percentage of vendor invoices (35 percent) are not paid on time, due in part to problems with the online requisitions and electronic receivers systems. Delays also result when schools and certain departments fail to notify the accounts payable unit when they receive goods and services.

- **Operating Procedures and Responsibilities** – Procedural manuals that have been prepared in several areas are not clearly written. A general lack of job descriptions and inconsistencies in those that do exist has led to confusion about responsibilities.

- **Automatic Direct Pay Deposit** – The district has a voluntary automatic direct pay deposit program, which wires checks to employee bank accounts for 75 percent to 80 percent of participating individuals.

- **P-Card Operations** – The team noted a number of issues in the implementation of the district p-card. For example:

  o Automated tools are not used to analyze commodities purchased by p-cards.

  o The district does not fully utilize available automated controls to monitor and restrict p-card purchases (e.g. "PayPal" Internet transactions were allowable under the district's system until brought to the attention of the p-card manager by the team).

  o Monthly limits on the p-card are not adjusted to reflect school, department, and time-of-year special requirements.

  o The requirement of preparing a manual list of all p-card transactions by schools and offices appears to be excessive.

  o The p-card reconciliation with the bank requires the re-keying of all p–card transactions. This reconciliation should be accomplished through an electronic interface between bank and district.

  o The p-card business rules are not aligned to the district's allowable use policy. Cards have a maximum per item limit of $300, while the district purchasing policy indicates that items costing $1,000 or less are to be purchased using the p-card.

Use of Funds

- It appears that the Kansas City school system spends its resources about the same way that most other urban school districts do. (See Appendix E.) The district, however, devotes a somewhat lower portion of its overall expenditures to direct classroom instruction and to total instructional activities than do other big city school districts.

- The district, on the other hand, devotes a substantially greater portion of its overall spending to transportation services than does the average big city public school district.

- Other expenditures, including those for the Board of Education and the office of the superintendent, are generally consistent with those in other urban school districts.

C. Recommendations

VI.1 **Reassign Budget and Accounting Functions –** Reassign the "interim" chief business officer as the Chief Finance Officer and hold the person responsible for overseeing the day-to-day fiscal operations of the district, including budgeting and functions, and for addressing the issues and concerns identified in this report. The person should—

- Ensure that financial considerations are addressed at all levels of the organization.

- Improve customer service.

- Resolve conflicts and coordinate staff efforts.

- Provide critical information in an accessible form and on a timely basis to both the staff within the division and to the board, administration, schools, and the public.

- Champion the use of technology to improve productivity.

- Ensure accountability among staff members in the division.

VI. 2 **Embrace Strategic Financial and Investment Planning –** The budget and fiscal planning, and accounting and investment departments should develop comprehensive business plans that reflect the district's strategic plan, with measurable and achievable goals, timelines, performance measures, and a monitoring and reporting mechanism to report progress towards meeting the goals.

VI.3 **Establish Financial Systems Training** – A formal mandatory entry-level training program needs to be offered for new employees and a continued professional development program needs to be mandated for all existing district staff members who use the business and financial systems.

VI.4 **Move P-Card Administration to the Purchasing Department** – The administration of the p-card program should be moved from the accounts payable unit to the purchasing department to improve internal controls and to ensure the policies and procedures governing the card's use are in concert with the district's overall procurement strategies, including the minority/women-owned business program and annual commodity bids. The management of the p-card program should take advantage of electronic tools to analyze purchases, reconcile p-card accounts with the bank, and control the nature of p-card expenditures. Limits on p-cards should be adjusted to coordinate with other purchasing policies and provide for special requirements of schools and offices.

VI.5 **Preserve the Fund Balance** – The district must immediately reverse its pattern of spending more than it receives in income and thus spending down its operating fund balance. A multiyear forecast (see recommendation VI.7 below) would provide a context for determining the level of spending reductions that must be made to accomplish this goal. The board should hold workshops to inform the public of the district's financial constraints and to solicit public participation in the solutions. The board should adopt a policy statement establishing a percentage amount, rather than fixed dollar amount, for its required minimum reserve fund balance.

VI.6 **Implement Multiyear Forecasting** – The district should implement a multiyear forecasting mechanism to help guide financial decisions, including program additions or reductions, and collective bargaining negotiations. This activity should be tied into an enrollment projection effort since enrollment is the primary driver of income and expenditures (See recommendation VI.7 below). The multiyear forecast should incorporate a full set of explicit assumptions for both income and expenditures that are updated with every budget and interim report to show the impact of current activity and recent decisions on the district's financial future. The forecast also could be used to determine whether resources are available to support contemplated program changes or to anticipate the need for reductions.

VI.7 **Develop an Enrollment Projection Process** – The district should develop a structured process for the development of student enrollment projections. The enrollment projection process should begin with the district's research department, which should utilize formal demographic tools and coordinate input from the instruction, budget, and facilities departments.

VI.8 **Establish a Classroom Staffing Allocation Process** – The district should immediately establish a formal staffing process that incorporates enrollment

projections (see recommendation VI.7 above) and approved allocation formulas to ensure that schools have adequate staffing and that the district is protected from the financial consequences of overstaffing. Initial staffing allocations to schools should be based on either enrollment projections of less than 100 percent or on slightly higher pupil/teacher ratios. Adjustments to staffing to reflect actual student enrollment should be made early in the school year (e.g., the September membership date) to minimize disruption of the instructional program, while avoiding the over-allocation of staffing resources. Authority to assign teachers in excess of budgeted positions should be restricted to the deputy superintendent in the current administrative structure or to the chief academic officer in the proposed structure.

VI.9   **Establish a Non-Salary Budget Allocation Process** – Schools should receive a portion of their enrollment-driven non-salary budgets (e.g., materials, equipment, and supplies) at the opening of the school year, with adjustments made once actual enrollments have been determined on the September membership date. For example, the district could allocate 80 percent of a school's estimated non-salary budget allocations based on projected enrollment, with subsequent adjustments for actual enrollment as of the September membership date.

VI. 10 **Establish Accountability for Overtime and Substitute Budget Allocations** – Schools receive budgets for overtime and substitutes based on the staffing levels of the sites. Principals should be held accountable for overspending this budget by reducing any over-expenditure from their next year's discretionary budget.

VI.11   **Create a Budget-Building Process** – The district should periodically use a modified zero-based budget-building process or similar process, which requires a review of all activities and resource allocations to ensure that they are aligned with the district's goals and priorities.

VI.12   **Respond to Management Letter Recommendations** – The district's finance officer, rather than the internal auditor, should be the administrative designee to respond to management letters and ensure that recommendations are implemented in a timely manner

VI.13   **Approve Grants and Fund-Raising Activities in Advance** – The grants office should process all grant applications to ensure that they are in line with the district's instructional goals and the budget office should review the applications for their fiscal impact. The district should require that all grant applications be presented to the board for approval prior to their submission to the funding agency. The district also should consider setting up a foundation to assist in fund-raising efforts.

VI.14   **Reduce the Amount of Minutiae** – The district should take advantage of opportunities to increase productivity by reducing or eliminating activities that are requiring time and effort beyond their value to the organization. Increasing the

threshold for the value of controlled property from the current $300, reducing the number of bank cash accounts, and requiring all employees to participate in the direct pay deposit program are some of those opportunities.

VI.15 **Establish Standard Operating Procedures –** The budget and fiscal planning and accounting and investment departments should establish and maintain clear and easily understood procedural manuals and workflows to document approved processes and define responsibilities.
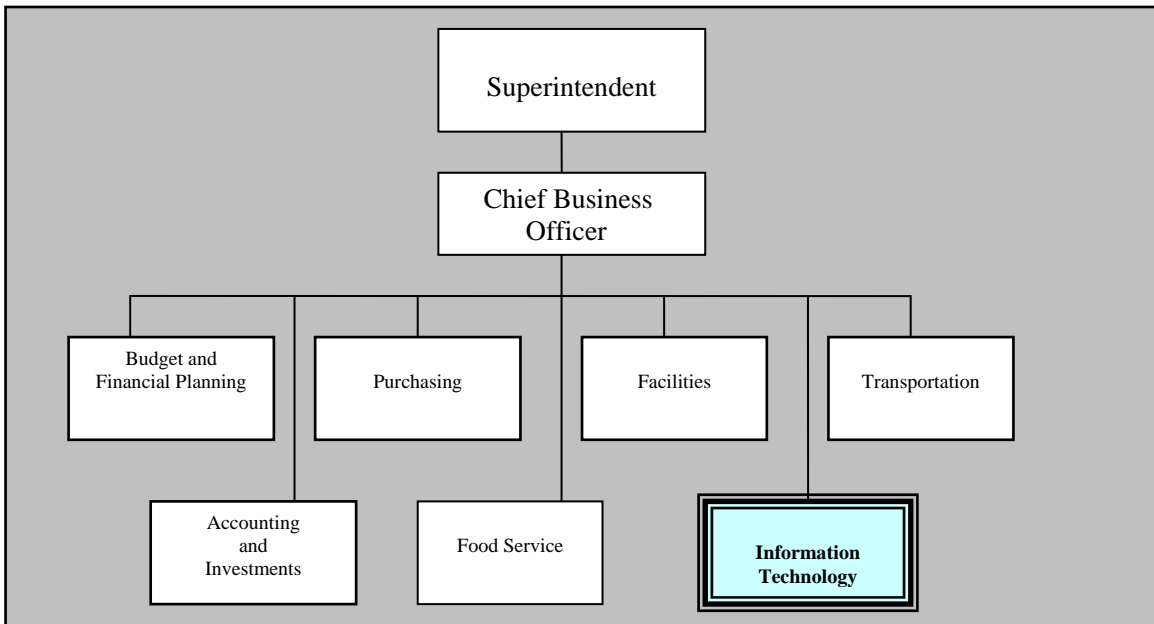
VII. INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

A. Introduction and Background

Organization and Administration

The information technology services (ITS) department reports directly to the chief business officer. Exhibit VII-1 depicts the reporting relationship.

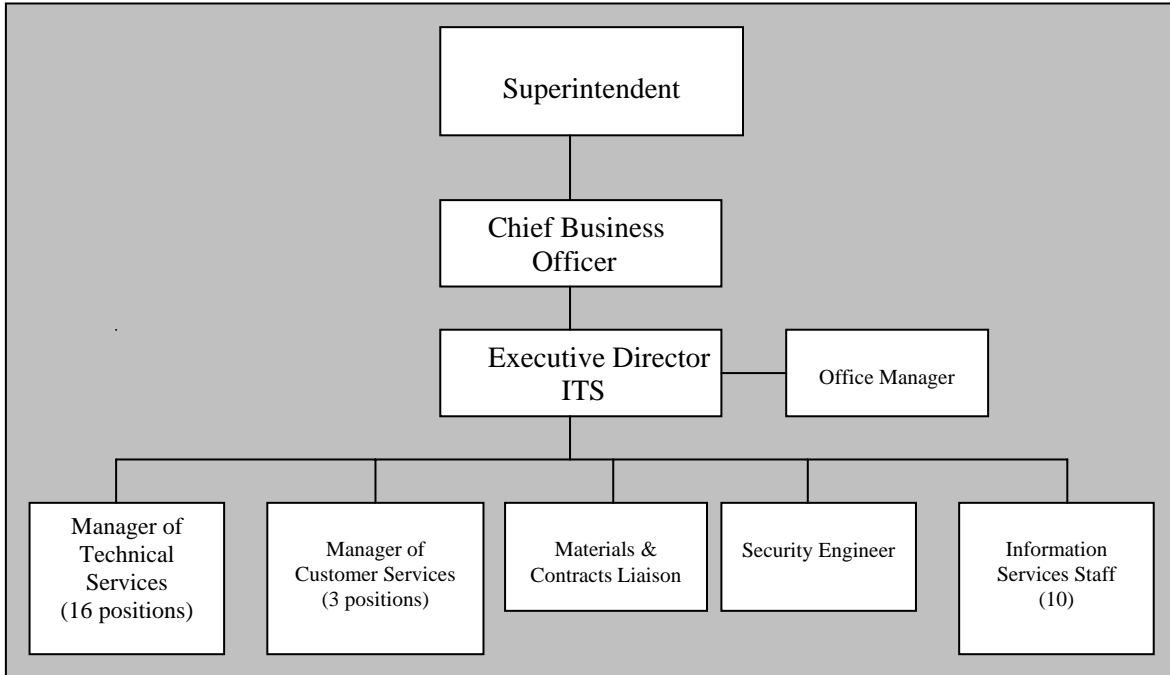**Exhibit VII-1. Business and Finance Division Organization**

Source: KCMSD, Division of Business and Finance

Exhibit VII-2 displays the organizational structure of the district's ITS department. Currently the department is operating with an interim executive director.

Exhibit VII-2. Information Technology Services Organization Chart

Budget and Staffing Data

Exhibit VII-3 shows the 2005-06 budget and authorized full-time equivalent (FTE) positions for the information technology services department. All of the 40 authorized positions were filled at the time of this review, including five of these positions which were assigned to the instruction division.

Exhibit VII-3. Information Technology Services Operating Budget

	FY 06 FTE[43]	FY 06 Budget
Salary Items	40.0	$2,259,525
Fringe Benefits		604,670
Purchased Services		1,045,135
Supplies and Materials		43,000
Capital Outlay		20,000
Total	**40.0**	**$3,972,330**

Source: KCMSD, FY 2006 Comprehensive Budget.

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[43] Includes five positions reporting to the manager of the instructional technology unit.

B. Findings

Commendations

- **Keeping the District's ERP Plain** – The district adopted the JD Edwards system as its primary business operations software in 1999. The system functions as the district's Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) system, although it lacks some of the interconnectivity and features of newer systems. School districts make changes to their basic ERP systems frequently to accommodate local business practices. Such changes usually result in situations in which the vendors' normal updates and program patches to the systems cannot be applied without substantial difficulty, if at all. The KCMSD resisted the temptation to modify its basic system and has kept it conventional as provided by the vendor.

- **E-Rate Funding** – The district acquired $48.5 million in e-rate funding over the past six years. This averages to more than $8 million a year for approximately 27,600[44] students or about $293 per student a year, which is significantly higher than the Council of Great City Schools' average of $85 per student a year. (See Exhibit VII-4 below.)

Exhibit VII-4. E-Rate Awards

Year	Amount
2001	$2,928,708
2002	$25,539,688
2003	$11,542,620
2004	$6,422,106
2005	$2,086,164
Total	**$48,519,286**

Source: KCMSD Budget Summary Spreadsheet

Leadership and Management

- **Interim Management** – The position of executive director of information technology services has been filled for almost five years on an interim basis by the previous director of information services (applications and systems). The provisional staffing of this high-level management position has resulted in tentative decision-making and indecisive leadership.

- **Technology Plan Alignment with the District Strategic Plan** – The district has developed a comprehensive technology plan for 2003-2006 that stems from the original five-year plan created in 1999. A broad-based technology committee, including representatives from schools and community organizations, produced

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[44] Based on average September school membership, 2001 to 2005. (Source June 30, 2005, Comprehensive Annual Financial Report draft.)

this most recent plan. While the department should be commended for its efforts, the plan has the following weaknesses—

o The technology plan is not aligned with the goals of the district's strategic plan.

o The technology plan supports its objectives with action steps and designates responsible parties, costs and funding sources, and target dates. However, the plan does not provide for a reporting mechanism so that management can adjust, adapt, and modify its approaches to ensure that tasks are completed quickly and efficiently.

- **Failure to Set the Plan in Motion** – The ITS department has not set specific targets, benchmarks, timelines, accountabilities, and reporting mechanisms for each of the ITS units and staff to take the plan to the next operational level.

- **Limited Technological Expertise** – The ITS staff generally lacks in-depth technical knowledge in a number of technology areas and the department does not have such expertise available from its outside contractors. The fact that there are no database administrators (DBAs) illustrates the deficiencies in this area.

- **Ineffective Executive Sponsorship/Ownership for Technology Initiatives** – The ITS department has not created an environment that encourages high-level executive support and user ownership and sponsorship of major systems, applications, and initiatives.

- **Lack of an Operational Framework** – The ITS department lacks an operational framework to get work done. The team saw no evidence of departmental standard operating procedures, written processes, or systems for applications development. The department also does not use formal project team management or change management methodologies and has not invested in management tools to monitor projects and assist with scheduling competing priorities.

- **Internal Audit** – The ITS department lacks internal audit processes and has weak internal controls over specific activities and transactions that have security implications. Several security weaknesses are described later in this chapter under "Operations – Security Issues."

Organizational

- **Inappropriate Positioning of the ITS Executive Director** – The information technology services department reports to the chief business officer and the ITS executive director is not a member of the superintendent's cabinet. This configuration fails to provide the necessary senior management attention and support that is critical to integrating technology into the organization.

Technology can result in greater productivity, but only if commitment to provide the necessary resources and training is demonstrated at the highest levels.

- **Organizational Impediments to Providing Optimal Service** – The team noted a number of shortcomings in the current ITS organization structure, including—

  o The span of control of the executive director is too broad. Currently two managers, a materials and contracts liaison, a security engineer, an office manager, and 10 information services (applications) staff members report to the executive director. Furthermore, the department is not organized to provide maximum efficiency. For example, there is no manager for the information services (application development) unit of 10 people and there is no database administrator.

  o There are redundancies in the way services are provided. For example, staff members in two parts of the organization provide telephone services and the applications staff also provides on-call user services normally done by a "help desk."

  o Separation of duties is insufficient for internal control purposes. For example, ITS applications staff should not have access to live databases. (See discussion of security issues in the "Policies, Operating Procedures, and Systems" section of this chapter.)

  o Current staffing levels are generally inadequate to effectively support an organization with the size and complexity of the school district.

Policies, Operating Procedures, and Systems

- **Poor Standardization of Personal Computers (PCs)** – The district lacks standardization in many areas of its technology, a practice that results in higher costs and less efficient operations and training. For example—

  o The district acquires different brands of PCs each year. The practice impairs the technicians' ability to maintain the hardware efficiently because a variety of spare parts must be kept and extra training is required to service the various vendors' equipment. Technicians indicated to the team that their efficiency could improve from 50-to-70 percent if they were able to work on standardized PCs.

  o Standardized PC software has not been adopted for the thousands of machines used throughout the district. This situation makes it more difficult for the "help desk" to diagnose problems and provide solutions.

  o The use of both Novell and Microsoft operating systems and directories requires more maintenance and extra licensing, dilutes limited staff expertise,

and creates apparent competition between proponents of both systems. This practice also results in a duplication of efforts in areas of e-mail access, identity management, and tools for managing the network.

o The listing of subject matter software that the instructional technology unit provides to the schools is not an "approved" list that could be used to identify "best of breed" educational software and establish uniform use throughout the district.

o The district uses a multitude of operating systems (Windows 95, 98, NT 2000, XP, OS9, OSX) for business enterprise applications that are not compatible and that increase the total cost of ownership.

o The district incurs increased maintenance costs by operating both Apple and PC systems.

• **Contracting Issues** – The district does not appear to leverage contracting opportunities that could reduce costs and improve service in areas, including—

o Direct vendor/manufacturer contracts.

o Alignment of warranties on new equipment to the district's equipment refresh program.

o Use of "piggyback" contracts available from other governmental entities.

o Deployment of equipment, imaging of computers, asset tagging, and trash removal in desktop computer contracts.

o Use of multiyear contracts to help promote consistency and standardization.

• **Telephone Systems Support** – The ITS department lacks the resources to support the district's telephone systems adequately. The department lacks "call accounting" software[45] and other metrics to measure performance and cost-effectiveness.

• **Security Issues** – The team was advised that there are more than 140 risks that have been identified within the ITS department that have not been addressed or assessed at the executive level for the potential impact that they might have on the district. For example—

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[45] Call Accounting software records and reports on telephone traffic and charges. These systems are used to control expenses and allocate costs.

- o There are no "identity management" systems.[46]

- o Applications programmers have the ability to alter production data files.

- o Applications developers and programmers do not have a development environment that is securely separated from operational systems and production databases.

- o Physical access to computer rooms and other sensitive areas is granted freely without supervision (e.g., programmers should not have access without escort or a process to document their entry and what work was performed).

- o There is no network or host-based intrusion detection system to provide alerts.

- o Application programmers currently are in charge of application security. This is a duty that should be separated from the programming staff and assigned to the security administrator.

- **Systems Reliability Issues** – The management of the ITS department has not adequately addressed issues relating to system reliability, for example—

  - o Computer operations staff members are not adequately provided with or trained to use tools to monitor the health of production systems (MOM, OpenManager, What's Up Gold, etc.).

  - o The ITS department does not have a current business recovery plan with contingency contracts for backup processing sites.

  - o The district lacks adequate system monitoring tools to detect and correct network and server issues before they become problematic.

  - o The future Wide Area Network (WAN) depicted in Exhibit VII-4 does not have redundancies to protect reliability among the data hub sites because the design allows for "single point of failures" at school locations. If the fiber were cut between the BOE HUB site and one of the 24 school locations, for example, all data and video traffic would be interrupted so that a site would be unable to use computer network resources.

  - o The backup power supply generators are not tested on a regular basis.

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[46] Identity Management encompasses technologies including password management (synchronization and self reset), user provisioning (the ability of Web-based users to add and delete services and features from their desktops), and access management.

Exhibit VII-4. Single Point of Network Failure (SPF) at School Sites
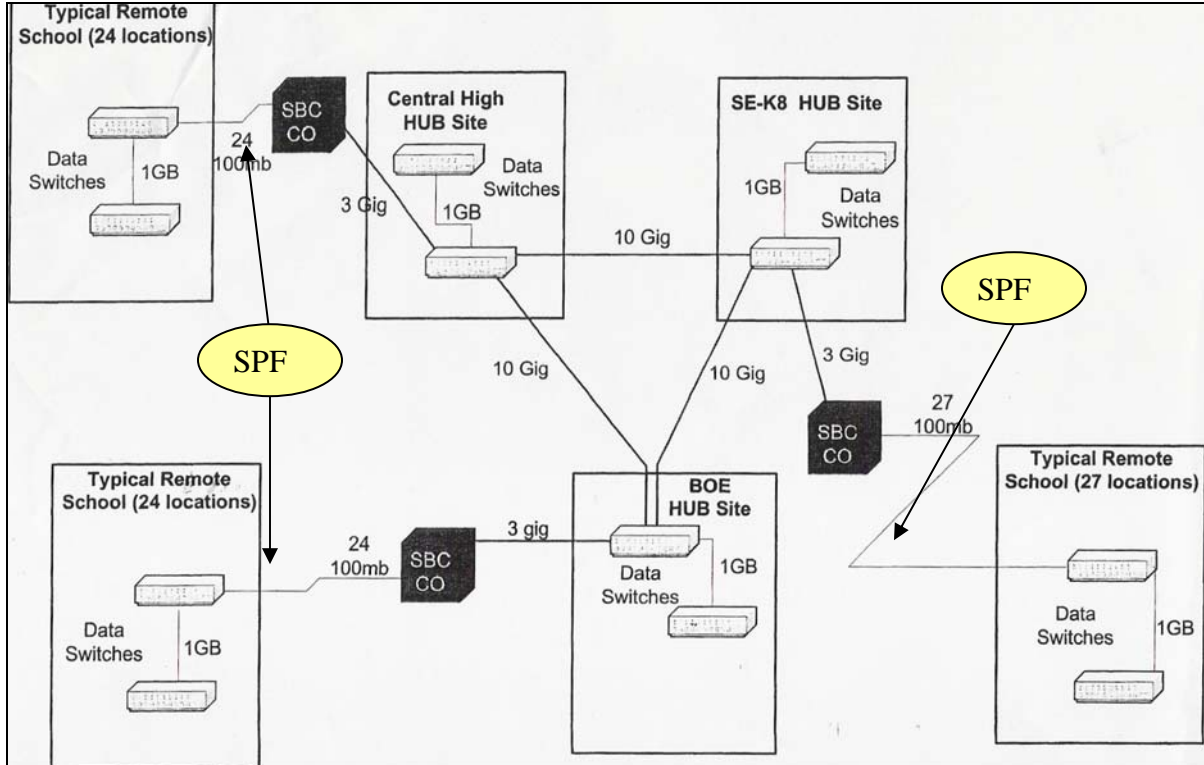
- **Help Desk Issues** – The lack of effective management tools hinder the operational effectiveness of the "help desk." For example—

  o No call management system is in place to measure call volume, wait times, dropped calls, and hang-ups.

  o The Help Desk Track-It software is outdated and inadequate to provide needed management information and operational efficiencies.

  o Work-order tickets emanating from the "help desk" are not accurately tracked to job completion.

  o Technicians dispatched to schools tend to address whatever issues school personnel present to them without documenting or preparing job tickets for the work.

  o The "help desk" does not have access to remote control software, which would enable its staff to fix problems and to install updates and patches from the ITS central office.

D. Recommendations

VII. 1 Establish Leadership in Information Technology Services – The district needs to appoint an experienced person to oversee the day-to-day operations of the IT department, address the issues and concerns raised in this report, and transition the department into a more effective, efficient, and strategically positioned operations. The person appointed should be someone who can lead the information technology services department to—

- Provide strategic leadership and direction in a complex, technology- and information-dependent environment.

- Ensure effective and efficient ITS operation.

- Improve customer service.

- Resolve internal conflicts and coordinate staff efforts.

- Provide critical and timely information in an accessible form to the board, administration, schools, and the public.

- Champion the use of technology to improve productivity and instruction.

VII. 2 Align the Technology Plan to the Strategic Plan – The ITS department should align its technology plan to the district's strategic plan, with measurable and achievable goals, timelines, performance measures, and a monitoring and regular reporting component. The technology plan needs to be put into operation within each ITS unit, with specific targets, benchmarks, timelines, accountabilities, and reporting mechanisms. The ITS department also should create an environment in which department users own and sponsor major systems, applications, and initiatives.

VII. 3 Create an Operational Framework – The ITS department should create an operational framework with standard procedures, processes, and methodologies for approaching and executing its responsibilities. In adopting this operational framework, the department should take advantage of the technology tools and systems that are readily available in the marketplace, including—

- A formal project management system for applications development, resource deployment, activity scheduling, and project reporting.

- An IT Infrastructure Library (ITIL)[47] to provide better information technology services management.

- An identity management system,[48] a call management system, and a new work order tracking system for the "help desk."

- A call-accounting software application to manage telecommunication expenses.

- Project-teaming techniques to provide intra- and inter-organizational coordination.

- A formalized change-management process.

- A standardized process for determining the appropriate situations for contracting outside expertise or for hiring additional technical staff.

- A process for determining the district's equipment and software refresh or replacement program needs.

- Remote control software for the installation of updates and program patches from the central ITS office.

VII. 4 Realign Placement of Information Technology Services within the District – The ITS organization should be repositioned strategically within the administrative structure and its leadership given appropriate titles.

- The information technology services department should report directly to the superintendent of schools. (See proposed districtwide organization in Recommendation III-13, Chapter III.)

- The name for the position of executive director of the ITS department should be changed to chief information officer (CIO) to reflect the important role of the department in supporting the district's goals and major initiatives.

- The CIO should be in the superintendent's cabinet to ensure the necessary senior management attention and support that is critical to integrate technology into the instructional and business activities of the entire district.

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[47] ITIL - IT Infrastructure Library provides a cohesive set of best practices, drawn from the public and private sectors internationally. It is supported by a comprehensive qualifications scheme, accredited training organizations, and implementation and assessment tools.
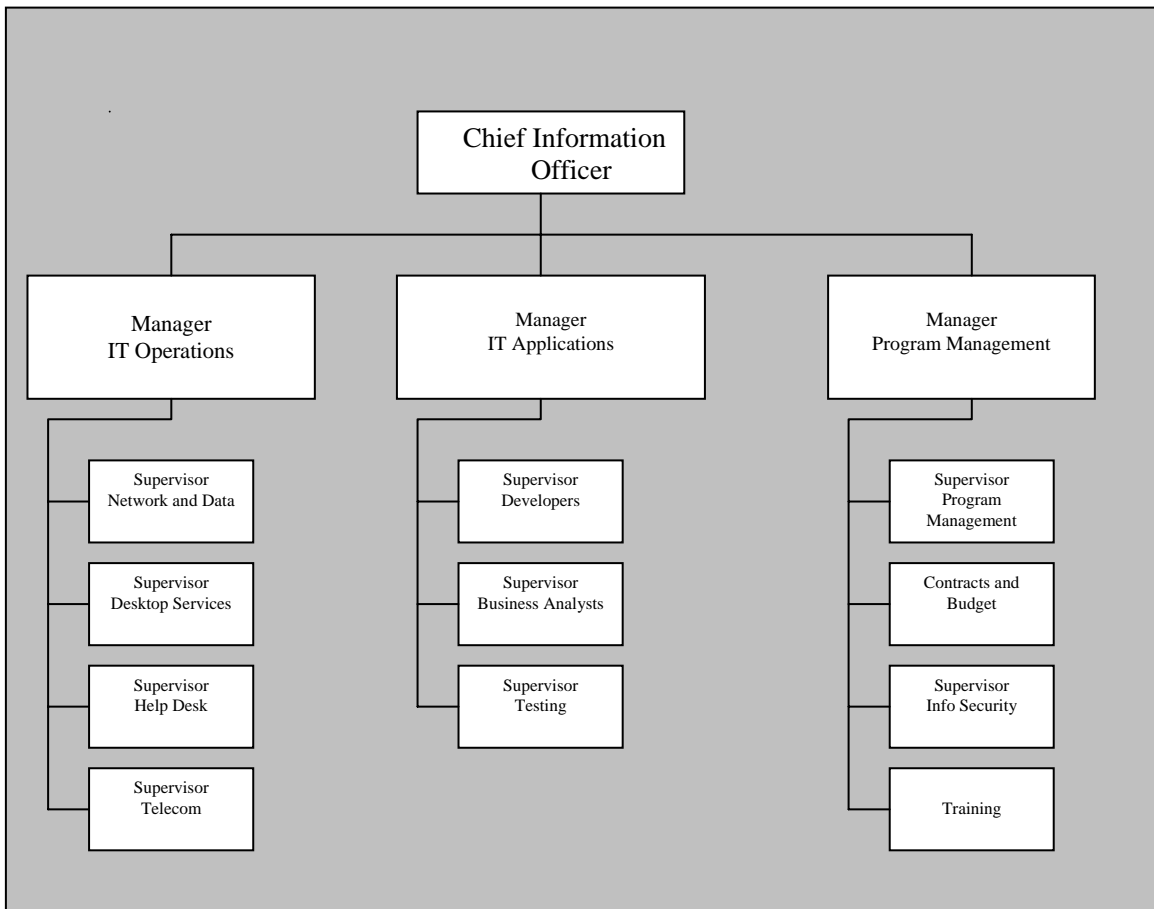
[48] Identity Management encompasses technologies including password management (synchronization and self reset), user provisioning (the ability of Web-based users to add and delete services and features from their desktops), and access management.

VII. 5 Restructure the Information Technology Services Department – The department should be reorganized along functional lines similar to the configuration shown in Exhibit VII-5.

- **Manager of IT Operations** – The operations unit should include network management, desktop support, telecommunications, the "help desk" function, and database administration. It is also recommended that the resources allocated to the telecommunications function be reevaluated and considered for augmentation.

- **Manager of IT Applications** – The applications unit should include Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) programmers, the Web developer, business systems analysts, and systems developers.

- **Manager of Program Management** – This program management unit should include materials and equipment contracting, security, planning, training, and internal controls.

Exhibit VII-5. Proposed ITS Organization Chart

VII. 6 Establish and Enforce Standards for Technology Acquisitions – In collaboration with the Board of Education and with the support of the superintendent and cabinet, the ITS department needs to establish and enforce districtwide hardware and software standards. These standards should cover all desktop computers and related equipment, including printers, scanners, copiers and other peripherals; business and instructional software; and operating systems. These standards should be applied in the procurement process to ensure that the advantages of uniformity are maximized.

VII. 7 Revise Technology Purchasing Practices – The district needs to revise its contracting practices to leverage opportunities to reduce costs and improve the quality of services to its customers. The purchasing department needs to address its lack of direct technology vendor/manufacturer contracts; align equipment warranties on new equipment to the district's equipment refresh program; use "piggyback" contracts available from other governmental entities; provide for the deployment of equipment, imaging of computers, asset tagging, and trash removal in its desktop computer contracts; and use multiyear contracts to help promote consistency and standardization.

VII. 8 Improve Information and Technology Security and Systems Reliability – The ITS department needs to address the internal list of security weaknesses, including those enumerated in the findings of this report. The findings of this report also identify a number of specific systems reliability issues that require management's attention and the development of an action plan to address their resolution.

VIII. FACILITIES

A. Introduction and Background

Organization and Administration

The facilities department reports directly to the chief business officer. Exhibit VIII-1 depicts the reporting relationship and the organizational structure of the business and finance operations division.

Exhibit VIII-1. Business and Finance Division Organization
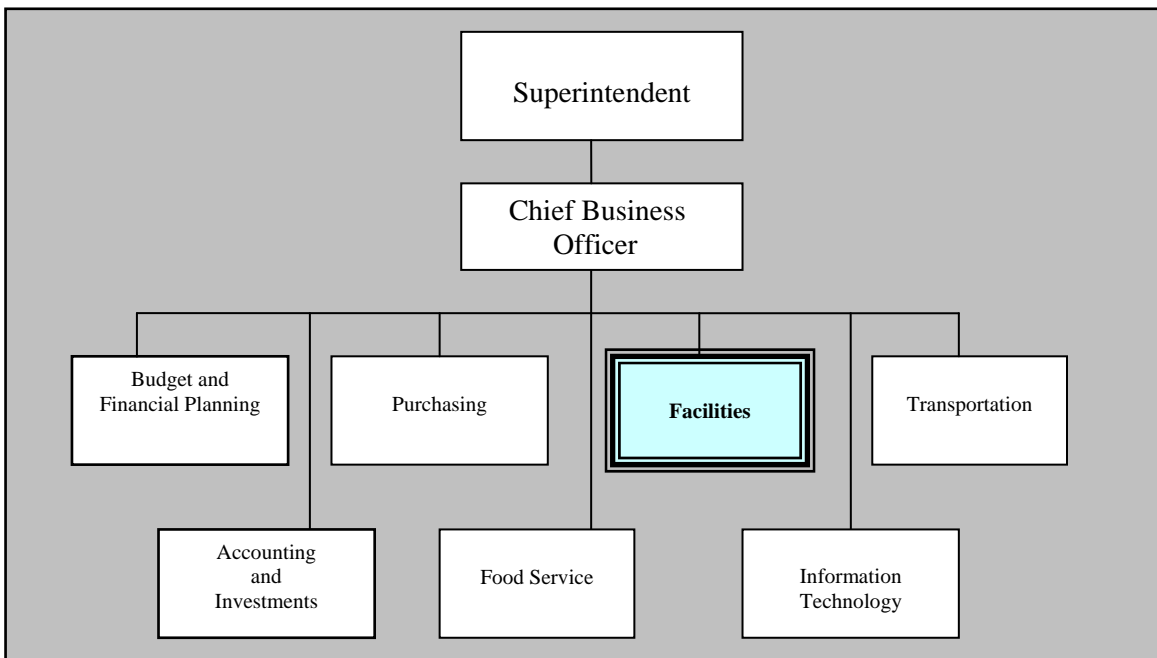
Source: KCMSD, Division of Business and Finance

The director of facilities manages a hybrid organization comprised of district employees and contracted services. Exhibit VIII-2 displays the organization of the department.

Exhibit VIII-2. Facilities Department
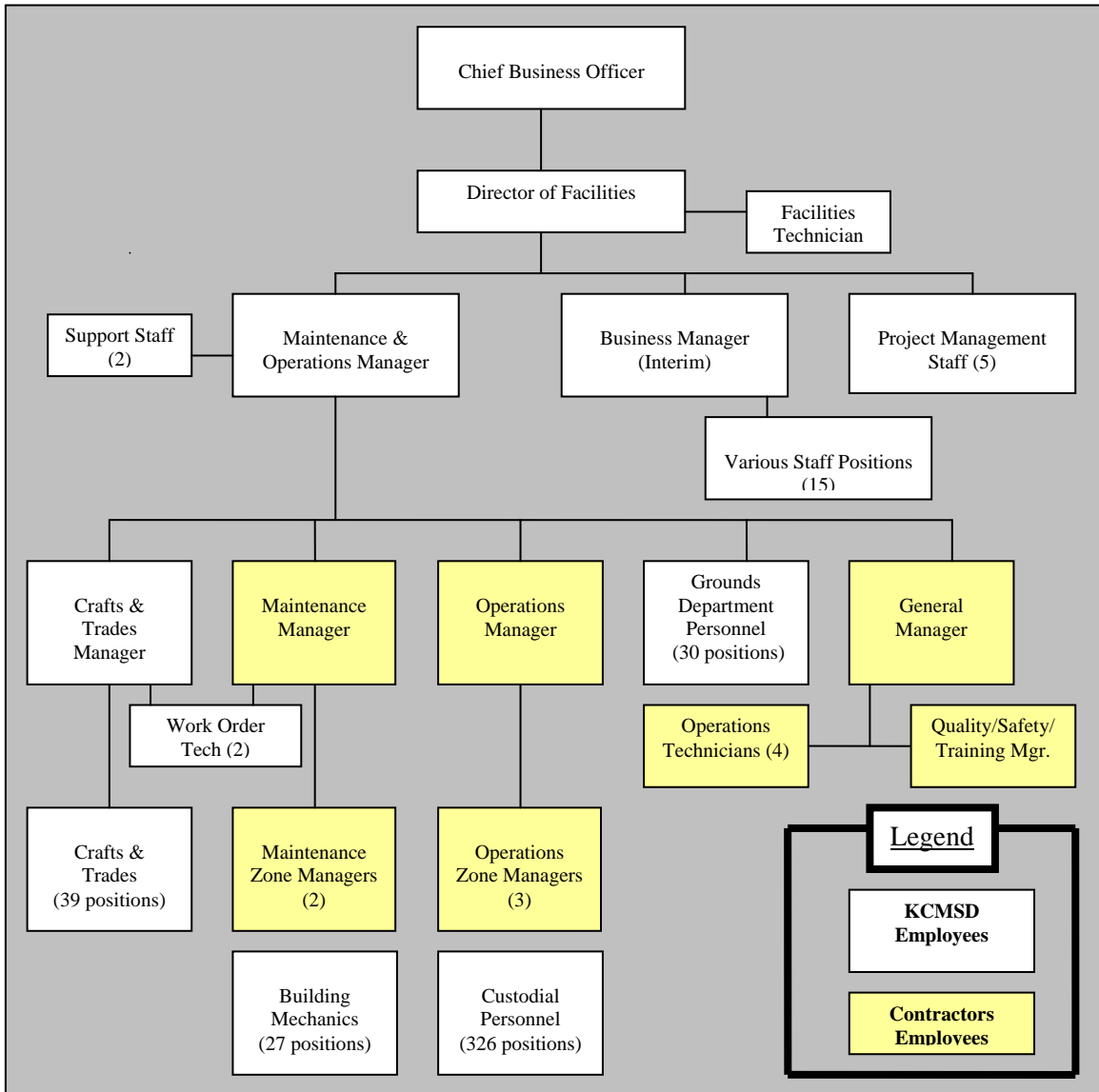
Source: KCMSD, Facilities Department

Budget and Staffing Data

Exhibit VIII-3 shows the 2005-06 budget and authorized full-time equivalent (FTE) positions for the facilities department. The FTEs include 407 KCMSD positions. The budgeted amounts also provide for 13 contractors' employees, including the managers of operations and maintenance, and 44 temporary employees.

Exhibit VIII-3. Facilities Department Operating Budget

	FY 06 FTE	FY 06 Budget
Salary Items	407	$11,474,656
Fringe Benefits		3,928,573
Purchased Services		2,195,825
Supplies and Materials		12,500
Capital Outlay		47,370
Other Purchased Services		1,048,037
Other Supplies and Materials		1,014,048
Other Expenditures		16,000
Total	**407**	**$19,737,009**

Source: KCMSD, FY 2006 Comprehensive Budget

B. Findings

Commendations

- **Facilities Clean and in Good Repair** – The small sample of schools that the team visited appeared to be reasonably clean and well-maintained.

- **Motivated School Staff** – School-level operations staff members appear to be motivated, feel personally responsible, and take pride in their sites.

- **Good Training Programs for Operations Personnel** – The contract management of facilities provides regular and useful training for the operations (custodial) staff. Comparable training for the maintenance staff does not appear to be available.

Leadership and Management

- **Strategic Planning** – The leadership has not developed a strategic plan for the facilities department, with goals, timelines, benchmarks, and measurements. No long-term capital or facilities plan exists to prepare for and guide capital expenditures. Technical and educational specifications are partial, outdated, or nonexistent. No system is in place to identify the backlog of needed maintenance and repairs. Published schedules for repairs are not met. It is universally acknowledged in the district that "the squeaky wheel gets the grease."

- **Facilities Inventory and Assessment** – The district lacks a comprehensive inventory of its facilities, and has not assessed the condition or utilization of its buildings formally. As a consequence, no comprehensive plan has been developed for preventive maintenance or building improvements, expansions, consolidations, or closures. The lack of an assessment of building conditions, coupled with the absence of a preventive maintenance plan, is a recipe for school deterioration and major maintenance needs that will become evident in the future.

The reason this deterioration has not yet been obvious is that the custodial staff is able to cover the shortfalls.

- **Underutilization of Classroom Space** – Based on its enrollment as of September 28, 2005, the district is only using 64 percent of its classroom capacity. (See Appendix F.) Elementary schools are at 73 percent capacity, middle schools at 54 percent, and senior high schools at 55 percent. (See Exhibit VIII-4 below.)

Exhibit VIII–4. School Capacity Utilization, by Level
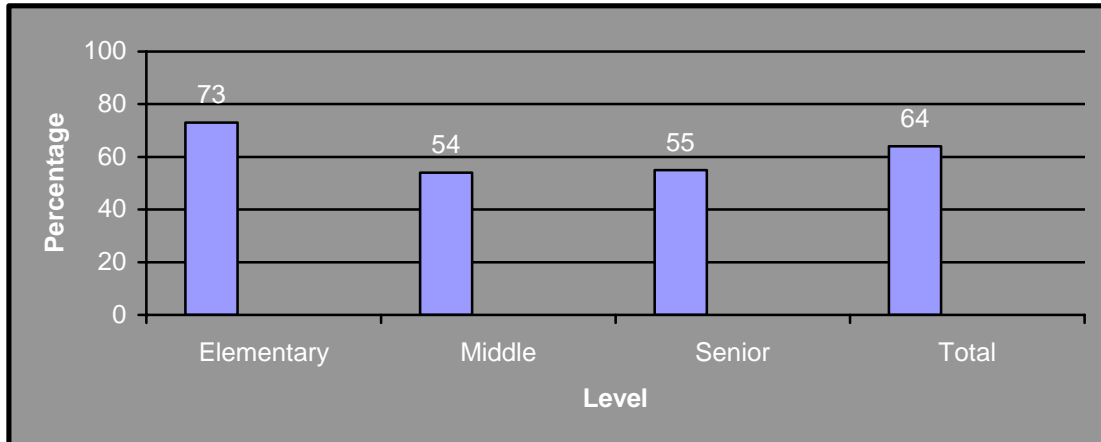
Source: KCMSD Research Office

o Thirty-one of the district's 47 elementary schools enrolled fewer than 300 students as of September 28, 2005. (See Exhibit VIII-5 below.) Five of the 31 schools were at or over capacity. The remaining 26 schools had enrollments that occupied 39 to 89 percent of available space.

Exhibit VIII – 5. Enrollments in Elementary Schools, by Range
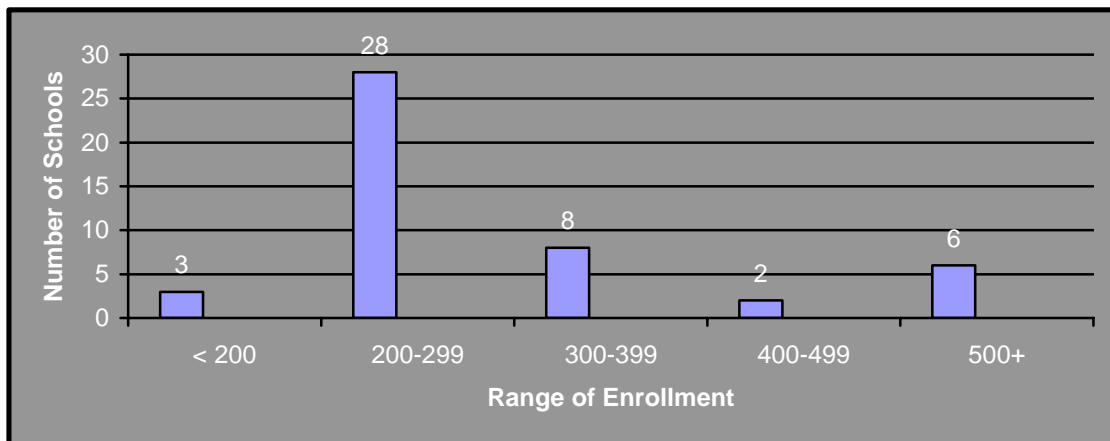
Source: KCMSD Research Office

o Four of the district's nine middle schools enrolled fewer than 500 students as of September 28, 2005. (See Exhibit VIII-6 below.) Only one of the four schools was at capacity. The remaining three schools had enrollments that occupied 41 percent to 49 percent of available space.

Exhibit VIII – 6. Enrollments in Middle Schools by Range
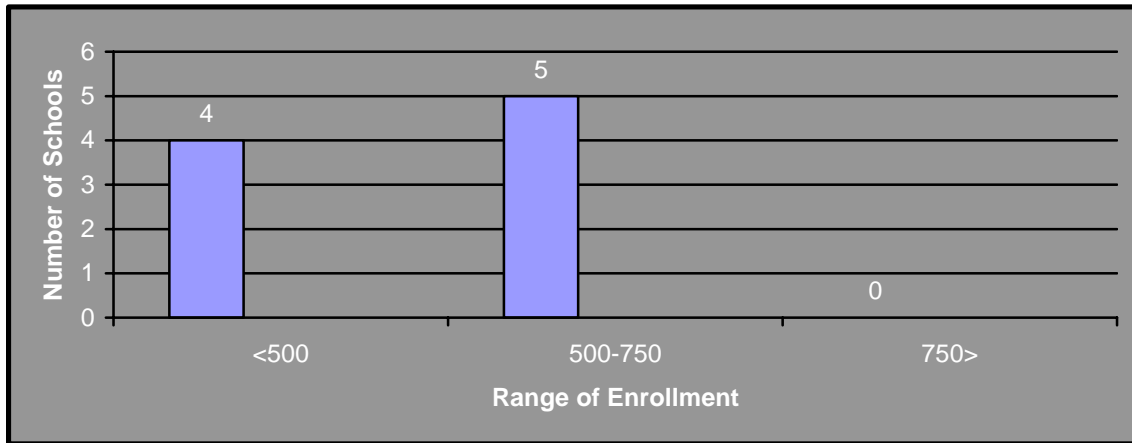
Source: KCMSD Research Office

o Four of the district's seven senior high schools enrolled fewer than 800 students as of September 28, 2005. (See Exhibit VIII-7 below.) Enrollments occupied 39 percent to 50 percent of available space in the four schools.

Exhibit VIII-7. Enrollments in High Schools, by Range
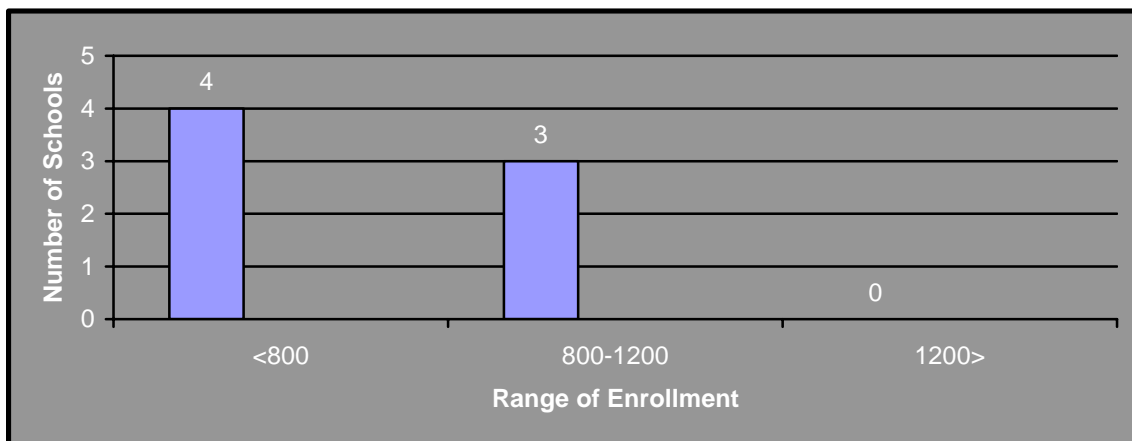
Source: KCMSD Research Office

The underutilization of schools and classrooms acts as a serious drain on resources, due to the fixed costs of keeping a school open (e.g., office staff, utilities). Furthermore, operation of very small schools often prevents the district

from offering a full complement of courses at the secondary level. While neighborhood schools are a desirable feature of any school district, the benefits must be weighed against the costs and program consequences of operating half-empty and very small schools.

- **Management Turnover and Interim Positions** – The facilities department has experienced frequent turnover in the position of director of facilities (four directors in the past seven years). Other management positions in the department are filled on an interim basis for periods of months and years in violation of district policies. The frequent turnovers and reliance on interim appointments suggest that the department has done little succession planning for key positions. The team observed an attitude of hopelessness among senior management, with some individuals taking pride in merely surviving in the organization.

  The constant turnover and reliance on interim appointments are affecting the efficiency and effectiveness of the department. Non-management employees appear to be motivated and willing to perform, but lack leadership and guidance. However, even at the custodial level, 21 of the 29 four-hour custodial positions have gone unfilled for months.

- **Contracted Management of Maintenance and Operations (M&O)** – The district contracts for a portion of the management of its facilities operations. The contract management company provides 13 positions, including the managers of operations and of maintenance (see organization chart in Exhibit VIII - 2). The team encountered a nearly universal opinion that the contract management company is not performing in the district's best interests. For example—

  o The district began contracting out the management of its facilities services in 1992. In the latest reauthorization, the Board of Education granted authority to execute a five-year contract to provide management and clerical services, custodial supplies, and equipment at a maximum cost of $158,443 a month for the period beginning July 1, 2002, and ending June 30, 2007. No new contract has actually been executed since the board's authorization three years ago. The team could not identify anyone on staff who could identify the actual terms of the current *de facto* M&O management contract or who on staff controls this contract.

  o The original 1992 contract was for a joint venture that included the M&O management company and a minority business enterprise (MBE) contractor, who was to provide 25 percent of the required custodial supplies. Prior to the completion of the original contract, the MBE contractor was dropped and has not been part of the current *de facto* contract, even though having an MBE contractor was part of the board's 2002 reauthorization.

  o It appears that the KCMSD may be paying the M&O management company for services and personnel that the district is not receiving. Although the

company has been involved in the district for more than 13 years, the company has not established a preventive maintenance program.

o Employees of the contractor hold management positions with responsibility for supervising district personnel. While district personnel provide the final sign off on matters of employee discipline, the contractor is responsible for the initial phases of the process.

o High turnover among the contracted personnel and unclear lines of authority and reporting have led to confusion as to who is in charge, a lack of direction, and a lessening of accountability.

o Although the contract requires monthly visits from zone managers (who are a part of the contracted management team), staff members at several schools indicated that they had not seen a zone manager yet this year (as of November). Principals also believe that staffing has been reduced and building conditions have worsened since the district contracted for M&O management.

o The team was unable to determine if the supplies and equipment purchased by the contractor were in necessary amounts and at reasonable cost.

o The original intent of contracting out the management of M&O was to build management capacity and enable district staff members to learn best practices so that they could assume responsibility for facilities management at the end of the contract. It is apparent that the district is currently unprepared to assume these responsibilities because neither the capacity building nor the knowledge transfer has taken place.

o The assignment of contracted management personnel to positions in the department has limited the opportunities to promote capable district employees and has disrupted any potential career paths.

o The contract for management services requires the preparation of written procedures, which has not been done.

o The contracting out of M&O management has not resolved problems in the structure of the department or focused attention on customer service.

o The district has not acted to terminate the relationship with the management company, although there is a widespread lack of support for the contracted management of M&O.

- **Communications** – The team observed communication problems within the facilities department and between the department, other departments and school staff, including the following—

- o Knowledge of budgets is lacking and the delegation of budget responsibility appears to be nonexistent. Only the director has a budget or budget authority, so all funding requests must go to the director for action.

- o The budget office made midyear adjustments to facilities budgets without coordination with or notification of the facilities department.

- o Work orders from schools are canceled arbitrarily, without notice or explanation to principals or school staffs. The quantity of canceled work orders was reported to be extensive.

- o New principals do not receive an orientation related to policies and procedures in maintenance and operations, and no mechanisms exist for feedback or regular means of communicating with principals.

- o Many of the facilities department staff members are said to be unresponsive to the field and fail to return phone calls or answer e-mails.

- **Coordination of Facilities Projects** – Little coordination and planning exist among maintenance, operations, and construction activities. For example, installing cables as part of technology wiring projects has created an asbestos problem. And the problem has been exacerbated by the absence of the M&O manager who had been on leave for three months at the time of the team's visit.

- **Staff Training** – The M&O management contract requires training for the district's maintenance and operations (custodial) staff. Although the operations training program appears to be strong, no training is available for maintenance personnel.

- **Wage Levels** – Facilities staff members believe that the wage structure for maintenance and operations workers in the department is not competitive with the wage structure in the Kansas City metropolitan area as a whole. The team was not able to confirm whether this was true.

Organizational

- **Organizational Impediments to Providing Optimal Service** – The team identified a number of shortcomings in the current organizational structure (see Exhibit VIII-2) of the facilities department, for example—

- o The department does not have a customer service call or coordination center to receive, plan, assign, respond to, and follow up on requests for maintenance or custodial services.

o The maintenance and operations manager has a wide span of control with five reporting units, including crafts and trades, maintenance, operations, grounds, and general management.

o The facilities department lacks clearly defined roles and responsibilities, clear lines of authority, and accountability. Some employees have never seen their job descriptions. Other employees are in positions that have no job descriptions.

Policies, Operating Procedures, and Systems

- **Lack of Standard Operating Procedures** – The facilities department lacks standard operating procedures. For example—

o Process workflows, desk manuals, or handbooks do not exist.

o Rules and standard processes are applied inconsistently where they do exist. School principals expressed frustration with differing departmental interpretations of policies and processes.

o There are no criteria for determining when work can be done in house and when it is appropriate to contract for work. The contracted management of M&O makes decisions about whether or not to contract out for work apparently without the benefit of written criteria and, in doing so, has created tensions with the district's skilled craftspersons.

- **Lack of Relevance of the Work Order System** – The team found that the work order system, which belongs to the contracted management company, is ineffective at best and often ignored. For example—

o Emergency work—which is at a high volume apparently because non-emergency requests are not addressed—is ill defined and results in delays in sending the right personnel and materials.

o No one is responsible for planning and scheduling maintenance work or ensuring quality control. The contracted management company, which should be responsible for planning, scheduling and monitoring maintenance work, must rely on verbal or written requests from district personnel because it does not have access to the district's electronic work order system. Custodians who are expected to access the system either lack computers and or the knowledge of how to use the system. Building mechanics are denied access to the system.

o Principals indicated to the team that there are large numbers of old and unaddressed work orders and that work orders are cancelled without notice or consultation.

It was noted by the team, however, that district staff recognizes the current system's weakness and that the staff has taken the initiative to capture the relevant historical data from the contracted management's system for use in a new, more effective work order system.

- **Change Order Approval Process** – The district policy requiring all change orders to be taken to the board for approval has created a cumbersome process that is costly in time and dollars while construction is halted pending approval. Management has no discretion to issue change orders.

- **Stringing of Requisitions to Avoid Bid Limits**[49] – The facilities department is perceived generally to be the most frequent abuser of procurement rules. People told the team that the district strings requisitions to avoid competitive bidding (i.e., the submission of multiple low-value requisitions instead of one requisition in an amount that would require formalized bidding). People also told the team that the purchasing department receives orders for goods and services after they have already been received. While the district does not condone these practices, there are no consequences when these practices are used.

- **Procedures for Contracting Professional Services** – The district fails to use procedures that could streamline the engagement of architects, engineers, and other construction professionals. The current selection process begins with a Request for Proposal (RFP) that is time-consuming and a poor use of staff resources. There is no process to qualify a number of firms in advance or to create long-term contracts with professional services providers from which a selection can be made on an as-needed basis.

- **Building Automation Systems** – The district lacks building automation systems for troubleshooting problems, controlling energy usage, and guiding preventive maintenance. It has not included such systems in new buildings and has no apparent plans for retrofitting existing buildings. The district utilizes "building checkers" to detect problems in unoccupied buildings.

- **Staff Uniforms and Safety Equipment** – The district does not provide or require uniforms for custodial and maintenance personnel, and the team saw no guidelines for personal safety equipment, such as steel-toed shoes.

- **Hazardous Material Programs** – The district lacks a comprehensive program for the handling and disposal of hazardous materials despite the mandate of the Asbestos Hazard Emergency Response Act (AHERA). The team saw no evidence of a management plan for annual employee and parent notifications, three-year re-inspection cycles, and training custodial staff in asbestos identification. The district also does not have a contact person to ensure compliance with the plan and with the proper disposal of asbestos materials, when necessary. The team was

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[49] This finding also appears in the purchasing chapter

advised that the issuance of the annual AHERA letter to schools and offices was being held up in the general counsel's office.

- **KPMG Review** – The district received a report from KPMG's Risk Advisory Services based upon its review of the facilities department in November 2003. The team observed that many of the problems that were identified in the KPMG review still exist and that little or no discernible improvement has been made in the facilities department in the intervening two years.

C. Recommendations

VIII. 1 Embrace Strategic Facilities Planning – The facilities department should develop a business plan that reflects the district's strategic plan, with measurable and achievable goals, timelines, performance measures, and a mechanism for monitoring and reporting progress in achieving the goals. The department should conduct an assessment of all plant and property and create an inventory of all school district facilities, including capacities and conditions, as part of the business plan. The assessment should lead to preparing a maintenance backlog and a long-term schedule of major repair and replacement projects.

VIII. 2 Conduct a School Utilization Study[50] **–** The district should embark on a comprehensive school utilization study with the goal of reducing the number of small and underutilized schools. This analysis should incorporate a review of school boundary lines and weigh the cost of pupil transportation in its evaluations.

VIII. 3 Establish Stable Leadership in the Facilities Organization – The district needs to establish stable, experienced leadership in the facilities department to manage its ongoing operations, identify issues and concerns raised in this report, and transition the department into a more efficient and effective district-managed operation. The department should endeavor to place permanent employees in key management positions to reduce or eliminate the number of interim appointments.

VIII. 4 Reevaluate Contracted Management of M&O – The district should reevaluate its relationship with the management company contracted to oversee facilities operations. The district should either consider terminating the relationship or establishing a written contract with the provider that specifies duties, responsibilities, accountabilities, objectives, timelines, deliverables, and fees and contains a district contract monitoring system. The contract also should include a process for moving facilities management back to the district (if that is still a long-term district goal).

VIII.5 Improve Communications Both Within and Outside the Facilities Department – The facilities department should establish formalized intra- and inter-departmental communications channels to improve the understanding of

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[50] See related recommendation, III-10 Consider Closing Underutilized and Small Schools, in the district-general chapter.

operational issues, and the coordination and planning of various facilities projects with other departments, e.g., budget and staffing.

VIII.6 Establish M&O Training Programs – The facilities department should establish a formal training program for district staff on facilities processes and procedures, a training program for entry-level departmental employees, and a professional development and cross-training program for existing employees.

VIII.7 Reorganize the Facilities Department – The facilities department should be reorganized along functional lines similar to the configuration displayed in the proposed organization chart below (Exhibit VIII - 8). The major functional units reporting to the director of facilities would include—

- Warehouse Operations

- Operations and Maintenance – The unit would be responsible for all maintenance and custodial activities at the school sites. Three zone managers would oversee custodial operations. A manager and three crafts foremen would oversee centralized maintenance services in the areas of grounds, HVAC/plumbing, and structural/painting. This unit also would contain a customer call center to coordinate the organization's response to service requests.

- Construction and Engineering – The unit should include the project managers and the district's environmental health and safety services functions (including AHERA compliance and the worker safety program).

- Real Estate.

- Budget and Administrative Staff.

VIII.8 Establish Standard Operating Procedures for Facilities – The facilities department should establish and maintain clear and easily understood procedural manuals and workflows that document approved processes, define responsibilities, and establish and clarify the authority for use of facilities department budgets. Subordinate staff should be knowledgeable of and have authority for budgets in their areas of responsibility

VIII.9 Establish an Effective Work Order System – The facilities department should work closely with the information technology services and finance departments to implement an effective work-order system to manage projects, schedule tasks, track costs, and monitor performance. The department should expand access to the system in order to utilize its features fully.

VIII.10 Establish Delegation of Authority Limits for Change Orders – The board should delegate authority for the approval of project change orders up to

predetermined amounts to ensure the flow of work while maintaining reasonable controls. Generally the change order approval authority should be at 10 percent of the contract level for repair and maintenance contracts and 5 percent of the contract level for new construction.

Exhibit VIII-8. Proposed Facilities Management Organization Chart
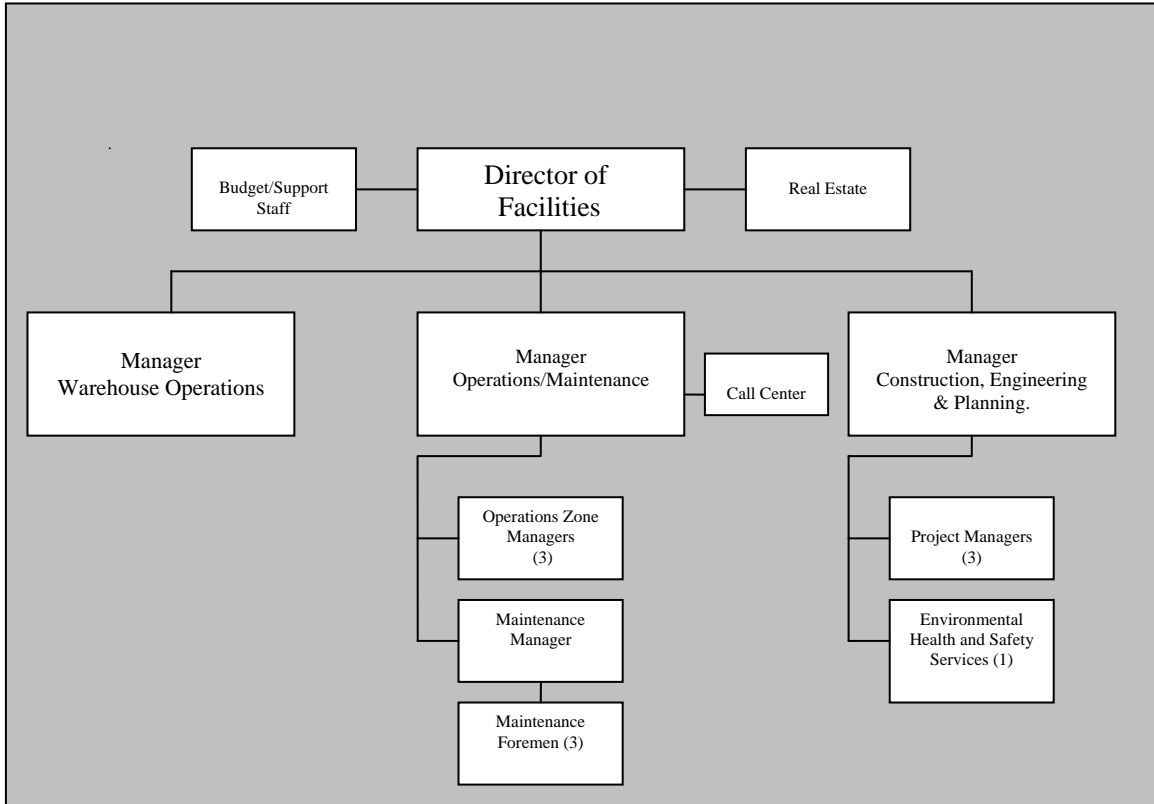
VIII.11 Install Building Automation Systems – The district should invest in building automation systems for troubleshooting problems, controlling energy usage, and guiding preventive maintenance.

VIII.12 Encourage or Provide M&O Uniforms and Safety Equipment – The district should either provide or encourage uniforms for custodial and maintenance personnel and establish guidelines for mandatory personal protective equipment.

VIII.13 Establish a Hazardous Material Program – The district needs to establish a comprehensive program for the handling, disposal, and reporting of hazardous materials, including compliance with the Asbestos Hazard Emergency Response Act (AHERA).

VIII.14 Establish a Personnel Management Program – The district should establish a personnel management program to define the training and promotion requirements of personnel in the maintenance and operations areas.

VIII.15 Establish Professional Services Contracts – The district should establish procedures for providing architectural and engineering design services on an as-needed and expedited basis.

IX. TRANSPORTATION

A. Introduction and Background

Organization and Administration

Transportation management is contracted out and reports directly to the chief business officer. Exhibit IX-1 displays the reporting relationship of the transportation department within the Business and Finance Division.

Exhibit IX-1. Business and Finance Division Organization
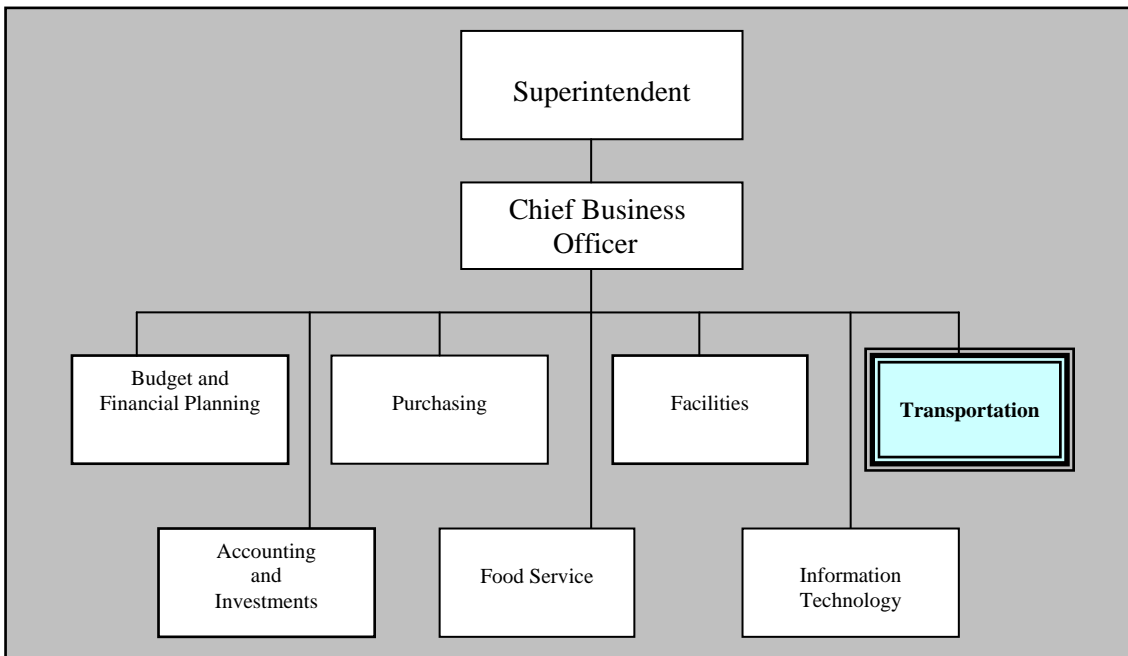
Source: KCMSD, Division of Business and Finance

The district contracts for the management of its public transportation operations, which includes the routing, scheduling, and oversight of two contract bus companies (one with approximately 320 buses and one with 80 buses) and one taxi service provider that furnishes 30-35 cabs to transport students. Exhibit IX–2 shows the organization of the transportation department.

Exhibit IX–2. Transportation Department Organization
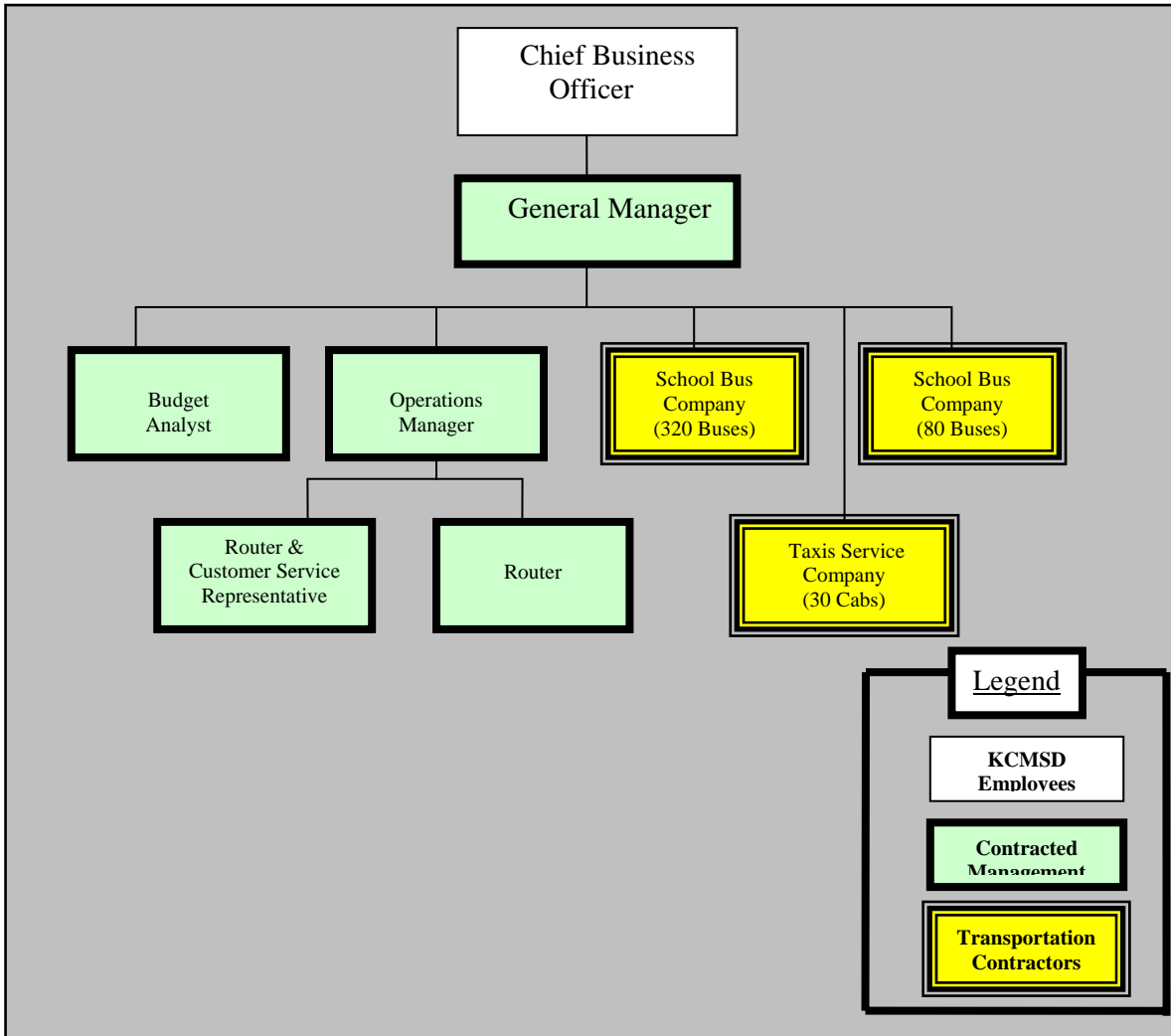
Source: KCMSD, DOT

Budget and Staffing Data

Exhibit IX–3 shows the 2005-06 budget for the department. Since contract employees provide all transportation services, the chart shows no staffing data.

Exhibit IX–3. Transportation Department Operating Budget

	FY 06 FTE	FY 06 Budget
Salary Items	-0-	
Fringe Benefits		
Purchased Services		$22,781,671
Supplies and Materials		
Capital Outlay		
Total	**-0-**	**$22,781,671**

Source: KCMSD, FY 2006 Comprehensive Budget

B. Findings

Commendations

- **Contract Management of Transportation** – The contractor's integration into the district organization has become transparent such that the contractor generally is considered to be the district's department of transportation (DOT). The contractor appears to perform in accordance with the expectations and responsibilities contained in its contract with the district, and has been proactive in developing alternative cost-saving strategies and options for the district's consideration. School principals consider the DOT one of the most responsive administrative units in the district.

- **Reduction in the Number Buses and the Cost of Pupil Transportation** – Since FY 1998, the district has reduced the number of buses and the cost of school bus operations substantially. The cost decreases reflect the reduction of buses from 770 in January 1998 to about 400 today. Of the 370 buses eliminated, approximately 150 were eliminated under the guidance of the contract management company, which began its work in early 1999. (Exhibit IX-4 below displays the expenditure reduction in transportation from FY 1998 to FY 2005.)

Exhibit IX–4. Pupil Transportation Expenditures (in Millions)
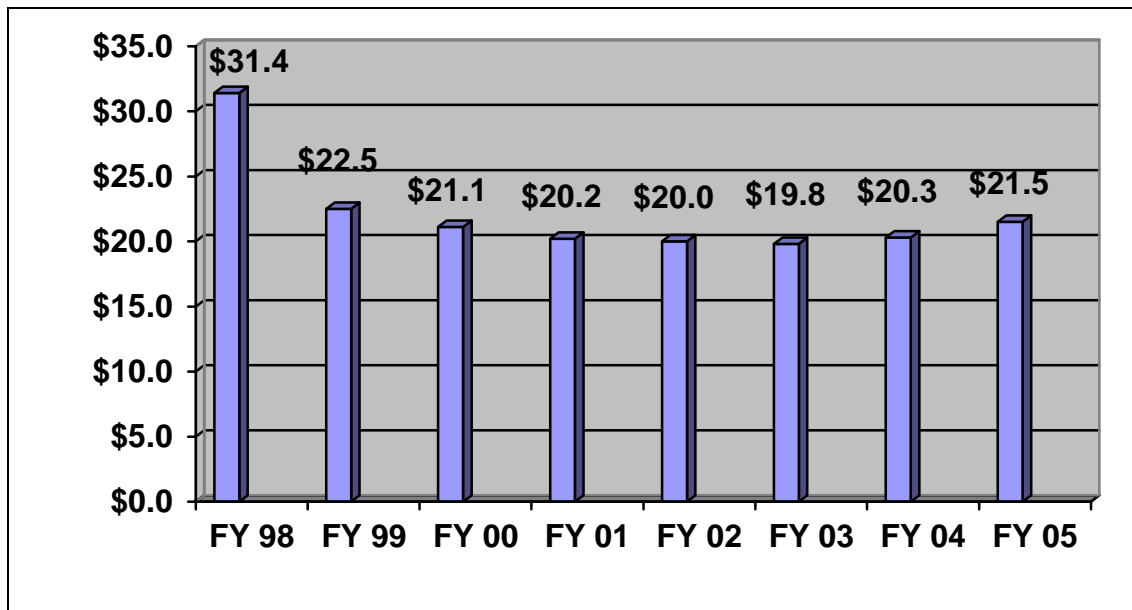
Source: KCMSD, DOT

Leadership and Management

- **District Management of Transportation Program** – The district does not take an active role in the day-to-day management of the pupil transportation operations

or in overseeing the management contractor, leading to a lack of basic contract administration. For example—

o Decisions about the number of buses and their routes are left to the contractors without district review or verification.

o The contract management company, rather than the district, reviews invoices from the bus contractors.

o The contract management company and the bus contractor make the determination of a hazardous condition that results in additional students being transported.

- **Transportation Management Contract**[51] – The team noted the following regarding the contract for the management of the district's transportation operations—

o The annual cost of the management contract is approximately $435,000.

o The management contract does not identify staffing levels. The district receives the services of the general manager and four other staff positions on a full-time basis, but the services of other personnel from the contract management company may be available to the district on an as-needed basis from time to time.

o The contract does not provide penalties or incentives for the management of pupil transportation within the district's budgetary limits.

o The management contract was originally awarded in 1999, apparently on a non-competitive basis.

o There was no evidence of an evaluation supporting a non-competitive renewal or of a cost analysis or justification for a 3 percent annual contract cost increase when the Board of Education approved a three-year extension of the management contract in May 2005.

o With the exception of the price escalator, the terms and conditions of the original contract were not modified or updated.

o The contract contains no penalty clause in the event of default by the contractor.

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[51] This item also appears in the purchasing chapter of this report.

Organizational

- **Organizational Alignment of Pupil Admissions Office**[52] – The director of public information was given responsibility for the student placement and assignments functions of the admissions office following the departure of the chief administrative officer and the abolishment of the position in February 2005. The policies and procedures relating to student placements and assignments for which the director is responsible are especially important since they impact the number, types, and distances traveled by students.[53]

Policies, Operating Procedures, and Systems

- **High Proportion of Pupils Transported –** The district transports a high proportion of its students. Of the 28,400 students[54] enrolled in KCMSD schools in the fall of 2005, 17,800 or 70 percent are authorized to be transported. These numbers include an estimated 2,000 students who receive transportation as courtesy riders[55]. Exhibit IX-5 displays the district's transported students.

Exhibit IX–5. Transported Students – Fall 2005

Students	Number	Percent of Total
Authorized Riders*	17,800	63%
Courtesy Riders	2,000**	7
Total Transported	**19,800**	**70**
Walkers	8,600	30
Total Students*	**28,400**	**100%**

Source: KCMSD DOT
*   Includes pre-K Head Start and early childhood
** Estimated by DOT

   o   The district's basic policies for providing student transportation are—

   ▪   Distance **–** More than 1½ miles from home to school.

   ▪   Hazard – The existence of a hazardous situation (undefined) between home and school.

   ▪   Overcrowding – Student assigned to a school other than his/her comprehensive neighborhood school because of a lack of space.

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[52] This item also appears in the district-general chapter of this report.

[53] The director has commissioned two reviews of the operations of the office and is in the process of developing recommendations on organizational placement, admissions policies, and student assignment practices.

[54] Includes Head Start and early childhood students as of 10/12/05, KCMSD Students Records System.

[55] Courtesy riders are non-authorized student riders who are provided transportation on a space available basis. It is the DOT's stated practice not to deny transport to any student who shows up at an authorized bus stop.

- Magnet School – Transportation provided.

- Special Education – As provided in the student's Individualized Education Plan (IEP).

Exhibit IX–6 displays the number of transported students by program and by mode of transportation (i.e., school bus or taxicab).

Exhibit IX–6. Transported Students by Mode – Fall 2005

Program	Number of Students Transported			Percent of Total
	Bus	**Cab**	**Total**	
Neighborhood Schools	7,721	229	7,950	44.7%
Magnet Schools	7,262	75	7,337	41.3%
Head Start/Early Childhood	1,612	8	1,620	9.1%
Alternative Schools	673	44	717	4.0%
Other Programs	108	46	154	0.9%
Total Transported Students	**17,376**	**402**	**17,778**	**100%**
Transported Exceptional Education Students Included Above	2,645	295	2,940	16.5%

Source: KCMSD DOT

o The high percentage of transported students can be attributed to the following—

- The district lacks control or oversight over student assignment and placement. For example, staff members in the pupil admissions office indicated that they unofficially encourage pupils to enroll in magnet programs so that home-to-school transportation will be provided automatically.

- The district does not review the process of designating a "hazard" for transportation purposes, and contractors have no disincentives to apply a hazardous designation. The determination of the existence of a hazard is apparently a joint decision between the contract management of DOT and the bus contractor. In the fall of 2005, almost 2,000 students, or 11 percent of the transported students, were transported by reason of "hazards."

- Schools and programs are not located where the students live and some attendance areas are geographically large.

- **Peer District Comparison** – The district transports a higher percentage of students than do four comparison districts and at a higher per pupil cost than do two of the four districts. (Exhibit IX-7 shows the peer district comparison.)

Exhibit IX–7. Peer School District Transportation Data

	KCMSD	Boston	Buffalo	Sarasota	Philadelphia
Total enrollment	25,000	58,600	40,000	39,500	184,000
Total transported (bus, vans, or cabs - not public transit)	19,000	32,534	27,374	17,400	21,700
Percent of Students Transported	76%	55%	68%	44%	12%
Total routed buses and cabs	400	615	561	320	880
Average Students per Bus/Cabs (All routes)	42.5	52.9	48.8	54.4	25
Total Transportation Expenditures	$22.8 m	$58.2m	$32.5m	$14.9m	$41.0m
Average cost per student transported	$1,340	$1,789	$1,188	$856	$1,891

- **School Bus Contracting Process**[56] **–** The district does not put its school bus contracts out to bid. Bus contractors are currently in the seventh year of an original three-year contract, with two one-year extensions executed in 1999 "based on a subjective evaluation of each contractor's ability to provide excellent student transportation services that meet the needs of the School District."[57] The negotiations occurred after the district abandoned a Request for Proposal (RFP) process for school bus services. In 2004, the contracts were again extended under the same terms and conditions for another two years and remain in effect until July 31, 2006.

- **Student and Routing Information for Bus Operators –** The school bus contractors are not given access to the DOT bus routing and student information systems. Contractors receive information on bus stop locations and destinations, but not the routing instructions (left/right turn) from the computerized system. Contractors also do not receive lists of authorized student riders or authorized student rosters by bus stop. At the time of an accident or incident, the bus company compiles a roster of students.

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[56] This item also appears in the purchasing chapter of this report.
[57] This quote is from a letter from the director of purchasing dated April 23, 1999, to potential bus contractors advising them that the district was abandoning its RFP (Request for Proposal) process for school bus services.

- **Bus Contractor Performance**[58] **–** The district lacks a standard reporting mechanism for late buses. The DOT published rates for routes without complaints and on-time service were above 99.9 percent for each of the reporting periods in the 2004-05 school year. School principals disputed these data. The principals interviewed by the team expressed frustration with the number of late buses, which results in students missing their school breakfast. Some principals deal directly with the bus contractor assigned to their school, while others report their problems to the DOT.

  The district's contracts with bus contractors provide for the assessment of liquidated damages in the event of late buses, no-shows, or other service failures. The DOT is assessing an average of $20,000 a year in liquidated damages on bus contracts worth more than $20 million.

  The DOT-published data for "accident rate per 100,000 miles" ranged from 0.3 to 1.1 for the reporting periods in the 2004-05 school year. The DOT-published data for "incident rate per 100,000 miles" ranged from 0.0 to 0.9 for the reporting periods in the 2004-05 school year.

- **Use of Taxis for Pupil Transportation –** The district's transportation program is somewhat unusual in its extensive use of taxi services to transport students. The district is spending about $1.5 million a year on 30 cabs to transport approximately 400 students (See Exhibit IX-6 above). This amounts to $50,000 a year per taxi, which is about the same amount that the district pays annually for a full-size school bus. On a cost-per-student basis, the district pays $3,500 a year per transported student in taxis, compared with the $1,340 overall average cost per transported student.

  More than 70 percent of the 402 students transported in cabs are exceptional students or students requiring wheelchairs. Ninety-four (23 percent) of the taxi-transported students are overflow students assigned to non-neighborhood schools.

- **Potential Use of Local Metro System for Student Transportation –** The district is one of the few urban public school systems that does not use local Metro bus services to meet some of its student transportation needs. The cost of a Metro student bus pass in Kansas City would be less than $200 a year, compared with more than $1,000 that the district pays per pupil a year to transport students by school bus or taxi. The DOT has estimated the annual savings from the appropriate use of Metro bus passes would amount to more than $3 million a year.

  The team was told that the district's decision not to use Metro bus system services was based on legal advice that to do so would violate Missouri statutes and regulations. This advice was apparently based on the assumption that, since

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[58] The DOT prepares statistics on performance measures that include the percentage of routes without complaints; the on-time bus rate; the accident rate per 100,000 miles; and the incident rate per 100,000 miles.

Metro's bus drivers do not receive the same training as school bus drivers and since their vehicles do not meet requirements for school bus safety, allowing district pupils to ride these buses might expose the district to some financial liability. The district might want to re-evaluate this position in light of the fact that many urban school districts use local Metro buses to transport their students.

- **Assignment of Bus Attendants –** The district does not appear to have any written policies or guidelines regarding the assignment of attendants to bus routes based on requests from the school principals. There is no standard process to review the continued need for bus monitors once they have been added to a bus route at a cost of $60 per day.

- **Lack of Integrity in Student Data –** People interviewed by the team generally complained about the integrity of pupil data and the accuracy of student information entered at the school level. Errors in the student database impact many areas of district operations, including transportation.

C. Recommendations

IX. 1   **Manage the Transportation Program Proactively** – A senior-level district employee should be charged with overseeing, monitoring, and day-to-day management of the district's transportation contracts. At a minimum, the responsibility should include establishing, communicating, and enforcing the criteria for transportation eligibility; collaborating with the admissions office on student assignments; reviewing and approving bus routes; monitoring performance data; and reviewing and approving invoices from the management and transportation contractors.

IX. 2   **Improve Contracting Procedures** – The district should initiate a process to competitively bid the contract for DOT management services prior to the expiration of the current contract in May 2008. The district should negotiate terms that include specific personnel and services to be provided, penalties and incentives where appropriate, the basis on which renewals or extensions will be granted, the basis for determining inflation adjustments, and the district management position with responsibility for oversight of the contract. The management services contractor also should be expected to compile and review performance data from bus operations.

The district also initiated a process to competitively bid the current school bus contracts prior to their expiration in July 2006. The district should establish systems to include standard methods for reporting problems, such as complaints, on-time rates, accidents, and incidents once the contractors are selected.

IX. 3   **Reduce Transportation Requirements through Better School Utilization** – As indicated in earlier chapters of this report, the district should conduct a

comprehensive school utilization study with the goal of reducing the number of small and underutilized schools. This analysis should incorporate a review of school boundary lines and include a goal of maximizing the number of students who can walk to school and, in doing so, controlling the district's transportation costs.

IX. 4   **Provide Student and Routing Information to Bus Operators** – The DOT should use its computerized systems to create routes and student rosters so that bus drivers know who is authorized to board the buses. The drivers should follow the directions provided by the routing system. This information is especially critical in the event of an emergency or in the case of a substitute driver.

IX. 5   **Review Alternatives to School Bus Transportation** – The district should review its dependence on taxis for transporting students. While taxis may be appropriate in limited circumstances, their high cost and arguable safety should make them one of the last choices for pupil transportation. The district also should reconsider its position on using the Metro bus system. It is common practice in most urban school districts for students to use public transportation as a cost-effective alternative to school bus transportation for some children.

IX. 6   **Review and Reduce the Number of Bus Attendants** – The district should implement a formal process for hiring bus attendants, with specific criteria for assigning and re-assigning them as needed. A district-level employee should decide on such assignments.

IX. 7   **Improve Pupil Data** – The district should provide training for school-level personnel to ensure that student eligibility for bus services is based on current information about a student's needs.

X. PURCHASING

A. Introduction and Background

Organization and Administration

The Purchasing Director reports directly to the chief business officer. Exhibit X-1 depicts the organizational structure and reporting relationship.

Exhibit X-1. Business and Finance Division Organization
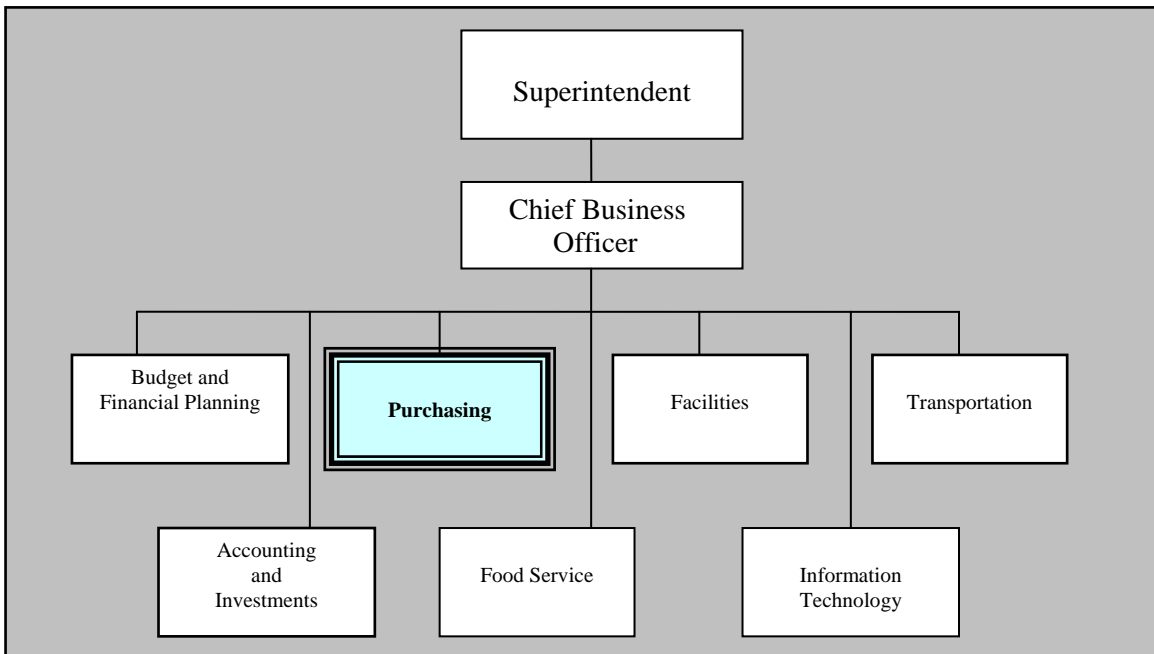
Source: KCMSD, Division of Business and Finance

Purchasing Department Organization, Budget and Staffing Data

The FY 2006 budget funded 10 positions in the purchasing department, eight of which are represented in Exhibit X-2. The other two positions are in the district's minority/women-owned business enterprise outreach program, which was reassigned this year to report directly to the superintendent. Exhibit X-3 shows the 2005-06 budget and authorized full-time equivalent (FTE) positions for the purchasing department.

Exhibit X–2 Purchasing Department Organization
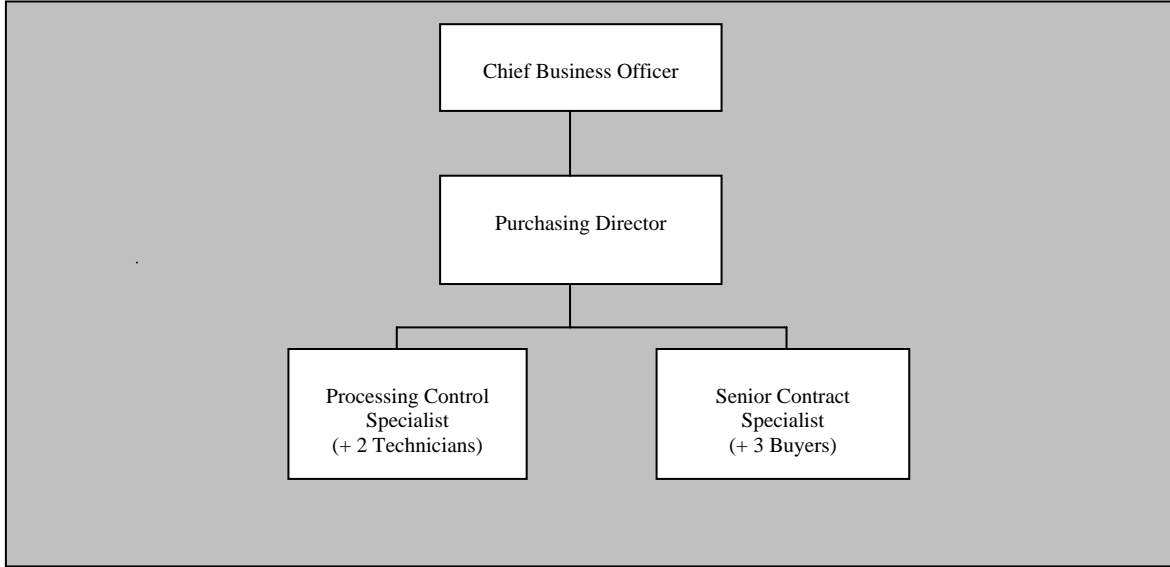
Source: KCMSD

Exhibit X–3. Operating Budget

	FY 06 FTE	FY 06 Budget
Salary Items	10.0	$519,836
Fringe Benefits		138,079
Purchased Services		32,400
Supplies and Materials		4,550
Capital Outlay		3,000
Total	**10.0**	**$697,865**

Source: KCMSD, FY 2006 Comprehensive Budget

B. Findings

Leadership and Management

- **Strategic Planning**

  o The purchasing staff is not knowledgeable of the district's strategic plan, and the department has not developed a business plan linked to the districtwide plan.

  o Although the department has established annual goals, it has no performance metrics (e.g., turn-around time, aging of requisitions) and little in the way of performance reporting.

  o The department has not established a master schedule for annual contracts and the reoccurring purchasing cycle.

- **Communications.** There is a general lack of communications both within the department and with other departments in the district. For example—

  o Regular departmental staff meetings are not held and members of the office staff do not all have the same information.

  o "Customers" are unaware of the role, responsibilities, and value of the purchasing department i.e., people don't know what the department does. As a consequence, the department has not earned the respect of users of its services.

  o No formal processes are in place to survey either customers or vendors, and no customer feedback mechanisms exist.

- **Staff Training.** Training within the purchasing department is virtually nonexistent. For example—

  o The department lacks a formalized training program for new employees and does not offer staff development opportunities for existing employees.

  o There is little cross-training available for employees to ensure continuity of work when absences or staff turnover occur.

  o Communications with peers at the city or county level or with other school districts do not exist.

  o Although the district maintains membership in the National Institute of Governmental Purchasing [59](NIGP), it has not taken advantage of the training and educational benefits available to it.

  o The district buyers are not certified and are not encouraged to obtain professional certification.[60]

- **Utilization of Technology.** Technology is generally underutilized in the purchasing department. For example—

  o The department accumulates paper copies of all documents despite the computerized system available for departmental use.

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[59] The National Institute of Governmental Purchasing, Inc.(NIGP) is a membership-based nonprofit corporation providing support to professionals in the public sector purchasing field. NIGP provides its members with many services, including education, certification, professional networking, research, and technical assistance.

[60] Certification programs are offered through NIGP (the Certified Professional Public Buyer and Certified Public Purchasing Officer certifications), the Institute of Supply Management (the Certified Purchasing Manager certification), and the American Purchasing Society.

o The district's Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) system has not been implemented sufficiently enough to ensure maximum utilization and reliability. It was reported to the team, for example, that—

- Although the ERP system provides for electronic requisitioning, at least 25 percent of requisitions are submitted to the purchasing department in paper form.

- Although the ERP system provides for electronic receiving, much of the documentation of receipt of goods is still done manually.

o Dissemination of bid information, requests for quotations, and the forwarding of data and copies of purchase orders are done manually by printing documents locally and then faxing them to the department, rather than using e-mail or, preferably, an automated vendor broadcast application. The purchasing department purchased an automated vendor broadcast application called Ion Wave, but this application has not been implemented fully and relatively few vendors have registered on the system.

o As reflected in an earlier report from KPMG, no mechanism exists to control users making changes to the vendor files.

o The excessive manual data entry of the process for ordering textbooks and library books and the procurement card (p-card) reconciliation reflect the district's failure to automate routine and repetitive processes.

- **Contract Management and Compliance.** The district lacks the capacity to manage contracts and ensure compliance with contracted services.

  o **Contracted Management of Maintenance and Operations (M&O).**[61] As previously noted, the district contracts out for a portion of the management of its facilities operations. The contract management company provides 13 positions, including the managers of operations and of maintenance. The team encountered a nearly universal opinion that the contract management company is not performing in the district's best interests. For example—

    - The district began contracting out the management of its facilities services in 1992. In the latest reauthorization, the Board of Education granted authority to execute a five-year contract to provide management and clerical services, custodial supplies, and equipment at a maximum cost of $158,443 a month for the period beginning July 1, 2002, and ending June 30, 2007. No new contract has actually been executed since the board's authorization three years ago. The team could not find anyone on staff who could identify the actual terms of the current *de facto* M&O management contract or who on staff controls this contract.

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[61] This item also appears in the facilities chapter of this report

- The original 1992 contract was for a joint venture that included the M&O management company and a minority business enterprise (MBE) contractor who was to provide 25 percent of the required custodial supplies. Prior to the completion of the original contract, the MBE contractor was dropped and has not been a part of the current *de facto* contract, even though having an MBE contractor was part of the board's 2002 reauthorization.

- It appears that the district may be paying the management company for services and personnel that the district is not receiving. Although the company has been involved in the district for more than 13 years, the company has not established a preventive maintenance program.

- Employees of the contractor hold management positions with responsibility for supervising district personnel. The contractor, as a result, is involved in district employee discipline, in probable violation of the labor contract and district policies. The contractor also processes employee grievances, but does not handle them in required time-frames.

- High turnover among the contracted personnel and unclear lines of authority and reporting have led to confusion as to who is in charge, a lack of direction, and a lessening of accountability.

- Although the contract requires monthly visits from zone managers (who are a part of the contracted management team), staff members at several schools indicated that they had not seen a zone manager yet this year (as of November). Principals also believe that staffing has been reduced and building conditions have worsened since the district contracted for M&O management.

- The team was unable to determine if the supplies and equipment purchased by the contractor were in necessary amounts and at reasonable cost.

- The original intent of contracting out the management of M&O was to build management capacity and enable district staff members to learn best practices so they could assume responsibility for facilities management at the end of the contract. It is apparent that the district is currently unprepared to assume these responsibilities because neither the capacity building nor the knowledge transfer has taken place.

- The assignment of contracted management personnel to positions in the department has limited the opportunities to promote capable district employees and has disrupted any potential career paths.

- The contract for management services requires the preparation of written procedures, something that apparently has not been done.

- The contracting out of M&O management has not resolved problems in the structure of the department or focused attention on customer service.

- The district has not acted to terminate the relationship with the management company, although there is a widespread lack of support for the contracted management of M&O.

o **Transportation Management Contract.**[62] As previously noted, the district contracts for the management of its transportation operations. The team noted the following regarding the management contract—

- The annual cost of the management contract is approximately $435,000.

- The management contract does not identify staffing levels. The district receives the services of the general manager and four other staff positions on a full-time basis, but the services of other personnel from the contract management company may be available to the district on an as-needed basis from time to time.

- The contract does not provide penalties or incentives for the management of pupil transportation within the district's budgetary limits.

- The management contract was originally awarded in 1999, apparently on a non-competitive basis.

- There was no evidence of an evaluation supporting a non-competitive renewal or of a cost analysis or justification for a three percent annual contract cost increase when the Board of Education approved a three-year extension of the management contract in May 2005.

- With the exception of the price escalator, the terms and conditions of the original contract were not modified or updated.

- The contract contains no penalty clause in the event of default by the contractor.

Organizational

- **Buyer Specialization.** Currently, the department's buying staff is organized by groups of schools and offices. While this organization has the advantage of providing a single point of contact within the department for purchasing customers, it has certain inherent inefficiencies. If buyers were organized by

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[62] This item also appears in the transportation chapter of this report

commodities, for example, it would be easier for them to do leveraged purchases by combining orders for like items, to develop expertise in product areas, and to acquire knowledge of vendor capabilities.

- **Impediments to Optimal Service.** There are a number of shortcomings in the current organization that impede the department's ability to provide its best service. For example—

  o There are no clearly defined roles and responsibilities, and no clear lines of authority and accountability for the purchasing staff.

  o Job descriptions are not readily available and some employees had never seen the job descriptions that are available.

  o The department does not use any work performance appraisal instruments or performance evaluations for its staff.

  o The department is not properly staffed to monitor contract compliance.

- **P-Card Administration.**[63] As previously noted, the district's procurement card (p-card) program was designed to be used by schools and offices for purchases of less that $1,000 and is administered by the accounts payable (AP) unit. The AP unit issues the p-cards, establishes limits and parameters for each card, and reviews and approves all payments. The placement of all p-card administrative functions in the AP unit, however, has—

  o Created a weakness in internal controls because the requisition of goods and services and the review and approval of all payments are housed in the same unit.

  o Limited the use of p-cards as a procurement tool because the policies and procedures governing its use are not synchronized with the district's minority/women-owned business programs or the purchasing department's master contracts.

Policies, Operating Procedures, and Systems

- **Purchasing Policies.** The team was provided with a set of the district's purchasing policies and noted the following—

  o Some members of the purchasing staff indicated that they had never seen the district's purchasing policies.

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[63] This finding also appears in the budget and finance chapter of this report.

o While board policy calls for the formal solicitation of bids for items over $25,000, the policy also indicates that the board can make the determination to waive the bidding process.

o The board's role in the procurement process is not consistent and in some cases the board's direct involvement in the process would appear to be excessive and unorthodox. For example, board members were the only voting members on the selection committee for the food service management contract. These board members also voted on the approval of the contract itself.

o The board appears to spend an inordinate amount of its meeting time on the selection of district vendors.

o There are no policies that provide for vendors to protest or appeal bid awards.

o The department has not developed an ethics policy for its purchasing staff and others involved in requirements determination and source selection.

- **Purchasing Communications to the Board.** Communications to the Board of Education lack sufficient detailed information for informed decision-making and monitoring of the bidding process. For example—

   o No information is provided on the total number of bidders, the number of MBE/WBE bidders, or the relative ranking of the bids received.

   o The purchasing documents currently provided to the board do not distinguish clearly between contract extensions and negotiated renewals that have not been bid.

- **Internal Control.** There is a general lack of security within the purchasing department. For example—

   o The entire purchasing staff has access to the bid box used for formal bids.

   o Active purchasing department files are not secured and there is no system in place to track the location of files.

- **Strategic Sourcing**[64] **and E-Procurement**[65]

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[64] Strategic Sourcing is defined as a disciplined, systematic process for reducing the total costs of externally purchased materials, products, and services while maintaining or improving levels of quality, service, and technology. Strategic Sourcing evaluates the total cost of ownership, the consolidation of purchasing power, standardization, the alignment of business processes, and improved teamwork and cross-functional collaboration.

[65] E-Procurement is the term used to describe the use of electronic methods in every stage of the purchasing process from identification of requirements through to payment, and potentially to contract management. Electronic enablement of the purchasing process can be more specifically identified as: **e-Sourcing -** for

o The department's attempt to use Web-based e-procurement resulted in duplication of effort and additional work for the department's limited staff. Consequently, the e-procurement system, which could be available to the buyers, is not utilized.

o The ability to sort the district's own vendor file by commodity is not available to buyers for sourcing. As a result, buyers must resort to the phone book in an effort to find vendors to bid on needed products.

o The department has not attempted to develop a program of strategic sourcing.

- **Minority and Women Business Enterprise (MBE/WBE) Purchasing**. While the board is to be commended for its aggressive goals for minority- and women-owned business participation in the district purchasing program, the team noted the following shortcomings in the implementation of the program—

o No data on MBE/WBE vendors are collected for the vast majority of purchases below the $25,000 informal bid limit, including items purchased *via* p-card.

o The district's system does not identify MBE/WBE vendors for the buying staff.

o The district lacks an aggressive formal process to recruit participation in the program.

o There needs to be recognition that expanding the base of qualified participants in the WBE/WBE program will not only help the district meet the program's goals, but also improve competition and, ultimately, reduce the cost and improve the quality of purchased goods and services.

- **Vendor Performance Measures.** The department does not measure vendor performance or the quality of goods and services received. While the district has policies that can eliminate vendors who perform poorly, the policy has never been used to disqualify a vendor.

- **Contracting Practices.** The team found the district contracting processes to be lacking in a number of areas, including—

o A number of major contracts go years without competitive bidding. Contracts are renewed without a review of pertinent facts, costs, and market conditions.

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contractual processes. Tools include e-Tendering, e-RFQs (Request for Quotations/evaluations) and e-Auctions. **E-Procurement -** for transactional processes. Tools include marketplaces using techniques such as e-catalogues and punch-out. **E-Payment.** Tools include virtual or embedded Government Procurement Card, e-Invoicing and self-billing.

These include contracts for school buses and the management contracts for transportation and facilities, which are discussed in greater detail elsewhere in this report.

o The district does not have effective systems or assigned responsibilities for the monitoring of contracts.

o The district does little in the way of contract piggybacking,[66] which could take advantage of high volume purchases and reduce administrative burden.

o Bid files generally lack documentation. The files do not address the salient details of negotiations, such as who was involved in negotiations, dates when negotiations took place, and terms that were the disputed.

o RFPs and bids do not provide the district with the right to waive minor technicalities in order to prevent the elimination of bids that would potentially save the district money.

- **Purchasing Procedures.** The team found the district's purchasing procedures to be lacking in a number of areas. For example—

o No desktop procedural manuals were in evidence and workflow documents were not current.

o The number of approvals (up to six) required to process a requisition appears to be excessive.

o The team learned that up to 30 percent of all requisitions are delayed because they require budget transfers in order to complete their processing. This is due to budgets being controlled by object code, rather than by the spending authority of the school or department.

o There is no formal identification of time-sensitive requisitions that may require priority processing, such as for grants.

o Buyers lack the tools to find sources of requisitioned goods and services efficiently.

- **ITS Contracting Issues.**[67] As previously noted, the district does not appear to leverage contracting opportunities that could reduce costs and improve services in areas including—

o Direct vendor/manufacturer contracts.

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[66] Contract "piggybacking" means to buy using a state or local agency contract that has previously been competitively bid.
[67] This item also appears in the information technology chapter of this report.

o Alignment of warranties on new equipment with the district's equipment refresh program.

o Use of "piggyback" contracts available from other governmental entities.

o Deployment of equipment, imaging of computers, asset tagging, and trash removal in desktop computer contracts.

o Use of multiyear contracts to help promote consistency and standardization.

- **School Bus Contracting Process**[68]**.** As previously noted, the district does not put its school bus contracts out to bid. Bus contractors are currently in the seventh year of an original three-year contract with two one-year extensions executed in 1999 "based on a subjective evaluation of each contractor's ability to provide excellent student transportation services that meet the needs of the School District."[69] The negotiations occurred after the district abandoned a Request for Proposal (RFP) process for school bus services. In 2004, the contracts were again extended under the same terms and conditions for another two years and are in effect until July 31, 2006.

- **Food Service RFP.** During the period of the teams' visits the district conducted a Request for Proposals (RFP) for management of its food services program. While the food services program has lost money in recent years, no independent study was conducted to determine the causes of the loss or to identify what remedies might be available to the district. The decision to contract out the management of food services may have been premature since the district has not demonstrated the ability to execute or administer service contracts effectively in other operational areas.

- **Stringing of Requisitions to Avoid Bid Limits**[70] **–** District buyers report the splitting or stringing of requisitions to avoid competitive bidding (i.e., the submission of multiple low-value requisitions instead of one requisition in an amount that would require formalized bidding). The team was told that the purchasing department also receives requisitions for goods and services that have already been received. While the district does not condone these practices, there are no consequences for failure to follow procedures. The facilities organization is generally perceived to be the most frequent abuser of procurement rules.

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[68] This item also appears in the transportation chapter of this report
[69] This quote is from a letter from the Director of Purchasing dated April 23, 1999, to potential bus contractors advising them that the district was abandoning its RFP (Request for Proposal) process for school bus services.
[70] This finding also appears in the facilities chapter

C. Recommendations

X. 1 **Embrace Strategic Planning** – Develop a business plan for the purchasing department that reflects the district's strategic plan, with measurable and achievable goals, timelines, performance measures, and a mechanism for monitoring and reporting progress.

X. 2 **Improve Communications both Within and Outside the Purchasing Department** – Establish formalized intra- and inter-departmental communications channels to improve the understanding of the operational issues of the purchasing department by schools and the coordination of contracting efforts with other departments.

X. 3 **Establish Training Programs** – Establish a formalized mandatory training program for new employees and provide for continued professional development and cross-training of existing purchasing department employees.

- o Take advantage of the resources of the professional organizations to which the district and department belong and the expertise of other local agencies.

- o Encourage and require the certification of the buyers.

X 4. **Increase the Use of Technology** – Review and evaluate each of the operational processes and procedures to incorporate the use of automation and technology to expedite processing, improve efficiency, and enhance the quality of departmental services.

X. 5 **Reorganize the Purchasing Department**

- o Reorganize the staff of the purchasing department so that buyers are assigned by commodities to enable them to leverage purchases and develop product expertise.
- o Augment the department staff with the sufficient resources to monitor contract compliance.

- o Develop job descriptions, performance appraisals, and organizational charts with clear lines of responsibility and authority that are consistent with the requirements of the departmental reorganization.

X. 6 **Refine Purchasing Policies** – Refine and augment current policies to address the board's role in the procurement process, provide a formalized avenue for vendor appeals, and incorporate a code of ethics for purchasing staff.

X. 7 **Enhance Purchasing Board Reports** – Include data on the number of bidders and their relative ranking, MBE/WBE information, and specific information on

why contract renewals have not been competitively bid in the formal reports present to the board for approval of purchasing items.

X. 8   Secure the Bid Box and Purchasing Records

o   Restrict access to the department's bid box to one or two management personnel.

o   Secure the purchasing records and files and institute a system for checking out files.

X. 9   Implement E-Procurement Technology and Strategic Sourcing Methodologies – Adopt modern procurement technologies and methodologies to enhance efficiencies and the effectiveness of the purchasing department.

X.10   Augment the MBE/WBE Outreach Effort

o   Institute a more aggressive outreach effort to potential MBE/WBE vendors.

o   Collect MBE/WBE data on all purchases, not just those that are formally bid.

o   Provide the list of identified MBE/WBE vendors, by commodity, to the purchasing department buyers.

X.11   Institute Vendor Performance Measures – Establish quality assurance measures to evaluate vendor performance and product quality.

X.12   Revise Purchasing Practices

o   Revise the district contracting practices to leverage opportunities, to reduce costs, and to improve the quality of services to its customers.

o   Seek more direct vendor/manufacturer contracts, use "piggyback" contracts available from other governmental entities, obtain value-added propositions from it vendors (such as extended warranties), and use multiyear contracts to help promote consistency and standardization.

o   Streamline the hierarchy of requisition approvals and exercise budget controls on a spending authority rather than an object code basis.

X 13.   Strengthen Resources to Manage the Food Service Contract – Ensure that that the district has the skills and resources in place to execute and administer the recently contracted food services program effectively.

XI. SYNOPSIS AND DISCUSSION

The Strategic Support Teams working on this project found talented and committed people working hard in the Kansas City (Missouri) Public Schools to improve education for children in the city. Their work is often done outside the public's view and without much recognition or acknowledgement. Similarly, the teams found committed community members and parents who want the system to teach their children to the highest standards.

The Kansas City school district has struggled, however. Its student achievement has not shown much progress over the last several years. It has lost students to other communities and to charter and private schools. It operates in an environment of ever-decreasing resources. And it faces a community whose support is fragile. In many ways, the district is experiencing many of the challenges of other large urban school systems.

Public education in the nation's major cities is being challenged in ways that few other institutions—public or private—are being so challenged. But big city public school systems are rising to the challenge and reforming in ways that many would have thought unthinkable a few short years ago. The result is higher student achievement, better management and operations, and renewed public confidence.

Kansas City, for its part, has made some important strides over the years. The outgoing superintendent served for a longer period than most of his immediate predecessors, adding a measure of stability in a system that was constantly changing its leadership. The school board is attaining a new sense of equilibrium under the leadership of its current president. The district implemented a number of important instructional strategies, improved its credentialing status, emerged from its long-running desegregation order, and launched an ambitious new effort to reform its high schools. None of these steps forward were small.

Still, the Kansas City school system faces substantial challenges. The district lacks a theory of action about where it is going and how. The school board often gets bogged down in administrative issues. The instructional program lacks cohesion and forward momentum. No one is really accountable for results. The reading program is not as strong as it needs to be. Professional development for teachers and staff is weak. The interim assessment system doesn't give the district much usable data. No system is in place for intervening with students when they fall behind. The school district has no effective way of monitoring program implementation. And, the district's most important reform initiative will probably not work as advertised.

On the operational side of the house, the district continues to experience high staff turnover. Its staff is poorly organized. The human resources office continues to struggle with timely hiring. The budget does not align with strategic priorities. Operations often lack procedures manuals and clear reporting lines. The technology system has security holes. Facilities are poorly coordinated. Transportation costs more than it needs to and often relies on manual routing procedures. Purchasing procedures do not routinely

provide the district with the best values. And major contracts are renewed continually without competitive bidding.

In general, the school system is highly fractured and operates mostly in separate silos that lack coordination and collaboration. Interim managers hold many senior staff jobs, and staff members do not always work as a team on behalf of the city's children.

The Kansas City public school system does not have to be this way. Many major urban school systems across the country are pulling themselves together and improving student achievement. None of these urban school systems is perfect, but they have taken identifiable steps that have made their improvement possible.

We have borrowed from the lessons learned in other cities to shape the recommendations that we are making in this report. We are proposing that the school district's leadership create a unified direction for itself and its children. We are proposing that goals be explicit and clear at the district and school levels. We are proposing that the district use student performance data to guide its decisions and ensure that students are receiving a rigorous program of instruction. We are proposing that the curriculum be linked explicitly to state assessments and that the district's instructional efforts be guided by data collected, analyzed, and used over the course of the school year.

We are also proposing that the district fix its noninstructional operations, align its resources with its goals, modernize its procedures, and begin pulling in the same direction.

In short, the Council is suggesting that the school district take greater responsibility for the instruction of all of its students and the operation of its systems. The district should define what is to be taught. The district should also develop a consistent program in the four core content areas, so they can be supported efficiently and effectively. This does not mean that everyone has to be doing the same thing at the same time on the same day. Teachers need some flexibility in how to deliver the district's curriculum, but the goals and expectations for what is taught should be the same across the district. The implementation of real short-cycle testing should help. But personnel throughout the district will need to be more accountable for the results than they have in the past.

These reforms will not be easy. The work required to implement them is complex and hard. It requires adults to be willing to examine their own beliefs about programs and practices in order to determine what must be changed for children to be successful. It requires rigorous use of data and a dedication to achieving stretch goals. It also means that the district will need to prioritize what can be accomplished with quality. And it means recognizing that the reforms will be resisted on a number of fronts for a variety of reasons.

Some people will complain that the reforms are "top down." This perception is partially correct, since in taking responsibility for student achievement, the district must

standardize expectations and pacing. It is doubtful, however, that every teacher would want to spend the time individually deciding on the level of rigor and depth of knowledge and skills required at each grade level. Such a decentralized system would be doomed to failure because there would be inevitable differences in interpretations of standards that would lead to gaps in foundational knowledge and skills and result in poor performance at subsequent grade levels. Still, the district probably will need to establish forums at which teachers and administrators can voice their concerns and questions.

There will also be skepticism from school-level staff and community about whether the central office can redefine itself to support principals and teachers. The only way to counter these perceptions is to prove them wrong.

The district's board has made a good first start in clarifying its goals and fixing some of the operational problems identified in this report. But the work has only just begun, as the district refocuses its work on boosting student achievement and refrains from finger-pointing about where things went wrong in the past. The future of the city depends on the education of its children, and the Kansas City Public Schools *can* rise to become a premier school district.

APPENDIX A. WORKING AGENDAS

Strategic Support Team
Curriculum and Instruction
Kansas City (MO) School District
April 17-20, 2006

Working Agenda

Tuesday, April 18, 2006

Time	Name	Title
8:00 – 9:00	Dr. Gwendolyn Cooke	Deputy Superintendent
9:00 – 9:45	Patricia Rowles	Executive Director, Curriculum & Instruction

9:45 – 10:00 AM – BREAK

10:00 – 10:45	Dr. William Eddy, Helen Ragsdale	Board Members
10:45 – 11:30	Cathy Dennis	Professional Development Coordinator
11:30 – 12:30	Monica Nance	Communication Arts Coordinator

12:30 – 1:30 P.M. – LUNCH

1:30 – 2:30	Suzan Bizorik	Mathematics Coordinator
2:30 – 3:15	Dr. Vicky Smith	Director, Early Childhood
3:15 – 4:30	Andrew Crist, Philomina Harshaw, Okpara Nosakhere	Executive Directors for School Leadership

4:30 – 4:45 PM - B R E A K

4:45 – 5:30	Dr. Margaret Seever	Executive Director, Research/Evaluation & Testing
5:30 – 6:15	Dr. Glenn Mitchell & Eunice Johnson	Director, Pupil Services Director, Special Education

Wednesday, April 19, 2006

Time	Name	Title
8:00 – 8:45	Alicia Miguel	ESL Program Coordinator
8:45 – 9:30	Jack Bitzenburg, Dr. Phyllis Budesheim, Kathleen Dalen	Director, Career & Technical Programs & Coordinator of High School Reform
9:30 – 10:15	Judy Morgan	President, KCAFT Teachers' Union

10:15 – 10:30 AM - BREAK

10:30 – 11:30	Dr. Kathy Whited, Dr. Marilou Joyner, Phillena Lane, Douglas Elmer Dolores Arzola or Ray Wilson	UMKC, Blackwell Education Support Team Talent Development (Achievement First) District Advisory Committee
11:30 – 12:30	George Michael Huke	Director – Title I

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12:30 – 1:30 P.M. – LUNCH

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1:30 – 2:15	Luis Arres, Anna Cline, Tracy Costello, Bonnie Stalder, Dennis Walker Linda Cordes,	Literacy/Math and Building Level Coaches
2:15 – 3:00		Parent Representatives (TBD)
3:00 – 4:00	Gwendolyn Squires, Esther Ray, Andrew Larson, Vickie Murillo, T. Alan McClain, Belinda Woodson, Kaye Ellis, Rita Marshall and Derald Davis	Focus Groups (principals) Garfield, Graceland, Knotts, Northeast HS, Northeast MS, Nowlin, Trailwoods, Troost, Westport MS

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4:00 – 4:15 - BREAK

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4:15 – 5:15	Kennya Authorlee, Sharon Brown, Ann Collins, Donna Cox, Willie Howard, Izziebeth Newby,Cleora Taylor, Steve Werninger, Melisa Wendel	<u>Teachers</u> (9): Clarke, Garfield, Northeast MS, Lincoln MS, Nowlin (2), Trailwoods, Troost, Westport MS

Strategic Support Team
Human Resources Management
Kansas City (MO) School District
September 27-30, 2005

Working Agenda

Tuesday, September 27

6:30 p.m.	Dinner Meeting	Dr. Bernard Taylor Superintendent Superintendent's Council

Wednesday, September 28

7:30 - 9:00 a.m.	Team Meeting	Deputy Superintendent
9:00 - 10:30 a.m.	Team Meeting	Human Resource Officer
10:30 - 12:00 noon	Team Meeting	Payroll Manager Staffing Manager Director, HR Operations Manager, EEO & Employee Relations Coordinator, Benefits & Compensation
12:00 - 1:00 p.m.	Working Lunch	
1:00 - 2:15 p.m.	Team Meeting	Records Management Technician Customer Service Representative Risk Management/Benefits Technician
2:15 – 3:30 p.m.	Desk Audit	HR Operations
3:30 - 5:00 p.m.	Team Meeting	Elementary & Secondary Principals
5:00 -	Team Meeting	Work Plan Discussion

Thursday, September 29

8:00 - 9:30 a.m.	Team Meeting	Staffing Specialist - Secondary Staffing Technician Employment Technician Lead Data Entry

		Staffing Specialist-Classified Subs & Temp. Employment Specialist HR Staffing Manager
9:30 – 10:30 a.m.	Desk Audit	Staffing
10:30 - 12:00 noon	Team Meeting	Payroll Specialist Payroll Analyst II Payroll Analysts I Payroll Technician Specialist Comp. & Benefits Specialist II Compensation Specialist
12:00 – 1:00 p.m.	Working Lunch	
1:00 - 2:00 p.m.	Team Meeting	General Counsel
2:00 - 3:15 p.m.	Team Meeting	CFO and Budget Office
3:30 - 5:00 p.m.	Team Meeting	Union Leadership
5:00 -	Team Meeting	Work Plan Discussion

Friday, September 30

8:00 - 12:00 noon	Team Meeting	Processing of Initial Findings & Recommendations
12:00 – 1:00 p.m.	Debriefing	Dr. Bernard Taylor Superintendent

Strategic Support Team
Financial Operations
Kansas City (MO) School District
October 11-14, 2005

Working Agenda

Tuesday, October 11

6:30 p.m.	Dinner Meeting	Dr. Bernard Taylor Superintendent Superintendent's Council

Wednesday, October 12

7:30 – 10:00 a.m.	Team Meeting	Chief Financial Officer
10:30 - 12:00 noon.	Team Meeting	Accounts Payable Manager Accounts Payable Analyst Staff Accounts
12:00 - 1:00 p.m.	Working Lunch	
1:00 - 2:30 p.m.	Team Meeting	Treasury Operations Manager Accounting Technician
2:30 – 4:00 p.m.	Desk Audit	Accounting Manager Assistant Accounting Manager
4:00 - 5:30 p.m.	Team Meeting	Fixed Asset Specialist Financial Analyst Training Specialist
5:00 -	Team Meeting	Work Plan Discussion

Thursday, October 13

8:00 - 9:00 a.m.	Team Meeting	Budget Officer
9:00 – 10:30 a.m.	Team Meeting	Budget Specialist Budget Specialist Special Revenue Specialist Revenue Specialist
10:30 - 12:00 noon	Team Meeting	Payroll Manager

		Payroll Specialist
		Payroll Analyst II
		Payroll Analysts I
		Payroll Technician Specialist
		Comp. & Benefits Specialist II
		Compensation Specialist
		Risk Management/Benefits
12:00 - 1:00 p.m.	Working Lunch	
1:00 - 2:00 p.m.	Team Meeting	Purchasing Director
		Purchasing Control Specialist
		Senior Contract Specialist
2:00 - 3:00 p.m.	Team Meeting	Internal Auditor
3:00 - 4:00 p.m.	Team Meeting	Grants Office Staff
4:00 - 5:00 p.m.	Team Meeting	Information Technology Staff
5:00 -	Team Meeting	Work Plan Discussion

Friday, October 14

8:00 – 12:00 noon	Team Meeting	Additional "Drill Downs"
		Initial Findings & Recommendations
12:00 – 1:00 p.m.	Debriefing	Dr. Bernard Taylor
		Superintendent

Strategic Support Team
IT Operations
Kansas City (MO) School District
October 25-28, 2005

Working Agenda

Tuesday, October 25

6:30 p.m.	Dinner Meeting	Dr. Bernard Taylor Superintendent Superintendent's Council

Wednesday, October 26

8:00 - 10:30 a.m.	Team Meeting	Executive Director, ITS
10:30 - 12:00 noon	Team Meeting	Manager, Technical Services Manager, Customer Services Manager, Instructional Technology Materials & Contracts Liaison Security Engineer
12:00 - 1:00 p.m.	Working Luncheon	
1:00 - 2:30 p.m.	Team Meeting	Information Service Staff
2:30 - 4:00 p.m.	Team Meeting	Desktop Supervisor & Staff
4:00 - 5:30 p.m.	Team Meeting	Network Supervisor & Staff Telecommunications Supervisor & Staff
5:30 -		Team Discussion of Work Plan for Balance of Site Visit

Thursday, October 27

8:00 - 9:15 a.m.	Team Meeting	Payroll Manager & Analysts Coordinator—Benefits & Compensation
9:15 - 10:30 a.m.	Team Meeting	Staffing Manager, Specialists & Technicians

10:30 - 12:00 noon	Team Meeting	Accounts Payable Manager & Analyst
12:00 - 1:00 p.m.	Working Luncheon	
1:00 - 2:30 p.m.	Team Meeting	Accounting Manager & Asst. Manager
2:30 – 5:00 p.m.	Team Meeting	School-Site Clerical Personnel – Randomly Selected Across Grade Levels
5:00 -		Team Discussion of Work Plan for Balance of Site Visit

Friday, October 14

8:00 – 12:00 noon	Team Meeting	Additional "Drill Downs" Initial Findings & Recommendations
12:00 – 1:00 p.m.	Debriefing	Dr. Bernard Taylor Superintendent

Strategic Support Team
Support Operations
Kansas City (MO) School District
November 6-9, 2005

Working Agenda

Sunday, November 6

6:30 p.m.	Dinner Meeting	Dr. Bernard Taylor
		Superintendent
		Superintendent's Council

Monday, November 7

7:30 – 9:00 a.m.	Team Meeting	Bonnie McKelvy
		Director, Business & Finance Division

9:00 - 10:30 a.m. Team Meetings
Team 1

Mike Contompasis	General Manager
John Lombardi	Transpar Group
Michael Turza	
Dave Koch (Project Lead)	

Team 2

Bill Koelm	Director of Facilities
Mike Langley	KCMSD Facilities Division
Patrick Quinn	
Bob Carlson (Project Lead)	

10:30 - 12:00 noon Team Meetings
Team 1

	Operations Manager
	Budget Analyst
	Transpar Group

Team 2

	Facilities Manager (Interim)
	Facilities Business Manager
	Lead PM
	KCMSD Facilities Division

12:00 – 1:00 p.m.   Working Luncheon

1:00 - 2:30 p.m.   Team Meetings

	Team 1	Router, Router/CSR
		Transportation Department
		Transpar Group
	Team 2	Maintenance Manager
		Facilities Technician
		Custodial Manager
		Facilities Office Manager
		KCMSD Facilities Division

2:30 – 4:00 p.m.   Team Meetings

	Team 1	First Student
		Durham School Services
		Kansas City Taxi
		Transportation Department
		Transpar Group
	Team 2	Reporting & QM Specialist
		Warehouse/Move Supervisor
		Payroll Technician
		Computer Specialist
		CUF Coordinator
		Business Tech
		KCMSD Facilities Division

4:00 - 5:30 p.m.   Team Meeting

	Team 1	Transportation Department
		Transpar Group
	Team 2	PM Compliance
		PM Cycle Maintenance
		PM Capital Projects
		Engineering Technician
		KCMSD Facilities Division

Tuesday, November 8

8:00 - 9:00 a.m.	Combined Team Meeting	Team Discussion of Work Plan for Balance of Site Visit
9:00 – 12:00 noon	Combined Team Visits	Randomly Selected Facilities
12:00 – 1:00 p.m.	Working Luncheon	
1:00 – 2:30 p.m.	Combined Team Meeting	Randomly Selected Head Custodians

2:30 - 3:30 p.m.	Combined Team Meeting	Randomly Selected Principals
3:30 - 4:30 p.m.	Combined Team Meeting	Union Leadership
5:00 -		Team Discussion of Work Plan for Balance of Site Visit

Wednesday, November 9

| 8:00 – 12:00 noon | Team Meeting | Additional "Drill Downs" Initial Findings & Recommendations |
| 12:00 – 1:00 p.m. | Debriefing | Dr. Bernard Taylor Superintendent Bonnie McKelvy Director, Business & Finance Division |

Strategic Support Team
Purchasing Operations
Kansas City Missouri School District
March 26-29, 2006

Sunday, March 26

  6:30 p.m.   **Dinner Meeting**

Monday, March 27

8:00 - 9:30 a.m.	**Team Meeting**	**Director, Business & Finance Division**
9:30 - 10:30 a.m.	**Team Meeting**	**Purchasing Director**
10:30 - 12:00 a.m.	**Document Review**	
12:00- 1:00 p.m.	**Working Lunch**	
1:00 - 2:00 p.m.	**Team Meeting**	**Senior Contract Specialist**
2:15 - 3:15 p.m.	**Team Meeting**	**Coordinator -Minority & Women Business Affairs**
3:30 - 4:30 p.m.	**Team Meeting**	**Manager Purchasing Card**
5:30 -	Team Discussion of Work Plan for Balance of Site Visit	

Tuesday, March 28

7:30 - 8:30 a.m.	**Team Meeting**	**Director of Facilities Facilities Manager (Interim) Facilities Business Manager**
8:45 – 9:45 a.m.	**Team Meeting**	**Document Review**
10:00 - 11:00 a.m.	**Team Meeting**	**Executive Director, Business Manager Information Technology Services**

11:00 – 12:00 Noon	**Team Meeting**	**Purchasing Control Specialist**
12:00- 1:00 p.m.	**Working Lunch**	
1:00 - 3:00 p.m.	**Team Meeting**	**Buyers and Assistants**
3:00 – 4:00 p.m.	**Team Meeting**	**Purchasing Director**
4:00 - 5:30	**Team Meeting**	**General Counsel**
5:30 -	Team Discussion of Work Plan for Balance of Site Visit	

Wednesday, March 29

8:00 – 12:00 noon	**Team Meeting**	Additional "Drill Downs" Initial Findings & Recommendations
12:00 – 1:00 p.m.	**Debriefing**	**Director, Business & Finance Division**

APPENDIX B. DOCUMENTS REVIEWED

- The School District of Kansas City, Missouri, Comprehensive Annual Financial Report, June 30, 2005 (Draft dated 10/12/2005)
- School District of Kansas City, Missouri, Comprehensive Annual Financial Report for the Fiscal Year ended June 30, 2004
- FY 2006 Comprehensive Budget
- FY 2005 Comprehensive Budget
- FY 2005 Comprehensive Budget Investment Portfolio Review, 12/31/05
- Financial Reports 7/04
- Financial Reports 8/04
- Financial Reports 2/05
- Financial Reports 4/05
- Financial Reports 5/05
- Preliminary Quarterly Financial Reports ending 3/31/05
- Quarterly Financial Reports ending 6/30/05
- Annual Secretary of the Board Report (ASBR) – Finance Report for the Missouri Public Schools, 2004-05
- Narrative Audit Report, prepared by PRG-Schultz USA, Inc., September 2002
- Administration's Corrective Action Plan to June 30, 2002, Management Letter and June 30, 2002 Federal Circular A-133 ("Single Audit") Schedule of Findings and Questioned Cost, January 13, 2003
- Status of Corrective Action Plan as of June 9, 2003 – June 30, 2002 Management Letter and Federal Circular A-133
- Internal Audit Report, Quarterly Status Review of Administration's Corrective Actions to FYE 6/30/03 Audit Findings, September 2004
- Management Letter June 30, 2003, KPMG LLP
- Management Letter June 30, 2004, KPMG LLP, October 22, 2004
- Management Letter June 20, 2005, KPMG LLP, September 30, 2005
- Memorandum from Cynthia Bradford, Internal Auditor, to Mrs. Ragsdale, Finance and Audit Committee Chairperson, submitting Corrective Action Plan for FYE 6/30/04, January 13, 2005
- Internal Audit Report – Current Status Review of Administration's Corrective Actions to FYE 6/30/04 Audit Findings, August 25, 2005
- Public School Retirement System of the School District of Kansas City, Missouri – Audited Financial Statements and Supplementary Information, Years Ended December 31, 2004 and 2003
- Revenues from Investments/Use of Surplus Funds, Board Policy, revised 08/28/2002
- Purchasing Card, Accounting and Investment Department procedure dated August 1, 2004
- Internal Audit Department list of Audit Reviews/Reports, dated 9/13/2005
- Various Internal Audit reports
- Various Internal Audit status reports
- Student Activity Funds Survey Form dated 10/13/2005

- Overtime Review, Internal Audit Report No. OT-100, August 31, 2003
- Budget Transfer Review, Internal Audit Report No. 03-0414-BT, May 6, 2003
- Various organizational charts
- Comprehensive School Improvement Plan, December 2003 to 2008
- Integrated Standards and Indicators Manual – Accreditation Standards for Public School Districts in Missouri, effective July 1, 2001 (Third Cycle)
- HR Process Strategy Team Report, May 20, 2005
- The Calendar for Human Resources Internal Benchmarking (CHRIB Sheet), School Year 2004 to 2005–1st Quarter
- HR Strategic Plans
- HR Staffing Rosters
- HR Staffing Standards
- HR Policies, Rules, and Operating Procedures
- HR Management Audits
- Technology Survey & Documentation, October 25-28, 2005
- Five-Year Technology Plan FY 2005 Comprehensive Budget Summary
- Transportation Survey and Supporting Documentation prepared by District staff for the Council of the Great City Schools
- Student Transportation Services, Board Policy, revised 07/23/2003
- School Bus Scheduling and Routing, Board Policy, adopted 02/19/2002
- Programs for Homeless Students, Board Policy, revised 12/17/2003
- Magnet Schools, Board Policy, adopted 12/04/2002
- KCMSD Transportation Department Plan, Organizational Structure and Position Descriptions
- Memorandum from Bonnie McKelvy to Members, Board of Directors regarding Extension of Student Transportation Services Agreements, C-99002, January 21, 2004
- Memorandum from Bonnie McKelvy to Members, Board of Directors regarding TransPar Group - Extension of Management Services Agreement, May 25, 2005
- Memorandum from Mark Garrett to Members, Board of Directors regarding TransPar Group - Extension of Agreement for Alternative Mode Student Transportation Services
- Student Transportation Services Agreements
- Transportation Management Services Agreement
- Letter from Carolyn Lucas, Director of Purchasing to Don Kincaid, School Services and Leasing, Inc., regarding Student Transportation Services, April 23, 1999
- Letter from Kyle Martin and Curt Roberts, TransPar Group, to Bonnie McKelvy, Chief Finance Officer, regarding 2004-05 Year in Review, September 1, 2005
- Student Transportation FY 2006 Budget Reduction Scenarios
- Memorandum from Curt Roberts, General Manager, Transportation Department to Council of the Great City Schools regarding FY 2005 Alternate Mode Vehicles (Student Taxis), 11/8/05
- Memorandum from Dr. Bernard Taylor to Members, Board of Directors, regarding Future Use of Schools Proposal – Respond to Requests, February 11, 2005

- Facilities Division Report for the Council of the Great City Schools, October 21, 2005
- Facilities Division Review Report, KPMG Risk Advisory Services, November 4, 2003
- Facilities Management Services Agreement between The School District of Kansas City, Missouri, and Servicemaster Management Services, LP a Limited Partnership, by General Partner, Servicemaster Management Services, Inc., and J&R Investments, Inc., d/b/a Woodley Building Maintenance, December 1, 1998, to December 21, 2001
- Memorandum from Carl VunCannon, Jr., Chief Operating Officer to Members of Board of Education regarding extension of ServiceMaster/Woodley Agreement, dated October 16, 2001
- Memorandum from Carl VunCannon, Jr., Chief Operations Officer for Facilities and Security to Members, Board of Education, regarding Facility Management Services, dated June 26, 2002
- Purchase Requisition for Management Fees for Aramark (PO 257426) and related documents
- Memorandum from Lisa Machicao to Kathy Walter-Mack regarding Issues and Concerns regarding Finalizing the Contract with Aramark, October 23, 2002
- Letter from Ronald E. Fiddler, Aramark, to Steve May, Director of Facilities regarding Consumer Price Index Adjustment, dated November 17, 2004
- Bidding Requirements, Board Policy, revised 03/24/2004
- Training History, S.D. of Kansas City MO prepared by Aramark, 11/8/05
- Listing of Board approvals of various contracts, plans and other facilities-related activities from July 2004 through September 2005
- Student Enrollment vs. Building Capacity – K-12 Population, 11/11/04
- Policies and Procedures of the Kansas City, Missouri School District Food Service Department
- Minority and Women Business Purchasing Policy of KCMSD
- Purchasing and Purchasing Authority of the Superintendent Policies of KCMSD
- MBE/WBE Utilization on Formally Bid Contracts report, July1 through December 31, 2005
- KCMSD Requisition Process, Ordering Process, Bid Process, and Evaluation Process work flow charts.
- Various bid files and procurement documentation.

- Middle School Communication Arts, Curriculum Calendar, Suggested Units of Study, Aligned to 2005 Core Curriculum
- Communication Arts Curriculum Calendar, Grade (K-5)
- "The Core Curriculum", Getting to Know the KCMSD, "New Curriculum" & Understanding How the "State Grade Level Expectations" Will Impact our Instructional Practices (Powerpoint)
- Kansas City Learning Walks (Folder)
- Program Evaluation: Kansas City Missouri School District

- KC MAP Scores, Mathematics/Communication Arts: Comparison of Newton Learning Program Participants with KC students at 7 KC Middle Schools, Spring 2005
- Council of the Great City School Curriculum, Instruction, Assessment Audit. Questions prepared by Gwendolyn J. Cooke, PhD.
- AYP Goals and Groups
- Organizational Chart for the Early Childhood Programs, April 2006
- Letter: From Susan Borgemeyer, Asst. Dir., Special Education Compliance
- Relative status of Northeast Middle School on various district performance indicators
- Memorandum: From P. Budesheim, School Improvement Performance Plan (Northeast Middle School)
- Professional Improvement Plan, P. Budesheim, Exec. Director for School Leadership
- PIP for an Assistant Principal from Okpara H. Nosakhere, RE: Kenneth Holstine at Lincoln Middle School
- KCMSD Planning Report
- KCMSD Librarian Utilization Report (2005)
- Program Evaluation: Lincoln College Preparatory Academy (SY2005)
- African-Centered Education Evaluation Report (2005)
- 2003-2004 Graduate Follow-Up Survey (2005)
- Program Audit: Special Education (Winter 2004-2005)
- Summary of MAP Demographic Changes and Corrections (2004)
- Cycle Three MSIP Accreditation Update 2004 Projected 2004; A Look to the 2005 APR
- Cycle Three Accreditation Update Standards 9.1-9.3
- Preliminary Report on the Percentage of Students Considered Level Not Determined (LND) for 2004 MAP
- Career and Technical Education Binder
- English as a Second Language Department Accomplishments and Goals
- ESL Dept. Professional Development Plan
- What is Sheltered Instruction?
- ESL Dept. SIOP and Principles of Learning Observation Tool
- ESL Dept. After School Project
- ESL Dept. Procedural Manual (Draft)
- Consolidated Federal Programs: Program Overview (Titles I-V)
- New and Beginning Teacher and Paraprofessional Resource Guide (2005-2006)
- 2005-2006 School Improvement Plan—Westport Middle
- 2005-2006 School Improvement Plan—Sugar Creek Elementary
- 2005-2006 School Improvement Plan—Longfellow Arts Academy
- 2005-2006 School Improvement Plan—E.F. Swinney
- 2005-2006 School Improvement Plan—Northeast Middle
- Professional Development Manual/Documentation Procedures for Principals and PDC Chairs (2004-2005)
- Views on Assessment, Prepared by David Rand, Assessment Coordinator (Interim), and Michael Reynolds, Assessment Assistant
- YouthFriends May 2004 Evaluation Summary, Prepared by David Rand
- Mentor Handbook, 2005-2006

- Exceptional Education Department Binder
- ACT Update 2006
- Central Middle School, Decision Making Data 2003-2004
- Building Capacity of Building Administration/Staff to Understand and Use Data
- Assessment Schedule 2005-2006
- AYP Goals and Groups
- Statement of Academic Purpose/Instructional Goals for SY2005-2006, Memo from Dr. Bernard Taylor
- The District, Back-to-School Issue, August-September 2006
- The District, February-March 2006
- Organization Structures for Academics
- District's Strategic Plan
- Professional Development Plan 2005-2006
- Grade 3 Communication Arts and Math Curriculum Guides
- Grade 3 Benchmark (short cycle) Tests
- Communication Arts Instructional Approach and Course Titles
- Mathematics Instructional Approach and Course Titles
- District's Choice Plan and School Applications
- Low Performing Schools--
  - Recommended Support to Elementary Schools from the Communication Arts Department
  - Recommended Support to Middle Schools from the Communication Arts Department
  - Recommended Support to Elementary Schools from the Mathematics Department
  - Reading First Schools MAP Results
  - Data Showing Progress Toward Meeting Objective 5 for MAP
  - What is Reading First?
  - Read 180 Intervention Initiative, Plan of Action
- Mean ACT Scores
- AP Courses
- IB Exams
- Department of Pupil Services
- English Language Learners
- Principal Evaluation Tools--
  - Directors and Executive Directors for School Leadership Assignments
  - Performance-Based Principal Evaluation
- Teacher Evaluation Tools--
  - Performance-Based Teacher Evaluation
  - Performance-Based School Counselor Evaluation
  - Additional Standard and Criteria Applicable to Library Media Specialists
- Schools with Reform Models
- State and National Accountability Status--
  - Supplemental Services Provider List
  - Title I AYP Status
  - Annual Performance Report (DESE)
  - Balanced Literacy Program: Onsite Technical Assistance

- Evaluation of The Balanced Literacy Program
- MSIP Reports

- KCMSD Professional Development Plan
- Grade 3 Communication Arts and Math Timing Chart
- Elementary Communication Arts Curriculum Calendar
- Middle School Curriculum Calendar
- Communication Arts Scope and Sequence K-12
- Grade 3 Communication Arts Guide
- Grade 3 Benchmark Tests (DAP)
- Communication Arts Instructional Approach K-12
- District's Strategic Plan
- Mathematics Instructional Approach
- (Math Curriculum Guide) 2005 Mathematics Curriculum Quarter At A Glance (Grade 3, First Quarter)
- Grade 3 Benchmark-short cycle- Test
- Recommended Support to Elementary Schools from the Mathematics Department 2005-2006 School Year
- Mathematics K-12 Timing Charts
- Mathematics Kansas City Missouri School District Textbooks/Interventions
- Kansas City Missouri School District Professional Development Plan 2005-2006
- Prep-KC—Kansas City's Partnership for Regional Educational Preparation
- Measuring What Matters (MWM)—Tools and Reports
- Getting Ready for First Things First—PowerPoint Presentation
- First Things First Family Advocate System: An Overview
- First Things First: An Overview
- First Things First: Results
- First Things First: Small Learning Communities: An Overview
- Teaching and Learning: Overview of FTF Approach to Instructional Improvement
- February 2005: Kansas City Outcome Conversions

APPENDIX C. INDIVIDUALS INTERVIEWED

- Dr. Bernard Taylor, Jr., Superintendent
- Ken Abramo, Property Manager
- Kathleen Alder, Secretary, Lincoln College Preparatory Academy – High School
- Joanna L. Alexander, Human Resources Manager
- Carol Allman, Principal, Foreign Language Academy
- Ron Armbruster, Sr. Network Engineer
- Julie Assel, Grant Liaison Technician
- Mike Bates, Coordinator of Minority & Women Business Affairs
- Pat Beary, Programmer Analyst
- Don Bell, Principal, Swinney Elementary School
- Erma Berry, Director, Human Resources Operations Manager
- Edwin Birch, Director, Public Information
- Dante Bolden, Financial Analyst
- Tom Boyd, Materials and Contracts Liaison
- Jim Bowes, Project Manager
- Cynthia Bradford, Internal Auditor
- Kenny Bradshaw, Technical Support Analyst
- Kathryn Brockenberry, Assistant Accounting Manager
- Mike Brown, M&O Manager (Interim)
- Scott Bryant, General Manager of Front Street, Durham School Services
- Audrey Bullard, Principal, J.S. Chick Elementary School
- Michael Burns, Principal, Southeast High School
- Bob Burton, Network Services Supervisor
- Myrtle L. Burton, Senior Buyer – Purchasing Department
- Sharon Byrd, Principal, Sugar Creek Elementary School
- Sara Carlson, Staff Accountant
- Deanna Chaunet, Buyer
- Sonya Carter, Secretary, King Middle School
- Michael Chrisco, Network Security Engineer
- Cynthia Clark, ITS Project Leader
- Melvin Clay, Head Custodian, Gladstone Elementary School
- Charles Coats, HR System Support Specialist
- Sheila Coleman, Staging Coordinator
- Shirley Conron Fields, Placement Advisor
- Dr. Gwendolyn Cooke, Deputy Superintendent
- Sherry Coy, Tech Engineering
- Andrew Crist, Executive Director for School Leadership
- Daniel DeLong, Senior Technical Support Analyst
- Linda Dennis, Staff Accountant
- Debbie Dougherty, Union Representative, SEIU
- Karen Doyle, Budget Analyst

- Bruce Evans, Manager, Instructional Technology
- Jean Evans, Payroll Analyst
- Richard Freiburghouse, Grant Liaison Technician
- Lori Garnos, Customer Services Manager
- Dorise Gilbert, Buyer
- Nick Goatcher, Cabler
- Beverly Gray, Budget Technician
- Connie Gray, Grant Director
- Donna Gross, Router/Customer Service Representative
- Brad Hambleton, General Manager of 35th Street & Manchester, Durham School Services
- Steve Harry, Sr. Telecommunication Engineer
- Philomina Harshaw, Executive Director for School Leadership
- Danise Hartsfield-Thompson, Manager EEO/Employee Relations/Core Data
- Jeffery Hayes, Head Custodian, Richardson
- Marilyn Hayes, Substitute Staffing Specialist
- John Henderson, Head Custodian, King Middle School
- Halina Hendzlik, Payroll Analyst
- Phil Horstman, Facility Manager
- Tyrone Hughlon, Head Custodian, Longfellow Elementary School
- Teisha Ingram, Accounting Technician
- Cindy Jackson, Senior Technical Support Analyst
- Monique Jemerson, Buyer
- LaTonya Johnson, Lead Data Entry Technician
- Vanessa Jones, Project Manager
- Jonathan Joseph, Network Engineer
- Kim Joyner-Wortman, Core Data Coordinator
- Jeff Keltner, Technical Support Analyst
- Jessie Kirksey, Principal, Hartman/Cook Elementary Schools
- Debbie Kohrs, Payroll Manager
- Patricia Laffitte, Head Custodian, Melcher Elementary School
- Joe Lauer, Environmental Specialist
- Lanny Lewis, Assistant Principal, J.A. Rogers Middle Academy
- Lisa Lincoln, Admin Tech, Garcia Elementary School
- Tosha Lindquist, Customer Service Representative
- Barbara Lunn, Budget Specialist
- James Mabry, Records Management Technician
- Lisa Machicao, Director of Purchasing (Interim)
- Kyle Martin, Vice-President, TransPar
- Steve May, Director, Facilities
- Laura McCarthy, Web Developer
- Bonnie McKelvy, Acting Chief Business Officer
- Elaine Morgan, Accounting Manager
- Judy Morgan, President, KCFT & SRP, AFT Local 691

- Mary Morgan, Purchasing Assistant
- Joyce Morrison, Project Manager
- Vickie Murillo, Principal, Northeast High School
- Ruth Newby, President, TransPar
- Cary Newsome, Accounts Payable Manager
- Don Newsome, Director of Custodians
- Iraj Nomani, Technical Support Analyst
- Elonia Norwood, Executive Director, ITS
- Okpara H. Nosakhere, Executive Director for School Leadership
- Brenda Nuesse, Treasury Manager
- Terry O'Toole, General Manager, Kansas City Taxi
- Kevin Patrick, Sr., Technical Support Analyst
- Marchita Peters, Secretary, Northeast High School
- Dennis Peterson, Technical Services Manager
- Lynnette Procopio, Project Leader (Applications Integration)
- Mary Rayborn, Lead Student Records Programmer
- Fred Rich, Operations Manager
- Curt Roberts, General Manager of Transportation (TransPar)
- Beatriz Sanchez, Payroll Tax Specialist
- Veronica Sarmiento, Budget Specialist
- Darlene Saunders, Benefits and Compensation Specialist
- Huebin Scales, Head Custodian, Central High School
- Corey Scholes, Principal, SE K-8
- Iesia Sharp, Customer Support
- Sharon Short, School Secretary, Pinkerton Elementary School
- Luanne Shrout, Compensation Specialist
- Carol Smith, Payroll Analyst
- Joseph Smith, Supervisor, Technical Support
- Leroy Smith, Facility Manager
- Ronnie Smith, Head Custodian, Allen Middle School
- Ted Smith, Head Custodian, Delano
- Vicky Smith, Principal, Pershing ECH
- Jan Stanton, Warehouse
- Jackie Strong, Attendance Secretary, LCPA – Middle
- Shaunte Strickland, Purchasing Tech
- David Swearingen, Crafts and Trades
- Adela Tan, Processing Control
- Mike Tan, Facility Business Manager (Interim)
- Ben Tate, Staffing Specialist
- Kenneth Taylor, Head Custodian, C.R. Anderson
- Brenda L. Thomas, Human Resources Officer (Interim)
- Damita Jo Thomas, Business Systems Analyst Trainer
- Erin Thompson, Budget Specialist
- Jan C. Toliver, Accounting Director

- B. Tuberville, Head Custodian, Holliday Elementary School
- Rita Vargas, Router
- Jevon Wallace, Head Custodian, J.S. Chick Elementary School
- Kathy Walter-Mack, General Counsel
- Christine Ward, Office Manager, Fairview
- Joyce Watkins, Budget Officer
- Billie Wentz, General Manager, First Student
- Dave West, Telecommunications Engineer
- Burdell Williams, Head Custodian, J.A. Rogers Middle Academy
- Pauline Williams, Staffing Specialist
- Dan Williams, Project Leader (HR)
- Rick Williams, Technical Support Analyst
- Gussie Winston, Union Representative, SEIU Local 2000
- Belinda Woodson, Principal, Nowlin Middle School
- Greg Wright, Wide Area Network Engineer

- Dr. William Eddy, School Board Member
- Helen Ragsdale, School Board Member
- Gwendolyn Cooke, Deputy Superintendent
- Brenda Thomas, Director of Human Resources
- Edwin Birch, Director of Communications
- Patricia Rowles, Executive Director, Curriculum and Instruction
- Cathy Dennis, Professional Development Coordinator
- Monica Nance, Communication Arts Coordinator
- Suzan Bizorik, Mathematics Coordinator
- Dr. Vicky Smith, Director of Early Childhood
- Andrew Crist, Executive Director for School Leadership
- Philomina Harshaw, Executive Director for School Leadership
- Okpara Nosakhere, Executive Director for School Leadership
- Dr. Margaret Seever, Executive Director of Research, Evaluation, and Testing
- David Rand, Assessment Coordinator
- Dr. Glenn Mitchell, Director, Pupil Services
- Eunice Johnson, Director, Special Education
- Dr. Mailou Joyner, Blackwell Education Support Team
- Haley Hanson, Blackwell Education Support Team
- Alicia Miguel, ESL Program Coordinator
- Jack Bitzenburg, Director of Career and Technical Programs
- Dr. Phyllis Budesheim, Executive Director
- Kathleen Dalen, Prep PC
- Judy Morgan, President, KCAFT Teachers' Union
- Dr. Kathy Whited, University of Missouri Kansas City
- Dr. Marilou Joyner, Blackwell Education support Team
- Phillena Lane, UMKC, Reading First
- Douglas Elmer, Field Manager, Achievement First
- Ray Wilson, District Advisory Committee Chairperson
- George Michael Huke, Director of Consolidated Federal Programs Luis Arres

- Anna Cline, District Literacy Coach
- Luis Arres, Milton Moore Instructional Coach
- Linda M. Cordes, Rogers Middle School Instructional Coach
- Tracy Costello Lear, Blenheim Instructional Coach
- Bonnie Stalder, District Math Coach
- Dennis Walker, Paseo Academy for Performing Arts Instructional Coach
- Gwendolyn Squires, Principal, Garfield Elementary
- Andrew Larson, Principal, Knotts Elementary
- Vickie Murillo, Principal, Northeast High School
- T. Alan McClain, Principal, Northeast Middle School
- Belinda Woodson, Principal, Nowlin Middle School
- Kaye Ellis, Principal, Trailwoods K-8
- Rita Marshall, Principal, Troost Elementary School
- Derald Davis, Principal Westport Middle School
- Willie Culclager-Howard, Language Arts Teacher, Westport Middle School
- Donna C. Cox, Reading Teacher, ACE Middle School
- Izziebeth Newby, Language Arts Teacher, Northeast Middle School
- Kennya Authorlee, Fourth Grade Teachers, Troost Elementary School
- Cleora Taylor, Algebra I Teacher, Lincoln Preparatory Middle School
- Stephen Werninger, Math Teacher, Nowlin Middle School
- Anne Collins Bertram, Language Arts Teacher, Nowlin Middle School
- Melissa Wendel, Fourth Grade Teacher, Trailwoods K-8
- Sharon Brown, ESL Teacher, Garfield Elementary School
- Kathleen Boyle Dalen, Associate Director, PREP-KC

APPENDIX D. STRATEGIC SUPPORT TEAMS

Ricki-Price Baugh

Ricki Price-Baugh recently retired from her position as the Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum in the Houston Independent School District. She was responsible for strategic planning and the design, implementation, and evaluation of the district's curriculum and instructional initiatives for eight departments: English/language arts, fine arts, early childhood education, foreign language, health/physical education, mathematics, science, and social studies. Since beginning her work with the Houston schools thirty years ago, Dr. Price-Baugh served as a teacher, department chair, resource coordinator, project manager, and director of curriculum services. Her major accomplishments included a districtwide effort to align curriculum, textbook, and assessment systems, and a substantial increase in student achievement scores in the district. She is a certified curriculum auditor for Phi Delta Kappa and is a member of Phi Beta Kappa. Dr. Price-Baugh has a doctoral degree from Baylor University, a master's degree in Spanish literature from the University of Maryland, and a B. A. degree (magna cum laude) from Tulane University.

Carolyn Bolen

Carolyn Bolen is the Purchasing Manager of St. Paul (Minn.) Public Schools, a district of approximately 43,000 students. She has overseen the procurement and contract review services of the district for over 10 years. Prior to joining the St. Paul school district, Ms. Bolen was a buyer and value analyst of the City of St. Paul and Ramsey County. She holds an A.A. degree in liberal arts and B.S. degree in business administration from the Carlton School of Management, University of Minnesota.

Robert Carlson

Robert Carlson is Director of Management Services for the Council of the Great City Schools. In that capacity, he provides Strategic Support Teams and manages operational reviews for superintendents and senior managers; convenes annual meetings of Chief Financial Officers, Chief Operating Officers, Human Resources Directors, and Chief Information Officers and Technology Directors; fields hundreds of requests for management information; and has developed and maintains a Web-based management library. Prior to joining the Council, Dr. Carlson was the executive assistant to the Superintendent of the District of Columbia Public Schools. He holds doctorate and masters degrees in administration from The Catholic University of America; a B.A. degree in political science from Ohio Wesleyan University; and has done advanced graduate work in political science at Syracuse University and the State Universities of New York.

Mike Casey

Michael Casey is currently the Executive Director of Information Technology for San Diego City Schools (SDCS). SDCS is the seventh largest urban school district in the U.S. with a student population of 130,000, an operating budget of $1.1 billion, and a workforce of 20,000. Mr. Casey has 25 years' experience with the school district as a teacher, technology resource teacher, program manager of educational technology, and project manager for Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) implementation (PeopleSoft HCM, FI, SIS and SpEd). Mr. Casey has degrees in chemistry, mathematics and physics, as well as, a master's degree in administration. He is a member of Computer Using Educators, California League of Middle Schools, California League of High Schools, International Society for Technology in Education (ISTE), and the California Network Implementation Committee representing Southern California. Mr. Casey has been a speaker at numerous conferences throughout his career, recently serving as the keynote speaker at the Cisco Annual Conference (2005). He also has been an instructor at San Diego State University and the University of California San Diego Extension College.

Michael Casserly

Michael Casserly is the Executive Director of the Council of the Great City Schools, a coalition of 66 of the nation's largest urban public school districts. Dr. Casserly has been with the organization for 29 years, 14 of them as Executive Director. Before heading the group, he was the organization's chief lobbyist on Capitol Hill in Washington, D.C. and served as its director of research. He has led major reforms in federal education laws, garnered significant aid for urban schools across the country, has spurred major gains in urban school achievement and management, and has advocated for urban school leadership in the standards movement. And he led the organization in the nation's first summit of urban school superintendents and big city mayors. Casserly has a Ph.D. from the University of Maryland and a B.A. from Villanova University.

Michael Contompasis

Michael Contompasis has served the Boston Public Schools for more than 40 years in a variety of positions. He was a teacher, assistant headmaster, and headmaster at Boston Latin School for 33 years prior to assuming the role of Chief Operating Officer of the Boston School District, a position that he has held for the past nine years. His current responsibilities include oversight of facilities, budget, transportation, human resources, strategic planning and collective bargaining for the district.

Maria Crenshaw

Maria Crenshaw is an instructional specialist in math with the Richmond (Va.) Public Schools and has been in education for 31 years. Mrs. Crenshaw received districtwide honors as Teacher of the Year, *TV 8* Golden Apple Award winner, and R.E.B Award nominee. She considers one of her greatest accomplishments as being the mother of three sons all of whom graduated with honors from Richmond Public Schools and have gone on to graduate with university degrees. For the past four years, she has served as an

instructional specialist in the Richmond public school system, providing technical support and training for both teachers and administrators, supervising math resource (specialist) teachers and Title I math staff, creating benchmark tests for the district, analyzing district data, and monitoring math instruction for the district. When she started in her position, only 16 district schools were accredited by the state in math. Currently, 45 schools are fully accredited. Mrs. Crenshaw has worked to assist the schools in Richmond to meet that accreditation by aligning the curriculum and materials with the state standards, designing lesson plans, and providing high-priority schools with personalized professional development. Mrs. Crenshaw received her undergraduate degree from Radford University, graduating in three years with a double major in early childhood education and elementary education in 1974. In 1986, she received a master's degree in education administration and supervision from Virginia State University.

Katy H. Dula

Katy Dula graduated *summa cum laude* from North Carolina A&T State University in 1976 with a degree in English education, grades 7-12. She was chosen Teacher of the Year from Gamewell Middle School in 1980 and, again, in 1985. In 1985, she received the Educator's Scholarship from the Caldwell County Chamber of Commerce. That same year, she received a master's degree in reading education from Appalachian State University. In 1994, she received National Board Certification in early adolescence/English language arts. She has served as a member of the board's Advisory Committee and has written editorials for the board's professional magazine, *Accomplished Teacher.* In 2001, she received advanced certification in curriculum and instruction from North Carolina State University at Charlotte. She also is a state-certified mentor. She has also served as an evaluator for the State of North Carolina's pilot project on performance-based licensure and was appointed by Governor Jim Hunt to the North Carolina Professional Teaching Standards Commission, serving for four years. In 1996, she was hired by the state of North Carolina to serve as a member of the ABC State Assistance Team. She then joined the Charlotte-Mecklenburg School (CMS) District in 2000 as a literacy specialist in grades K-5. In July 2005, she was appointed executive coordinator of education services for CMS. In her tenure at CMS, she has worked closely with the reading initiative and has been an integral part of efforts to develop the K-12 Comprehensive Reading Model. She also continues to work with the state as a trainer and developer of writing materials.

Joseph A. Gomez

Joseph A. Gomez is the Assistant Superintendent of Procurement Management Services of the Miami Dade County Public School District in Florida. The Miami Dade County School District is the fourth largest in the nation with more than 365,000 students, more than 48,000 full-time and part-time employees, and an annual budget of more than $5 billion. His responsibilities include the supervision of the Division of Procurement Management; stores and mail distribution warehousing operations; maintenance warehousing operations; the materials testing department; the furniture, fixtures, and equipment department; surplus property management; and textbook services. Mr. Gomez

is a certified CPM, CPPO, CPPB and APP with more than 30 years experience in procurement and materials management. He has a B.A. degree in business administration.

Richard H. Hinds

Richard Hinds is the former Chief Financial Officer of the Miami-Dade County Public Schools. Dr. Hinds joined the Miami-Dade school system in 1964 as a classroom teacher. He has served as executive director of budget management, assistant to the associate superintendent for business, chief educational auditor, and director of planning and evaluation. Dr. Hinds retired as Chief Financial Officer in July 2003, after 22 years of service in that position. His assignment included responsibility for traditional accounting and finance functions, in addition to risk management, procurement, and federal and state legislative affairs. Dr. Hinds received his Ed. D. degree from the University of Miami and M.A. and B.A. degrees from The Catholic University of America. Dr. Hinds also was an adjunct graduate professor at Pepperdine University, the University of Northern Colorado, and Florida International University.

Craig Honour

Craig Honour served 30 years in the Navy as a combat fighter pilot; training instructor; deep draft ship captain; operations and planning staff officer in Europe and Japan; and professor of Naval science at the University of Virginia. He specialized in Computers, Command and Control and Intelligence (C4I), advancing operational use of computers for disciplines such as fully computer-controlled automated landings on aircraft carriers, computer-driven radar and missile weapons control systems, flight simulator systems, advanced command and control telecommunication systems, and business-driven desktop computing. Captain Honour also spent five years in successful commercial practice, engineering, and delivering high-level information technology systems and services. For the last two years, he has been the Associate Superintendent/Chief Information Officer for Duval County (Fla.) Public Schools.

Barbara Jenkins

Barbara Jenkins is the current Chief Officer for Human Resources and Labor Relations for Orange County Public Schools in Orlando, Florida. She previously served as the assistant superintendent for human resources in Charlotte, North Carolina, for eight years. Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools is nationally recognized for outstanding accomplishments in student achievement and the use of a balanced scorecard to assess business and academic functions. The school system's Human Resources Department was also recognized for innovative strategies to enhance the recruitment and retention of quality teachers, as noted in a recent Harvard Education Publication, *Urban School Reform.* Dr. Jenkins' experiences include serving as a classroom teacher, professional developer, principal, and supervisor of schools. Dr. Jenkins holds an Ed.D. degree from the University of Central Florida.

David W. Koch

David Koch is the former Chief Administrative Officer for the Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD). The LAUSD is the nation's second largest public school system, with more than 725,000 students in grades K-12, an annual budget of more than $9 billion, and more than 80,000 full- and part-time employees. Mr. Koch's responsibilities encompassed virtually all noninstructional operations of the district, including finance, facilities, information technology, and all of the business functions. Mr. Koch also served the LAUSD as business manager, executive director of information services, and deputy controller. Mr. Koch was also business manager for the Kansas City, Missouri Public School District and was with Arthur Young and Company prior to entering public service. He is a graduate of the University of Missouri and a Certified Public Accountant in the states of California, Missouri, and Kansas. Currently a resident of Long Beach, California, Mr. Koch provides consulting services to public-sector clients and companies doing business with public-sector agencies.

William W. Koelm

William Koelm is the former Executive Director of Facilities and Support Operations for the Albuquerque Public Schools. In that capacity, he was responsible for capital construction, maintenance and operations, real estate, student transportation, the facility master plan, and food services. During his 12-year tenure, the rapidly growing district of 86,000 students opened 11 new schools and renovated more than 30 others. With an annual construction budget of $85 million and a maintenance and operations budget of $46 million, the district was the largest employer and had one of the largest construction programs in New Mexico. Mr. Koelm has more than 30 years of facility management experience in federal, municipal, and education environments. A retired colonel, he holds bachelor's and master's degrees in mechanical engineering from the University of Illinois.

Mike Langley

Mike Langley joined the Denver Public Schools (DPS) in November 1997 as the director of operations and maintenance. In July 1998, he assumed his present position as the Executive Director of Facility Management. Prior to coming to DPS, he served more than 24 years in the U.S. Army. He managed facilities, construction projects or construction programs in the United States, Thailand, Japan, Okinawa, Germany, Croatia, Morocco, Tunisia, Mozambique, and Iraq. Major accomplishments of his DPS facility management team include successfully managing the 1998 and 2003 general obligation bond construction programs; initiating and expanding a districtwide business diversity outreach program; implementing a districtwide facility condition assessment system; and initiating an elementary school playground program with the University of Colorado at Denver and numerous public and private foundations. He holds a B.S. degree in engineering from the University of Wisconsin, an M.S. degree in systems management from the University of Southern California, and an M.B.A. degree from Saint Martin's College in Washington.

John Lombardi

John Lombardi has served as the Administrator of Transportation Services for the School District of Philadelphia since 1989. In this capacity, he is responsible for the operation of 1,240 district and contracted routes that transport more than 33,000 students to public, non-public, and charter schools. He also oversees maintenance operations for approximately 625 school buses, 450 other vehicles, and an intra-district mail operation for the pick-up and delivery of small packages and non-U.S. mail to nearly 350 sites. He is a member of the National Association of Pupil Transportation and the Pupil Transportation Association of Pennsylvania, serving as president of the latter organization from 1998 through 2000. He is a graduate of Penn State University with a B.S. degree in business logistics.

James P. McIntyre, Jr.

Jim McIntyre is the Deputy Chief Financial Officer and Budget Director for the Boston Public Schools (BPS). In this capacity, he is responsible for developing and managing the district's $800 million budget, as well as all accounting functions for the BPS. Dr. McIntyre received his undergraduate degree from Boston College and holds master's degrees in education administration (Canisius College in Buffalo, NY) and urban affairs (Boston University), as well as a Ph.D. degree in public policy from the University of Massachusetts, Boston. Dr. McIntyre is also an instructor at Harvard University's Graduate School of Education, where he co-teaches a course on public education resource management.

Lee Nicklos

Lee Nicklos has returned as the Interim Director of Human Resources for the Pittsburgh Board of Education, where she manages the human resources and recruitment needs for 5,400 employees. Included in her responsibilities are such areas as retirement, benefits, unemployment and workers' compensation, employee relations, and personnel. Her areas of special expertise in more than 30 years supervising personnel and human resources for the city school system have included strategic planning, contract negotiations, staff development, teacher induction systems and accountability, and performance appraisals. Ms. Nicklos, a former classroom teacher, holds a B.S. degree in elementary education and a master's degree in reading and language arts from the University of Pittsburgh.

André N. Pettigrew

André Pettigrew has served as Assistant Superintendent of Denver Public Schools since 2001. In this capacity, he directs the business and noninstructional support operations of the district, including human resources, technology services, facility management, transportation, food services, and purchasing. He also has served as the district's chief personnel officer, providing strategic direction and effective management of the school system's personnel system. He is a former member of Colorado Governor Roy Romer's Executive Cabinet serving as Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) responsible for

managing the State of Colorado's business systems, including information technology, financial reporting, personnel administration, facilities, risk management, and procurement. In this capacity, he served as the State Personnel Director. He is a graduate of the University of California at Los Angeles and Harvard University's John F. Kennedy School of Government, Senior Executive Program.

Dennis L. Pool

Dennis Pool serves as the Assistant Superintendent of General Administration and Chief Financial Officer of the Omaha Public Schools. Dr. Pool was a classroom mathematics teacher and coach in Alliance, McCook, and Norris public schools from 1970 through 1983. He spent four years as a principal in the Norris Public Schools before joining the staff of the Nebraska Department of Education in 1987, working in the area of school data and information management. Dr. Pool served as the department's Administrator of School Finance and Organizational Services from 1995 through June 1997 and then joined the Omaha Public Schools. His work with the Omaha school system has focused primarily on the district's financial operations and includes responsibility for technology services and risk management. Dr. Pool holds a doctorate degree in educational administration from the University of Nebraska.

Patrick F. Quinn

Patrick F. Quinn, A.I.A., is Executive Director of the Office of Operations for the St. Paul Public Schools. His major responsibilities include management of the district's buildings and grounds, safety and security, nutrition services, and transportation departments. Since 1990, Mr. Quinn has overseen the completion of more than $400 million worth of building improvements, including the construction of four new schools, the addition of 1.2 million square feet of space, and almost 600 remodeling projects in the district. He has served on annual budget committees, chaired several groups studying space issues, and is the staff liaison to the Citizens Long Range Space Planning Advisory Committee. His work includes coordination with neighborhood groups, site councils, ad hoc committees, and the Board of Education.

Lois Rockney

Lois Rockney is the Executive Director of Business and Financial Affairs for St. Paul Public Schools (SPPS), a position that she has held since 1997. SPPS is the second largest district in the state of Minnesota, with an enrollment of approximately 43,000 students, more than 9,000 employees, and a budget of $551 million. In her current position, Ms. Rockney has responsibility for accounts payable, budgeting, graphic services, payroll, and purchasing. Prior to joining the SPPS, she held other positions in Minnesota, including auditor with the Office of the State Auditor, controller for the Edina Public Schools, and assistant superintendent for business services in the West St. Paul Area Public Schools. Ms. Rockney is active in the Minnesota Association of School Business Officials, serving on its Board of Directors from 1992 through 1999 and as

president in 1998. She is a certified public accountant licensed in the State of Minnesota and holds a B.S. in accounting from Winona State University

Christopher P. Steele

Christopher Steele is currently the Senior Director Purchases & Supply for Norfolk Public Schools, Virginia. Starting as a Navy Supply Corps Officer, Mr. Steele has more than 28 years experience in operational supply chain logistics, financial management, facility management and acquisition contracting with both the public (federal, state, and K-12) and private sector. Mr. Steele holds a master's degree in engineering and business from the University of Kansas, a master's degree in human resource management from Pepperdine University, and a B.S. degree in chemistry from Pennsylvania State University.   Mr. Steele is a Certified Purchasing Manager (C.P.M.) and Certified Management Accountant (CMA), and he attained the highest certification level in the federal Acquisition Professional Corps.

Thomas B. Stevens

Thomas Stevens recently retired as the Chief Technology Officer for the Denver Public Schools. He had 36 years of experience as a teacher, counselor, high school principal, and central office administrator with the district. He also has consulted and run workshops for school districts, state and federal agencies, and private-sector organizations for more than 25 years. In addition, Mr. Stevens has served as Honoraria Professor with the University of Colorado-Denver, Graduate School of Educational Administration, where he taught technology use in school district management. He is the author of the award-winning *School Administrator's Assistant* and six other software programs.

Leonard Sturm

Leonard Sturm served the Houston Independent School District (HISD) for 34 years in a number of positions. For the last 15 years, he served as Deputy Superintendent of Finance and Business and most recently as Chief Financial Officer. In these capacities, he had responsibility for the direction, management, and supervision of all financial and business operations of the district. Over the years, Mr. Strum served on numerous state and local committees and was a member of several professional organizations. After retiring in 2002, he was asked to lead a new venture that he had envisioned, the HISD Office of Marketing and Business Development. The office coordinates activities related to the marketing and sales of district-developed products and services that allow other districts the opportunity to acquire and use products proven effective by expert practitioners in classroom settings. The office also provides school districts the opportunity to save time and money by creating partnerships with external firms from whom high-quality goods and services can be obtained at competitive prices through an HISD sponsored cooperative procurement program.

Michael Turza

Michael Turza has been the Director of Business Services for the Milwaukee Public Schools since 1997. In this capacity, he manages facilities, pupil transportation, food services, procurement, telecommunications, and warehouse and delivery services. Mr. Turza has been with the Milwaukee Public Schools since 1987, and has served in a variety of positions over the years. Prior to joining the Milwaukee Public Schools, he worked for Ecotran Corporation as an account executive. He holds an M.A. degree in human resources from Marquette University, an M.B.A. from Baldwin-Wallace College, and a B.A. degree from Cleveland State University.

Lori Ward

Lori L. Ward joined Dayton Public Schools, Dayton, Ohio, in 1995 as a classroom teacher and in 1999 became the Executive Director of Information and Educational Technology. She oversees the district's computer, voice, and video networks encompassing six administrative buildings and 40 instructional buildings. Ms. Ward is credited with migrating the district's voice network to a private branch network, which included having telephones installed in all classrooms, designing and implementing an electronic student attendance and grade book application used by all teachers in the district, and creating a digital summer school for high school students. In addition, Ms. Ward manages the district's educational technology systems, media centers and interactive video distance learning network. In 1996, Ms. Ward received the Dayton Public Schools' Sallie Mae First Year Teacher Award. Prior to joining Dayton Public Schools, Ms. Ward spent 13 years at IBM Corp, where she held positions in administration, systems engineering, and management and received several IBM Means Service Awards, System Engineering Symposium Awards, and a Leadership Award.

Robert E. Watkins

Robert Watkins is currently Purchasing Agent for Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools in Tennessee, serving in this capacity since 2000. He earlier served eight years as a buyer in the Purchasing Division of the Finance Department of the Metropolitan Government of Nashville and Davidson County. Prior to entering the procurement profession, he was a deputy assistant secretary of commerce responsible for the international trade and competitiveness policies affecting the U.S. automotive and consumer goods-producing industries. His specialization in the automotive industry occurred during eight years as director of international trade for the Motor Vehicle Manufacturers Association. He is a graduate of Washington and Lee University and pursued graduate studies at George Washington University.

APPENDIX E. SPENDING BY FUNCTION

Comparing Kansas City Schools' Budgeted Spending per Pupil with Urban School Averages, 2004-2005[71]

Budget Category	Kansas City	Percent of Current	Urban Average	Percent of Current
Total Current Expenditures	$13,141	100.0	$8,852	100.0
Instructional Expenditures				
• Classroom Instruction	4,838	36.8	3,772	42.6
• Special Education	1,659	12.6	1,113	12.6
• Books & Materials	430	3.3	192	2.2
• Instructional Technology	33	0.3	44	0.5
• Auxiliary Instructional Services	519	4.0	363	4.1
• Curriculum & Staff Development	450	3.4	363	4.1
• Other Instructional Expenditures	587	4.5	161	1.8
Subtotal	$8,516	64.9	$6,008	67.9
Student Services				
• Health & Attendance	480	3.7	185	2.1
• Transportation	926	7.1	341	3.8
• Food Services (net costs)	4	0.0	64	0.7
• Student Activities (net costs)	72	0.6	23	0.3
• Other Student Services	0	0.0	30	0.3
Subtotal	$1,482	11.4	$643	7.3
Central & Regional Services				
• Board of Education	18	0.1	29	0.3
• Executive Administration	241	1.8	160	1.8
Subtotal	$259	1.9	$189	2.1
Operations				
• Fiscal Services	114	0.9	73	0.8
• Business Services	482	3.7	205	2.3
• Maintenance & Facilities	838	6.4	602	6.8
• Energy & Utilities	387	2.9	191	2.2
• Insurance	50	0.4	72	0.8
Subtotal	$1,871	14.3	$1,143	12.9
School-Site				
• Leadership	495	3.8	375	4.2
• Support	198	1.5	206	2.3
Subtotal	$693	5.3	$581	6.5
Other				
• Other Current Expenditures	319	2.4	$323	3.6

[71] Source: Council of the Great City Schools. Note: Figures reflect budgeted, not actual, amounts.

Council of the Great City Schools

Survey of Urban School Budgeted Expenditures
School Year 2004-2005

- Name of School District _____
- Name and Title of Persons Completing Survey_____
- Phone: (   )_____ Fax: (   ) _____ Email: _____

Instructions
Please complete this form using budgeted, rather than actual, figures for your 2004-2005 school year. Include budgeted expenditures for services that the district provides directly and those for which the district contracts. If an exact amount is not available, please provide the best estimate possible. Round figures to the nearest dollar. If the correct response to any item is $0.00, please write in a zero (0) rather than leaving the space blank so that the response can be differentiated from "not available."

A. General Information

- What is the total prek-12 enrollment of the district this school year (2004-2005)?_____
- Is your school district: ☐ Fiscally Independent ☐ Fiscally Dependent
- When does your fiscal year begin and end? Begins _____ Ends _____
- When is your budget usually approved by the school board? _____
- Is your budget approved by an outside organization or entity (e.g., city council, regional or county school authority, state, control board, or other)?   ☐ Yes   ☐ No

  -If yes, please specify outside entity approving district budget._____
  -If yes, in what month does outside entity usually approve your budget? _____

B. Budgeted Expenditures by Function, 2004-2005

- Include budgeted expenditures for all current expenditure funds (e.g., operating, special education, federal projects, transportation, etc.) but exclude funds that are intended to be self-supporting, such as food service.
- Include total budget costs of compensation for both professional and support staff—salaries, employer retirement contributions, and costs of fringe benefits—as well as the cost of supplies, travel, etc., in each functional category.

1. Current Budgeted Expenditures, 2004-2005

Function	Explanation	Budgeted Amount
Instructional Services		
Classroom instruction	Include: Prek-12 teachers, paraprofessionals, instructional coaches, and clerical personnel working with teachers in the classroom. Also include afterschool instructional programs costs. Exclude: Special education spending (see next category).	$

Special education	Include: Teachers, paraprofessionals, clinical staff, and clerical personnel assigned to work with students classified as eligible for special education services; as well services contracted to outside agencies or private schools to which the district sends special education students. Exclude: Transportation of special education students (see transportation).	$
Books & materials	Include: Textbooks, library books, audiovisuals, instructional software, and other instructional materials. Exclude: Costs of in-class computers (see next category).	$
Instructional technology	Include: Computers and other related or auxiliary technology that is used for the delivery of instruction.	$
Auxiliary Instructional Services	Include: Counselors, librarians and their support staff.	$
Improvement and Development	Include: Curriculum development, instructional supervision, in-service and professional development of staff, and leadership training and principal academies.	$
Other	Include: Other instructional services, including those that are contracted to outside agencies such as regional service agencies but are not prorated to the functions above. Exclude: Special education contracts. (Place under special education or transportation.)	$
School-Site		$
School-site leadership	Include: Offices of principals, assistant principals, and other supervisory staff.	
School-site support	Include: Secretaries, clerks, and noninstructional aides.	
Student Services		
Health and Attendance	Include: Physical and mental health staff and services such as nurses, psychologists, social workers, related paraprofessional and clerical staff and materials.	$
Transportation	Include: Staff, drivers, maintenance and operation of equipment, fuel, and contracts, for	$

	transporting public school pupils even if a separate transportation fund is maintained. Also include special education transportation and transportation for non-public and charter schools.	
Food Service	Include: Net cost to district of operating food service program (may be $0 if self-supporting). Exclude: Expenditures offset by income from cash sales and state and/or federal subsidies.	$
Student Activities	Include: Net cost to district (may be $0 if self-supporting) of extracurricular student activities. Exclude: Expenditures offset by gate receipts, activity fees, etc.	$
Other	Include: Other student services (only net cost to district).	$
Board of Education Services	Include: Board members, board staff, travel & meeting expenses, election services, legal services or general counsel, census, tax assessment/collection services, and similar Board services.	$
Executive Administration	Include: Offices of the superintendent, deputy, associate, assistant, and area (regional) superintendents. Also include negotiation services; state and federal relations; communications (or public information) and community relations; planning, research, evaluation, testing, statistics, and data processing; and related central office services not listed elsewhere. Exclude: Services (listed elsewhere) for instruction; fiscal services; operations (or business services); maintenance; pupil personnel; and school-site leadership.	$
Fiscal Services	Include: Fiscal services (payroll, budgeting, accounting, internal auditing, short-term interest, etc.); facilities acquisition and construction services; and similar finance-related services not included elsewhere. Exclude: Capital expenditures.	$
Business Operations	Include: Procurement; warehousing; printing; management information services, human resources and personnel; security; TV and radio. Exclude: Maintenance, food services,	

	transportation or other listed operations.	
Facilities and Maintenance	Include: Staff, equipment, and supplies for the care, upkeep, and operation of buildings, grounds, security, custodial and other services. Exclude: Expenditures (listed elsewhere) for major equipment purchased from a special capital purchases fund, utilities, and heating/cooling fuel.	$
Environment, Energy, and Utilities	Include: Fuel for heating and cooling plus all utilities including telephone (if budgeted to one districtwide account), electrical, water, and sanitation. Exclude: Fuel for transportation. (Place under transportation.)	$
Insurance	Include: Fire insurance, professional liability insurance, and other self-insurance expenses.	$
All Other Current Expenditures	Include: All other expenditures not reported elsewhere. Exclude: Community services, recreation services, and junior and community colleges.	
Subtotal Budget for Current Spending, 2004-2005	Dollar amount reported should be the total of all current budget figures listed above. Please double-check figures for accuracy.	$

In addition to the current budgeted expenditures detailed above, the district budgeted the following on non-current expenditures:

2. Non-current Budgeted Expenditures, 2004-2005

Capital Outlay	Include: Expenditures from any special capital outlay accounts for new and replacement buildings, vehicles, and other major equipment items. Exclude: Expenditures for capital outlay purchases already reported above.	$
Debt Retirement	Include: Payments on principal and payments to school-housing authorities.	$
Interest Paid on Debt	Include: Interest on long-term debts only.	$
Subtotal Budget for Non-current Spending, 2004-2005	Dollar amount reported should be the total of non-current budget figures in this section. Please double-check figures for accuracy.	$

Grand Total Budget, 2004-2005	Include: Sum of current subtotal (section #1) and non-current subtotal (section #2) from above.	$

C. Budgeted Expenditures for Staff Compensation, 2004-2005

Spending amounts in this section overlap with those in the previous section and are designed to present a different view of school spending. This section looks at specific expenditures by object rather than by function.

(a) Salaries, Retirement Contributions, and Fringe Benefits

Type of Personnel	Spending for Salaries & Wages	Spending for Contributions to Employee Retirement & Social Security	Spending for Other Fringe Benefits	Total Amount
Central Administration Personnel: Include central office and area office professional and managerial personnel.	$	$	$	$
School-site Leadership: Include principals and assistant principals.	$	$	$	$
Classroom Teachers: Include salaries of both contract and substitute teachers.	$	$	$	$
Auxiliary Professional Personnel: Include professional personnel in direct support of the instructional program and other professional personnel working with students (librarians, counselors, nurses, etc.).	$	$	$	$
Support Personnel: Include all other employees of the school district, e.g., clerks, custodians, bus drivers, teacher aides.	$	$	$	S

Exclude food service personnel if these people are paid from a self-supporting food-services fund.				
Totals	$	$	$	$

(b) Employer Payments to Retirement Systems and Social Security (FICA)

- Employer contributions to staff retirement systems and Social Security (FICA) for professional and support staff may be handled in several ways as related to the local school district budget: they may (1) appear in the local school district budget, (2) be paid directly to the retirement system by a state or municipal government, or (3) be paid through some combination of these methods. Employer contribution procedures may also differ for professional and for support personnel within the same school district.

- Check (√) the items below that best describe the procedure used for employer contributions to the employee retirement system and Social Security (FICA) in your school district. Check (√) one procedure in each of the four (4) columns.

Amount of Employer Contribution for Retirement	Professional Staff		Support Staff	
	Retirement System	FICA	Retirement System	FICA
All: Entire employer contribution in local school district budget. (Check even if state will eventually reimburse local budget.)				
Shared: With another governmental unit (municipal, county, or state).				
None: All employer contributions paid by another governmental unit.				
Not applicable: Employees not covered under this program.				

D. Other

▪ Does your district pay for services from an <u>intermediate or regional service agency</u> without the cost of these services appearing in your district's budget?

☐ Yes   ☐ No

▪ Are all costs for <u>student health services</u> included in your budget or are some of these services provided by another agency from their budgets? (Check one.)

☐ All costs included in district budget   ☐ Some or all provided by another agency
`
▪ Are all costs for <u>student security services</u> included in your budget or are some of these services provided by another agency from their budgets? (Check one.)

☐ All costs included in district budget   ☐ Some or all provided by another agency

• Are all costs for <u>after-school activities</u> and programs included in your budget or are some of these services provided by another agency or organization from their budgets? (Check one.)

☐ All costs included in district budget   ☐ Some or all provided by another agency

• Are all costs for <u>student transportation services</u> included in your budget or are some of these services provided by another agency or organization from their budgets? (Check one.)

☐ All costs included in district budget   ☐ Some or all provided by another agency

• Are all costs for <u>e-rate related services</u> included in your budget or are some of these services provided by another agency or organization from their budgets? (Check one.)

☐ All costs included in district budget   ☐ Some or all provided by another agency

▪ Do you contract out more than 50 percent of the functions listed below? (Check one option for each of the five.)

Student transportation	☐ Yes	☐ No
Food Service	☐ Yes	☐ No
Maintenance of facilities/grounds	☐ Yes	☐ No
Special education	☐ Yes	☐ No
School security	☐ Yes	☐ No

**Please return completed survey by April 30 to Michael Casserly or Robert Carlson at the
Council of the Great City Schools, 1301 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW, Suite 702,
Washington, DC 20004.
Fax: (202) 393-2400**

Thank You

APPENDIX F. DISTRICT SCHOOLS

Student Enrollment vs. Building Capacity
Kansas City (Missouri) School District K-12 Population

FY 2005
Final

	Location Code	Enrollment as of 9/28/05	Building Capacity*	Percent Occupied
Elementary Schools:				
Askew	4040	272	421	65%
Attucks	4060	242	402	60%
Blenheim	4120	209	419	50%
Bryant	4180	220	417	53%
Chick	4240	252	262	96%
Cook	4280	257	334	77%
Carver	4290	210	408	51%
Border Star	4300	260	417	62%
Trailwoods	4310	390	408	96%
East	4330	566	607	93%
Foreign Lang Academy	4350	658	871	76%
Fairmount	4380	232	206	113%
Faxon Mont	4420	215	334	64%
Franklin	4450	269	519	52%
Garfield	4460	340	539	63%
Gladstone	4500	525	583	90%
Graceland	4520	216	348	62%
Hartman	4580	278	453	61%
James	4700	365	409	89%
Knotts	4760	258	460	56%
Korte/NRC	4770	516	516	100%
Ladd	4800	264	419	63%
Longan	4860	292	345	85%
Longfellow	4880	254	318	80%
McCoy	4900	270	285	95%
Melcher	5020	204	408	50%
Moore	5060	158	258	61%
Mt. Washington	5080	255	421	61%
Phillips	5200	258	360	72%
Pinkerton	5220	234	285	82%
Pitcher	5240	255	371	69%
Richardson	5250	198	474	42%
West Rock Creek	5320	252	204	124%
Scarritt	5380	384	388	99%
Southeast Elementary	5420	508	833	61%

Paige	5430	560	583		96%
Banneker	5440	334	583		57%
Holliday	5450	408	566		72%
Sugar Creek	5460	215	164		131%
Swinney	5500	370	390		95%
Three Trails	5570	286	322		89%
Troost	5580	258	468		55%
Garcia	5630	486	441		110%
Weeks	5650	209	536		39%
Wheatley	5660	199	396		50%
Whittier	5700	358	445		80%
Woodland	5740	346	430		80%
Total Elementary Schools		**14,565**	**20,026**		**73%**
Middle Schools:					
Central	2060	412	1,013		41%
King	2120	398	945		42%
Lincoln Middle	2180	520	968		54%
Rogers	2200	539	856		63%
Northeast	2240	621	1,183		52%
Nowlin	2280	673	1,251		54%
KCMSA	2300	580	855		68%
Westport Middle	2400	344	704	**	49%
Clark @ Merservy	2500	332	361		92%
Total Middle Schools		**4,419**	**8,136**		**54%**
Senior Schools:					
Central	1100	998	1,632		61%
Lincoln Coll Prep	1220	726	1,479		49%
Northeast	1340	1,148	1,683		68%
Paseo	1400	610	1,556		39%
Southeast	1460	757	1,569		48%
Van Horn	1580	1,179	1,734		68%
Westport Senior	1640	604	1,202	**	50%
Total Senior Schools		**6,022**	**10,855**		**55%**
Districtwide Totals		**25,006**	**39,017**		**64%**
K-12 Schools					

* Building Capacity based on data provided by the Research Office's report KCMSD Planning Data dated 2/25/03.

** Research Office provided data on 11-11-04.

APPENDIX G. BENCHMARKING KANSAS CITY

The chart below presents the average scores of the curriculum and instructional Strategic Support Team on a draft tool developed by the Council of the Great City Schools to benchmark school districts against the practices and characteristics of faster-improving urban school systems on areas that the organization's research shows are instrumental in boosting student achievement districtwide. Scores range from 1.0 (lowest) to 5.0 (highest).

Political Preconditions							
Setting a Vision							**District Score**
1. Board has not articulated a clear direction for the future of the district.	1	2	3	4	5	Board articulates a vision around where it wants the district to go.	2.0
2. Board has multiple objectives that compete with improved achievement.	1	2	3	4	5	Board sets student achievement as a clear, top priority and uses this to guide decisions.	2.3
3. Board shows no sense of urgency for improvement.	1	2	3	4	5	Board proclaims urgency for raising student achievement and establishes a "no excuses" attitude.	2.0
School Board							
4. Board is fractured, and most decisions are made on split votes.	1	2	3	4	5	Board has a stable working majority on most issues.	2.7
5. Board is involved in administrative and operational issues of the district.	1	2	3	4	5	Board is focused on policy-making and lets superintendent handle policy implementation and administration.	2.0
6. Board devotes most of its time discussing nonacademic issues.	1	2	3	4	5	Board devotes most of its time monitoring academic progress of district.	1.7
Superintendent							
7. Board selects superintendent because he/she had success elsewhere and brings own vision about how to succeed.	1	2	3	4	5	Board selects superintendent because of his /her commitment to pursue board's vision and priorities.	3.0

	1	2	3	4	5		
8. Board has nebulous goals for superintendent and has no specific provisions for holding him/her accountable.	1	2	3	4	5	Board sets initial goals for superintendent and holds him/her accountable for making progress on them. Superintendent welcomes the accountability.	3.0
9. Board and superintendent are not in accord about the direction of the school district.	1	2	3	4	5	Board and superintendent refine district goals jointly and are in agreement about them.	3.0
10. Board evaluates superintendent mostly on administrative operations.	1	2	3	4	5	Board evaluates superintendent mostly on the progress the district is making on student achievement.	2.5
11. Board and superintendent experience high rates of turnover.	1	2	3	4	5	Board and superintendent have stable and lengthy relationship as the district improves.	2.5
Subtotal: Political Preconditions							2.4
Diagnosing Situation							
12. Board and superintendent conduct no assessment of the district's challenges, conduct a general assessment, or use an assessment brought to the district by the superintendent.	1	2	3	4	5	Board and superintendent jointly analyze specific local factors affecting student achievement that are under the control of the district.	2.0
13. District leadership does not consider strategies that are being successful in other cities.	1	2	3	4	5	District leadership spends time and effort seeking out evidence of what works in other cities.	2.3
Making Plans							
14. Board and superintendent have no specific plan for raising student achievement or plan lacks details and tactics.	1	2	3	4	5	Board and superintendent develop a detailed blueprint for raising student achievement.	2.0
15. Board endorses superintendent's plan but has little role in	1	2	3	4	5	Board is involved actively in crafting strategic plan and has a strong interest in its	3.0

crafting it.						implementation and success.	
Selling Reform							
16. Board and/or superintendent develop reform plan on their own.	1	2	3	4	5	Board and superintendent meet with community leaders and listen to them as plan is being developed.	2.0
17. Superintendent takes the lead in selling the reform plan, but board members are only sporadically involved.	1	2	3	4	5	Board and superintendent work jointly to sell the reform plan to key community stakeholders.	N/A
18. Board and/or superintendent moves forward with reform plan without community input.	1	2	3	4	5	Board and superintendent garner community support before moving forward with plan.	N/A
Subtotal: Strategic Planning							2
Administrative and Operational Foundations							
Setting Goals							
19. District lacks specific systemwide academic goals or timelines for meeting goals.	1	2	3	4	5	Board and superintendent translate the reform plan into "SMART" goals– **S**tretching, **M**easurable, **A**spiring, **R**igorous, and with **T**imelines.	1.5
20. District's goals lack explicit targets for academic performance of subgroups.	1	2	3	4	5	Districtwide goals have specific targets for improving the academic performance of subgroups.	1.0
21. District does not have school-by-school goals or goals do not align with systemwide targets.	1	2	3	4	5	Districtwide goals have been translated into specific school-by-school targets for principals.	1.5
22. School-by-school goals lack specificity and/or do not have targets for subgroups.	1	2	3	4	5	School-by-school goals are specific and have explicit targets for subgroups.	1.3
23. "School Improvement Plans" do not contain school and subgroup targets.	1	2	3	4	5	School-specific goals, including subgroup targets, appear in "School Improvement Plans."	1.3
24. District's work seems fractured or distracted by noninstructional	1	2	3	4	5	District appears to be focused relentlessly on improving student	1.8

priorities.						achievement.	
Being Accountable							
25. Central office staff members have nebulous goals or no goals that are tied to districtwide student performance.	1	2	3	4	5	Central office staff members have specific performance goals tied to districtwide targets.	2.3
26. District has no formal mechanism for holding senior staff accountable for student achievement.	1	2	3	4	5	District has a way (e.g., performance contracts) to hold senior staff accountable for district results.	1.0
27. School board can protect favored senior staff without regard to districtwide progress.	1	2	3	4	5	Superintendent evaluates senior staff based in part on progress on districtwide goals.	1.7
28. Principals are evaluated mostly on administrative performance.	1	2	3	4	5	Principals are evaluated on their progress in meeting their school's goals and targets.	2.0
29. School board and/or constituent groups protect principals when progress is not made.	1	2	3	4	5	Superintendent can remove or transfer principals for lack of progress on meeting school goals.	2.0
30. District does not recognize staff or principals when goals are attained.	1	2	3	4	5	District has a well-publicized system to recognize staff or principals when goals are attained.	2.3
Operating Smoothly							
31. Central office is generally seen as focused on compliance and rule-setting.	1	2	3	4	5	Central office is generally seen as working to lead and support schools in meeting goals.	2.3
32. Noninstructional operations are seen as a barrier to meeting academic goals.	1	2	3	4	5	Noninstructional operations generally work to support the district's academic goals.	2.5
33. Noninstructional staff is seen as remote and unresponsive to immediate needs of schools.	1	2	3	4	5	Noninstructional operations staff is seen as responsive to the immediate needs of schools.	2.3
34. Noninstructional staff	1	2	3	4	5	Superintendent is able to	2.3

members are often promoted because of longevity or contacts.						hire and place noninstructional staff members because of their expertise.	
Finding Funds							
35. District has little way to fund reforms that it is pursuing.	1	2	3	4	5	District identifies how it will fund reforms by moving monies internally or through external sources.	3.3
36. District pursues and/or accepts funds without regard to their relationship to plan.	1	2	3	4	5	District pursues and accepts funds that are tied explicitly to strategic plan, reforms, and priorities.	2.5
37. District is not moving funds into its instructional priorities.	1	2	3	4	5	District is moving funds into instructional priorities.	3.3
38. District has no concerted effort to build public confidence or attract external funds to support district priorities	1	2	3	4	5	District is working to build public confidence for reforms in order to attract new funds.	2.3
39. District has a reputation for management and fiscal inefficiency.						District is working to improve operations and financial standing.	N/A
Subtotal: Administrative and Operational Foundations							2.0
Programmatic Strategies							
Unifying Curriculum							
40. District permits schools to choose their own programs in reading and math.	1	2	3	4	5	District picks a uniform program in reading and math at lower grades or uses an overarching framework for its instructional system.	3.3
41. District has a multiplicity of reading and math programs in its schools.	1	2	3	4	5	District uses a single program or framework for teaching reading and math at the lower grades.	2.5
42. District has not analyzed and filled the gaps between its program and state standards and tests.	1	2	3	4	5	District's reading and math program has been explicitly aligned with state standards and assessments.	3.3
43. District reading and math instruction is not	1	2	3	4	5	District's reading and math program or curriculum is	3.0

	1	2	3	4	5		
vertically aligned or is aligned by grade bands.						aligned grade-to-grade.	
44. District uses a reading program that is not scientifically-based.	1	2	3	4	5	District uses a scientifically-based reading program developed after 2000.	4.0
45. District has no policy defining the time each day teachers are to spend on reading and math instruction.	1	2	3	4	5	District requires a specific amount of time each day for reading and math instruction.	3.3
46. District lacks a system by which it determines the pace at which skills are taught.	1	2	3	4	5	District has an explicit pacing system to ensure teachers are covering the curriculum before skills are tested.	2.3
Training Staff							
47. Schools define and control the bulk of professional development for principals and teachers.	1	2	3	4	5	District defines and controls the bulk of professional development for principals and teachers.	1.8
48. School-by-school professional development focuses on many different instructional programs not related to the district's programs.	1	2	3	4	5	Districtwide professional development is focused explicitly on implementation of the district's reading and math programs.	2.5
49. Professional development is not defined on the basis of teacher skills or student needs.	1	2	3	4	5	Districtwide professional development is differentiated by teacher skills and student needs.	2.8
50. Professional development is sporadic and fractured.	1	2	3	4	5	Professional development is intense, ongoing, and is followed by support and technical assistance.	2.3
51. District's teacher recruitment efforts are not strong enough to prevent the weakest teachers from continuing.	1	2	3	4	5	District's teacher recruitment efforts are strong and timely enough to strengthen teaching pool over time.	1.3

Pressing Reforms							
52. District approves reform policies and waits for staff to accept them at school level.	1	2	3	4	5	District-approved reforms are pressed explicitly into schools and classrooms.	3.3
53. District is uncertain about the extent to which its reading and math policies and programs are implemented and has no way to monitor their implementation.	1	2	3	4	5	District pushes explicitly for districtwide implementation of reading and math policies and programs through "walkthroughs," classroom observations by principals, lead teachers or coaches, or other methods.	2.8
54. District does not have its principals monitor classroom practice in any systematic way.	1	2	3	4	5	District holds principals accountable for monitoring the implementation of reforms.	3.0
55. Central office leaves instruction up to individual schools.	1	2	3	4	5	Central office takes responsibility for nature and quality of instruction.	2.3
Using Data							
56. District waits until end of school year before testing students and determining whether they have fallen behind.	1	2	3	4	5	District administers regular (often quarterly) low-stakes tests of student progress over course of school year to assess student progress.	3.5
57. District has not determined if its tests or quarterlies are aligned with state standards and assessments.	1	2	3	4	5	District end-of-year and interim tests are aligned explicitly with state standards and assessments.	2.8
58. District does not disaggregate either end-of-year or quarterly tests by school and subgroup.	1	2	3	4	5	District disaggregates end-of-year and interim tests by school and subgroup.	3.5
59. District distributes interim and final test results to schools and teachers in the next school year.	1	2	3	4	5	District distributes results of interim and end-of-year test results fast enough to allow teachers to use them.	3.0

	1	2	3	4	5		
60. District relies almost exclusively on test data to measure its progress.	1	2	3	4	5	District performance indicators include an array of data beyond standardized test scores.	2.8
61. District does not use student test results to determine where to intervene or provide professional development. Results often used simply to rank or rate schools.	1	2	3	4	5	District uses results of annual and interim tests to decide on where and how to target instructional interventions and provide professional development.	2.8
62. District has no ongoing way of training principals and teachers on how to interpret and use test data.	1	2	3	4	5	District provides ongoing training to principals and teachers on the use of end-of-year and interim test results to improve instruction.	2.5
Focus on Lowest-Performing schools							
63. Lowest-performing schools receive little attention over and above districtwide program or are left to fend for themselves.	1	2	3	4	5	District has a specific strategy designed specifically to improve instruction in its lowest-performing schools.	2.0
64. District lacks any specific interventions for its lowest-performing schools or lets schools identify their own strategies.	1	2	3	4	5	District has a bank of specific interventions for its lowest-performing schools and students.	2.3
65. District does not differentiate instruction for its low-performing students.	1	2	3	4	5	District differentiates instruction for its low-performing students.	2.0
66. District's "School Improvement Planning" exists only on paper and does not drive real improvement.	1	2	3	4	5	District uses the "School Improvement Planning" process to improve performance in its lowest-performing schools.	2.3
67. District assigns the least experienced and weakest teachers to its lowest-performing schools.	1	2	3	4	5	District provides incentives for its most experienced teachers to work in the lowest-performing schools.	1.3

68. District provides the same resources to all schools regardless of need.	1	2	3	4	5	District provides extra resources to its lowest-performing schools.	2.5
Starting Early							
69. District has no strategy for where to start or how to sequence its reforms.	1	2	3	4	5	District starts reforms in early elementary grades and works up.	1.8
Handling Upper Grades							
70. District has no strategy for improving instruction for older students who have fallen behind.	1	2	3	4	5	District has fledgling strategies to strengthen teaching for older students.	3.3
71. District provides no extra time for students lacking basic skills.	1	2	3	4	5	District provides additional instructional time for older students who lack basic skills.	3.3
72. District offers AP courses in select schools only.	1	2	3	4	5	District offers AP courses in all high schools.	1.0
73. District does not monitor course-taking patterns of high school students.	1	2	3	4	5	District actively encourages and places high school students in higher level courses.	1.3
Subtotal: Programmatic Strategies							2.6
Total: All Categories							2.4

APPENDIX H. ABOUT THE COUNCIL

The **Council of the Great City Schools** is a coalition of 66 of the nation's largest urban school systems. Its Board of Directors is composed of the Superintendent of Schools and one School Board member from each member district. An Executive Committee of 24 individuals, equally divided in number between Superintendents and School Board members, provides oversight of the 501(c3) organization in between Board meetings. The mission of the Council is to advocate for and to assist in the improvement of public education in the nation's major cities. To meet that mission, the Council provides services to its members in the areas of legislation, research, communications, teacher recruitment, curriculum and instruction, and management. The group convenes two major conferences each year on promising practices in urban education; conducts studies on urban school conditions and trends; and operates ongoing networks of senior managers in each city with responsibility in such areas as federal programs, operations and finance, personnel, communications, research, technology, and others. The Council, founded in 1956 and incorporated in 1961, has its headquarters in Washington, D.C. and can be found on the internet at www.cgcs.org.

History of Council Reviews

City	Area	Year
Albuquerque		
	Facilities and Roofing	2003
	Human Resources	2003
	Information Technology	2003
	Special Education	2005
	Legal Services	2005
Anchorage		
	Finance	2004
Broward County (FLA.)		
	Information Technology	2000
Buffalo		
	Superintendent Support	2000
	Organizational Structure	2000
	Curriculum and Instruction	2000
	Personnel	2000
	Facilities and Operations	2000
	Communications	2000
	Finance	2000
	Finance II	2003
Caddo Parish (LA.)		
	Facilities	2004
Charleston		
	Special Education	2005
Cincinnati		
	Curriculum and Instruction	2004
Cleveland		
	Student Assignments	1999, 2000
	Transportation	2000
	Safety and Security	2000
	Facilities Financing	2000
	Facilities Operations	2000
	Transportation	2004
	Curriculum and Instruction	2005
Columbus		
	Superintendent Support	2001
	Human Resources	2001
	Facilities Financing	2002
	Finance and Treasury	2003
	Budget	2003
	Curriculum and Instruction	2005

Dayton		
	Superintendent Support	2001
	Curriculum and Instruction	2001
	Finance	2001
	Communications	2002
	Curriculum and Instruction	2005
	Budget	2005
Denver		
	Superintendent Support	2001
	Personnel	2001
	Curriculum and Instruction	2005
	Bilingual Education	2006
Des Moines		
	Budget and Finance	2003
Detroit		
	Curriculum and Instruction	2002
	Assessment	2002
	Communications	2002
	Curriculum and Assessment	2003
	Communications	2003
	Textbook Procurement	2004
	Food Services	2006
Greensboro		
	Bilingual Education	2002
	Information Technology	2003
	Special Education	2003
	Facilities	2004
Hillsborough County		
	Transportation	2005
	Procurement	2005
Jacksonville		
	Organization and Management	2002
	Operations	2002
	Human Resources	2002
	Finance	2002
	Information Technology	2002
	Finance	2006
Kansas City		
	Human Resources	2005
	Information Technology	2005
	Finance	2005
	Operations	2005
	Purchasing	2006

	Curriculum and Instruction	2006
Los Angeles		
	Budget and Finance	2002
	Organizational Structure	2005
	Finance	2005
	Information Technology	2005
	Human Resources	2005
	Business Services	2005
Louisville		
	Management Information	2005
Miami-Dade County		
	Construction Management	2003
Milwaukee		
	Research and Testing	1999
	Safety and Security	2000
	School Board Support	1999
	Curriculum and Instruction	2006
Minneapolis		
	Curriculum and Instruction	2004
	Finance	2004
	Federal Programs	2004
New Orleans		
	Personnel	2001
	Transportation	2002
	Information Technology	2003
	Hurricane Damage Assessment	2005
	Curriculum and Instruction	2006
Norfolk		
	Testing and Assessment	2003
Philadelphia		
	Curriculum and Instruction	2003
	Federal Programs	2003
	Food Service	2003
	Facilities	2003
	Transportation	2003
	Human Resources	2004
Pittsburgh		
	Curriculum and Instruction	2005
	Technology	2006
	Finance	2006
Providence		
	Business Operations	2001
	MIS and Technology	2001

	Personnel	2001
Richmond		
	Transportation	2003
	Curriculum and Instruction	2003
	Federal Programs	2003
	Special Education	2003
Rochester		
	Finance and Technology	2003
	Transportation	2004
	Food Services	2004
San Francisco		
	Technology	2001
St. Louis		
	Special Education	2003
	Curriculum and Instruction	2004
	Federal Programs	2004
	Textbook Procurement	2004
	Human Resources	2005
Toledo		
	Curriculum and Instruction	2005
Washington, D.C.		
	Finance and Procurement	1998
	Personnel	1998
	Communications	1998
	Transportation	1998
	Facilities Management	1998
	Special Education	1998
	Legal and General Counsel	1998
	MIS and Technology	1998
	Curriculum and Instruction	2003
	Budget and Finance	2005
	Transportation	2005

Instructional Strategic Support Team interviewing Kansas City teachers on April 19, 2006.