MONTGOMERY COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS SCHOOL DIVISION EFFICIENCY REVIEW

FINAL REPORT

Submitted by:

MGT
OF AMERICA, INC.

March 28, 2007

EFFICIENCY REVIEW OF MONTGOMERY COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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The Commonwealth of Virginia inaugurated the school efficiency review program in the 2004-05 school year as a part of Governor Mark Warner's *Education for a Lifetime* initiative. This program involves contracting with outside educational experts to perform efficiency reviews for school divisions within the Commonwealth. School divisions must volunteer to participate. The results of the reviews provide school divisions with assistance in determining whether their educational dollars are being utilized to the fullest extent possible.

Since its inception, the program has expanded to include a greater number of school divisions each year. In October of 2006, MGT of America was awarded a contract to conduct an Efficiency Review of the Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS). As stated in the Request for Proposals (RFP), the purpose of the study is to conduct an external review of the efficiency of various offices and operations within MCPS and to present a final report of the findings, recommendations, and projected costs and/or cost savings as recommendations. The object of the review is to identify ways that MCPS could realize cost savings in non-instructional areas in order to redirect those funds towards classroom activities.

Overview of Montgomery County Public Schools

Montgomery County is located in the southwestern region of Virginia known as New River Valley. The county has a land area of 388 square miles and lies between the Appalachian Plateau and the Blue Ridge Mountains. This area was first explored in 1671 and the first settlers came from Pennsylvania and eastern Virginia. The county was formed in 1776 and was named after General Richard Montgomery. The general was an American war hero of the French and Indian War and the American Revolution. The town of Christiansburg, the county seat, was incorporated in 1792 in honor of Colonel William Christian. The town of Blacksburg was incorporated in 1871 on land donated by William Black. Today Montgomery County has a population of approximately 88,000.

According to the 2006-07 Annual Report, Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) consists of 12 elementary schools, four middle schools, four high schools, and two alternative schools. They serve over 9,500 students and spend $8,428 per pupil. It is the mission of MCPS to prepare all students so that they develop the knowledge and skills to achieve success and become active citizens who contribute to their communities. The division employs approximately 545 classroom teachers and the average teacher salary is $39,014. MCPS is led by a School Board of seven members. All members are elected by popular vote and meet twice a month.

Review Methodology

The methodology MGT used to prepare for and conduct the Montgomery County Public Schools Efficiency Review is described in this section. Throughout our practice we have discovered that to be successful, an efficiency review of a school division must:

- Be based upon a very detailed workplan and time schedule.

- Specifically take into account the unique student body and environment within which the school division operates.

- Obtain input from Board members, administrators, staff, and the community.

- Identify the existence, appropriateness, and use of specific educational objectives.

- Contain comparisons to other similar school divisions to provide a reference point.

- Follow a common set of guidelines tailored specifically to the division being reviewed.

- Include analyses of the efficiency of work practices.

- Identify the level and effectiveness of externally imposed work tasks and procedures.

- Identify both exemplary programs and practices as well as needed improvements.

- Document all findings.

- Present straightforward and practical recommendations for improvements.

With this in mind, our methodology primarily involved a focused use of Virginia review guidelines as well as MGT's audit guidelines following the analysis of both existing data and new information obtained through various means of employee input. Each of the strategies we used is described below.

Review of Existing Records and Data Sources

During the period between project initiation and beginning our on-site review, we simultaneously conducted many activities. Among these activities were the identification and collection of existing reports and data sources that provided us with recent information related to the various administrative functions and operations we would review in Montgomery County Public Schools.

More than 100 documents were requested from MCPS. Examples of materials MGT requested included, but were not limited, to the following:

- School Board policies and administrative procedures.
- Organizational charts.
- Program and compliance reports.
- Technology plan.
- Annual performance reports.
- Independent financial audits.
- Plans for curriculum and instruction.
- Annual budget and expenditure reports.
- Job descriptions.
- Salary schedules.
- Personnel handbooks.

Data were analyzed from each of these sources, and the information was used as a starting point for collecting additional data during our on-site visit.

Diagnostic Review

A diagnostic review of MCPS was conducted from November 9 and 10, 2006. An MGT consultant interviewed central office administrators, community leaders, School Board members, and county Board of Supervisors concerning the management and operations of Montgomery County Public Schools.

Employee Surveys

To secure the involvement of central office administrators, principals/assistant principals, and teachers in the focus and scope of the efficiency review, three on-line surveys were prepared and disseminated in November 2006. Through the use of anonymous surveys, division staff were given the opportunity to express their views about the management and operations of Montgomery County Public Schools. These surveys were similar in format and content to provide a database for determining how the opinions and perceptions of central office administrators, principals/assistant principals, and teachers vary.

MCPS staff were given from November 14, 2006 through December 8, 2006 to respond. The MCPS response rates for the survey groups were good. Ninety (90) percent of administrators returned a survey as did 85 percent of principals/assistant principals and 36 percent of teachers. MGT compared all survey responses between the two employee groups and compared all MCPS administrators and teachers to those in the more than 30 districts where MGT has conducted similar surveys.

Complete survey results are found in Appendix A. Specific survey items pertinent to findings in the functional areas MGT reviewed are presented within each chapter.

Conducting the Formal On-Site Review

A team of seven consultants conducted the formal on-site review of Montgomery County Public Schools during the week of November 27, 2006. As part of our on-site review, we examined the following MCPS systems and operations:

- Division Organization and Management
- Human Resources

- Financial Management, Purchasing, and Cost of Education Services
- Facilities Use and Management
- Transportation
- Administrative and Instructional Technology
- Food Service

Prior to the on-site review, each team member was provided with an extensive set of information about MCPS operations. During the on-site work, team members conducted detailed reviews of the structure and operations of Montgomery County Public Schools in their assigned functional areas. Consultants visited 16 schools as part of their review.

MGT hosted a community open house at New Christianburg Middle School to allow school and division staff, as well as community members, to provide input in the process. Twenty-eight persons attended this open house which was held on November 30, 2006. If anyone was unable to attend this event, MGT also provided a Web site address for public input. Numerous comments were provided through this additional forum.

Our systematic assessment of Montgomery County Public Schools included the use of MGT's *Guidelines for Conducting Management and Performance Audits of School Districts*. In addition, the Commonwealth of Virginia school efficiency review guidelines were used. Following our collection and analysis of existing data and new information, we tailored our guidelines to reflect local policies and administrative procedures; the unique conditions of Montgomery County Public Schools, and the input of administrators in the school division. Our on-site review included meetings with appropriate central office and school-level staff as well as Montgomery County officials, and reviews of documentation provided by these individuals.

Comparison Summary

MGT performed a data comparison between Montgomery County Public Schools and other divisions in its cluster-divisions that are close to the same size and the same part of the Commonwealth. When comparing data on the Montgomery County Public Schools to the other specified school divisions within the commonwealth of Virginia, MCPS has the lowest student population, the highest number of teachers per 1,000 students, the highest ratio of pupils to classroom teaching positions for grades K-7, and the lowest ratio of pupils to classroom teaching positions for grades 8-12.

The Montgomery County Public Schools reports the third lowest instruction disbursements per pupil and the third highest administration disbursements per pupil. In regard to receipts by fund source, the division reports that most of their funds come from local funds. When compared to the peer divisions, Montgomery County reports a higher percentage than the division average from state funds, but is comparable to the peer division average in federal and other funds.

In terms of student demographics, Montgomery County has the lowest student population and student population per 1,000 general population. Montgomery has the highest number of total schools along with Augusta and Rockingham. MCPS has the highest percentage of economically disadvantaged students and the second lowest percentage of students with disabilities among these peer divisions.

Key Commendations

Detailed findings for each commendation for exemplary practices are found in the full report in Chapters 2 through 8. Following are the major commendations for which Montgomery County Public Schools is recognized.

- The MCPS School Board, superintendent, administration, and staff develop a comprehensive Board meeting agenda and information packet that are provided to members of the School Board **(Chapter 2)**.

- The superintendent has developed numerous internal and external advisory groups to assist in enhancing communication **(Chapter 2)**.

- MCPS and the Montgomery County Board of Supervisors have renovated a joint facility for the administration of both organizations **(Chapter 2)**.

- The entire policy manual is kept up-to-date **(Chapter 2)**.

- MCPS is commended for having an inclusive and collaborative budget process that includes input from school principals and department heads **(Chapter 3)**.

- MCPS is commended for having a grants office that proactively targets and seeks grant funding and for managing grant funds efficiently **(Chapter 3).**

- MCPS is commended for its warehouse management and the efficiency with which it competitively procures, manages, and distributes those items most commonly used by the school division **(Chapter 3)**.

- MCPS is commended for initiating and implementing innovative programs that serve different student populations and for seeking new funding and creating partnerships to carry out such programs **(Chapter 3)**.

- Auburn Elementary School and MCPS are commended for implementing a successful and effective program through a partnership with an institution of higher education, to the mutual benefit of both entities **(Chapter 3)**.

- MCPS has a proactive recruitment plan for the hiring of teachers **(Chapter 4)**.

- MCPS has implemented an on-line job applicant management system **(Chapter 4)**.

- MCPS has implemented an automated SubFinder system **(Chapter 4)**.

■ MCPS has decreased the number of days that teachers are absent from their teaching responsibilities **(Chapter 4)**.

■ The educational facilities of MCPS are well planned, cleaned, and maintained. The facilities use and management functions are effective and utilize several best practices **(Chapter 5)**.

■ The facilities are based on the educational program and on accurate enrollment projections. The design process involves input from all stakeholders, including administrators, teachers, parents, students, and the maintenance and operations staff **(Chapter 5)**.

■ The maintenance and operation of the facilities is accomplished in an efficient and effective manner in order to provide a safe and secure environment that supports the educational program and utilizes the school division's resources efficiently. Efficiency and economy of management and operation are critical to ensure that resources for direct instruction are maximized **(Chapter 5)**.

■ MCPS is involved in ongoing facilities expansion projects. These projects are the result of several years of planning with the Montgomery County Board of Supervisors to address the growth of the county **(Chapter 5)**.

■ MCPS has a well-established energy conservation management program that continues today thanks to strong leadership and dedicated staff **(Chapter 5)**.

■ In general, the MCPS maintenance and facilities support department is staffed with capable professionals who take pride in the job they do and the services they provide **(Chapter 5)**.

■ MCPS staff overwhelmingly approve of the services provided by the transportation department **(Chapter 6)**.

■ The transportation department operates a financially efficient operation **(Chapter 6)**.

■ The transportation department provides high-quality service while maintaining efficient staffing levels **(Chapter 6)**.

■ MCPS recently received funds for student hardware, and routinely submits its formal "intent to participate" in the Commonwealth of Virginia's Standards of Learning (SOL) initiatives, specifically for on-line testing **(Chapter 7)**.

■ MCPS has been consistently successful in receiving annual E-Rate funding to substantially subsidize the costs of telecommunications and Internet services **(Chapter 7)**.

- MCPS school nutrition provides exceptional customer service **(Chapter 8)**.

- MCPS school nutrition maintains the highest levels of quality control associated with food preparation and safety **(Chapter 8)**.

- MCPS has created a food purchasing co-op to aid area school divisions in maximizing purchasing efficiencies **(Chapter 8)**.

Key Recommendations

Although this executive summary briefly highlights key efficiency issues in Montgomery County Public Schools, detailed recommendations for improving operations are found throughout the main body of the full report. Key recommendations for improvement include the following:

- Establish planning, policy, budget and finance, and community relations standing committees of the School Board in addition to ad hoc committees **(Chapter 2: Recommendation 2-2)**.

- Change the role of the director of management services to the assistant superintendent for administrative services to include responsibility for the human resources, finance, business, facilities, transportation, nutrition, and technology departments **(Chapter 2: Recommendation 2-9)**.

- Hire a director of secondary education and a director of elementary education; requiring the building principals and appropriate curriculum supervisors report to a director of education **(Chapter 2: Recommendation 2-11)**.

- Empower individuals at the lowest possible level to make decisions and direct individuals who have questions and concerns to contact the appropriate individual within the chain of command **(Chapter 2: Recommendation 2-15)**.

- Review and adopt specific policies for the finance department and establish the process for creating well-written and organized procedures with periodic reviews and regular updates **(Chapter 3: Recommendation 3-1)**.

- Document the entire budget process in a policies and procedures manual and immediately begin cross-training another finance department employee **(Chapter 3: Recommendation 3-2)**.

- Educate all division staff in the budget process and institute a forum that allows department heads and principals to receive input from teachers and staff **(Chapter 3: Recommendation 3-3)**.

- Provide monthly budget-to-expenditure reports to the School Board **(Chapter 3: Recommendation 3-5)**.

- Update the School Activity Fund Manual and Internal Control Procedures, provide annual training to bookkeepers, and increase oversight over bookkeepers, to include site visits **(Chapter 3: Recommendation 3-6)**.

- Develop and implement a comprehensive fixed assets tracking system for identifying, inventorying, and managing valuable school division assets **(Chapter 3: Recommendation 3-8)**.

- Initiate a divisionwide purchasing card program for purchases of less than $1,000 to reduce costs and to improve purchasing efficiency **(Chapter 3: Recommendation 3-9)**.

- Immediately change the policy of providing "free" supplies and replace this with a budget for each school and department for all major supplies **(Chapter 3: Recommendation 3-10)**.

- Review MCPS course offerings and teacher assignments at the high schools to improve the division's capacity to meet the priority goals set by the School Board, and review the pupil/teacher ratio and class size goals for grades K-3 to ensure that the educational benefits are sufficient to merit the additional cost to meet Board goals **(Chapter 3: Recommendation 3-12)**.

- Compare the effectiveness of MCPS's special education inclusive model to the high inclusion models of peer school divisions in Virginia once the Virginia Department of Education releases its special education report in February 2007 **(Chapter 3: Recommendation 3-13)**.

- Increase the hours for middle school nurses to 32.5 hours at three middle schools to match those at the elementary schools **(Chapter 3: Recommendation 3-15)**.

- Post all human resources forms and handbooks for new employees on the HR Web site **(Chapter 4: Recommendation 4-2)**.

- Develop and annually update an employee handbook for MCPS staff **(Chapter 4: Recommendation 4-3)**.

- Develop and maintain a comprehensive procedure manual for the HR department **(Chapter 4: Recommendation 4-4)**.

- Create job descriptions for all positions, and systematically review and update them on a three-year cycle **(Chapter 4: Recommendation 4-5)**.

- Conduct a survey of classified employees to determine reasons for attrition **(Chapter 4: Recommendation 4-9)**.

- Analyze teacher salaries in relation to the competition and make adjustments as appropriate and as budgets allow **(Chapter 4: Recommendation 4-10)**.

- Develop division level activities to ensure that certified and classified employees have regular professional development activities **(Chapter 4: Recommendation 4-11)**.

- Conduct post-occupancy reviews upon completion of major facility renovations or new construction projects **(Chapter 5: Recommendation 5-4)**.

- Sell the 28 modular classrooms that are not needed for the current student enrollment **(Chapter 5: Recommendation 5-7)**.

- Establish policies or guidelines detailing the division's expectations with regard to cleanliness standards for the facilities **(Chapter 5: Recommendation 5-9)**.

- End the practice of moving students with disciplinary problems into exclusive student buses **(Chapter 6: Recommendation 6-6)**.

- Enforce the Board policy on student walking distance **(Chapter 6: Recommendation 6-8)**.

- Charge per mile for all activity trips and apply proceeds to the transportation budget **(Chapter 6: Recommendation 6-9)**.

- Develop a formal process for regularly monitoring and reporting on technology activities such as Internet (Web) performance, usage, and transport limitations **(Chapter 7: Recommendation 7-2)**.

- Renegotiate the existing contracts or "shop around" (issue an RFP) for Internet or managed WAN services to ensure guaranteed and/or increased bandwidth for the same cost **(Chapter 7: Recommendation 7-3)**.

- Negotiate a longer discounted copier rental term under the Commonwealth of Virginia's contract **(Chapter 7: Recommendation 7-6)**.

- Reduce MCPS food costs to an industry standard of 36 percent of total revenue **(Chapter 8: Recommendation 8-6)**.

- Reduce staff at schools where staff hours are above best practice levels **(Chapter 8: Recommendation 8-7)**.

- Charge all appropriate direct and indirect costs to the school nutrition fund **(Chapter 8: Recommendation 8-8)**.

Fiscal Impact

Based on the analyses of data obtained from interviews with MCPS personnel, parents, and the community at large, MCPS surveys, state and school division documents, and first-hand observations during the division, the MGT team developed 85 recommendations, 19 of which are accompanied by fiscal implications.

As shown in **Exhibit 9-1**, full implementation of the recommendations in this report would generate total savings of $5,504,220 over a five-year period. Costs over that same period equal $1,809,610, to equal net savings of **$3,672,554** over a five-year period.

EXHIBIT 9-1
SUMMARY OF ANNUAL SAVINGS (COSTS)

CATEGORY	YEARS					TOTAL FIVE-YEAR SAVINGS (COSTS)
	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	
TOTAL SAVINGS	$423,224	$1,270,249	$1,270,249	$1,270,249	$1,270,249	$5,504,220
TOTAL (COSTS)	($361,922)	($361,922)	($361,922)	($361,922)	($361,922)	($1,809,610)
TOTAL NET SAVINGS (COSTS)	$61,302	$908,327	$908,327	$908,327	$908,327	$3,694,610
ONE-TIME SAVINGS(COSTS)						($22,056)
TOTAL FIVE-YEAR NET SAVINGS (COSTS) INCLUDING ONE-TIME SAVINGS (COSTS)						$3,672,554

1.0 INTRODUCTION

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In October 2006, the Commonwealth of Virginia contracted with MGT of America, Inc., to conduct a School Efficiency Review of Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS). The review focused on the financial, organizational, and operational effectiveness of MCPS. **Exhibit 1-1** shows an overview of MGT's workplan, and **Exhibit 1-2** provides the timeline for the project activities.

1.1 *Overview of Montgomery County Public Schools*

Montgomery County is located in the southwestern region of Virginia known as New River Valley. The county has a land area of 388 square miles and lies between the Appalachian Plateau and the Blue Ridge Mountains. This area was first explored in 1671 and the first settlers came from Pennsylvania and eastern Virginia. The county was formed in 1776 and was named after General Richard Montgomery. The general was an American war hero of the French and Indian War and the American Revolution. The town of Christiansburg, the county seat, was incorporated in 1792 in honor of Colonel William Christian. The town of Blacksburg was incorporated in 1871 on land donated by William Black. Today Montgomery County has a population of approximately 88,000.

According to the 2006-07 Annual Report, Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) consists of 12 elementary schools, four middle schools, four high schools, and two alternative schools. They serve over 9,500 students and spend $8,428 per pupil. It is the mission of MCPS to prepare all students so that they develop the knowledge and skills to achieve success and become active citizens who contribute to their communities. The division employs approximately 545 classroom teachers and the average teacher salary is $39,014. MCPS is led by a School Board of seven members. All members are elected by popular vote and meet twice a month.

1.2 *Methodology*

This section describes the methodology MGT used to prepare for and conduct the MCPS efficiency review. Throughout our practice, we have discovered that to be successful, an efficiency review of a school division must:

- Be based upon a very detailed workplan and time schedule.

- Specifically take into account the unique environment within which the school division operates and the specific student body involved.

- Obtain input from Board members, administrators, staff, and the community.

- Identify the existence, appropriateness, and use of specific educational objectives.

EXHIBIT 1-1
OVERVIEW OF THE WORKPLAN FOR THE PERFORMANCE EVALUATION
OF MONTGOMERY COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

PHASE I - PROJECT INITIATION

Task 1.0
Initiate Project

Task 2.0
Develop Preliminary Profile of the Selected Divisions
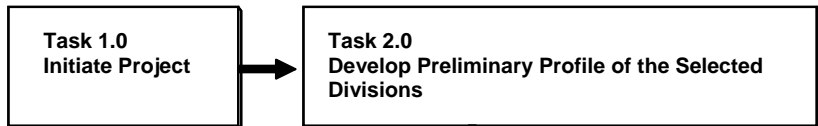
PHASE II - STAKEHOLDER INVOLVEMENT AND DIAGNOSTIC REVIEW

Task 3.0
Solicit Public Input in the Efficiency Review

Task 4.0
Conduct On-Line Surveys of Central Office Administrators, School Principals and Teachers

Task 5.0
Conduct Diagnostic Review

Task 6.0
Conduct Benchmark Analysis with Comparison School Divisions

Task 7.0
Tailor MGT and Virginia Study Guidelines for the School Division
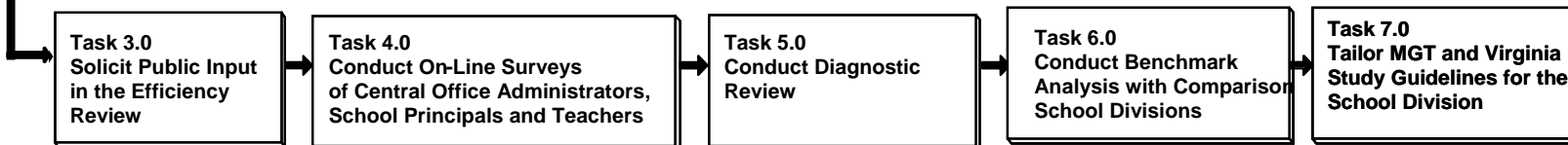
PHASE III - IN-DEPTH EFFICIENCY REVIEW

Task 8.0
Review Division Administration

Task 13.0
Review Costs of Special Education Programs

Task 9.0
Review Personnel and Human Resources Management

Task 14.0
Review Facilities Use and Management

Task 10.0
Review Financial Management

Task 15.0
Review Food Services

Task 11.0
Review Purchasing, Warehousing, and Fixed Assets

Task 16.0
Review Technology Management

Task 12.0
Review Costs of Educational Service Delivery and Management

Task 17.0
Review Transportation

PHASE V -
PROJECT REPORTING

Task 19.0
Prepare Initial Draft Report, Exposure Draft Report, and Final Report
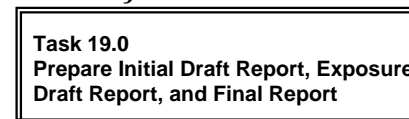
PHASE IV –
INTERIM REPORTING

Task 18.0
Conduct an Interim Briefing Session on Proposed Findings and Recommendations

**EXHIBIT 1-2
TIMELINE FOR THE PERFORMANCE EVALUATION OF
MONTGOMERY COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS**

TIME FRAME	ACTIVITY
October 2006	■ Finalized contract with MCPS. ■ Designed tailor-made, written surveys for central office administrators, principals, and teachers. ■ Collected and analyzed existing and comparative data available from the school division. ■ Produced profile tables of Montgomery County Public Schools.
November 2006	■ Disseminated surveys to administrators and teachers.
November 9-10, 2006	On-site visit with Montgomery County Public Schools. ■ Conducted diagnostic review. ■ Collected data. ■ Interviewed School Board members. ■ Interviewed central office administrators.
November 2006	Analyzed collected data.
November 2006	Tailored review guidelines and trained MGT team members using findings from the above analyses.
Week of November 27, 2006	Conducted formal on-site review, including school visits.
December 2006	Requested additional data from the school division and analyzed data.
December 2006 – January 2007	Prepared Draft Report.
January 2007	Submitted Draft Report.
February 2007	Revised Draft Report.
March 2007	Submitted Final Report.

■ Contain comparisons to other, similar school divisions to provide a reference point.

■ Follow a common set of guidelines tailored specifically to the division being reviewed.

■ Include analyses of the efficiency of work practices.

■ Identify the level and effectiveness of externally imposed work tasks and procedures.

■ Identify both exemplary programs and practices as well as needed improvements.

■ Document all findings.

■ Present straightforward and practical recommendations for improvements.

With this in mind, our methodology primarily involved a focused use of Virginia review guidelines as well as MGT's audit guidelines following the analysis of both existing data and new information obtained through various means of employee input. Each of the strategies we used is described below.

Review of Existing Records and Data Sources

During the period between project initiation and the beginning of our on-site review, we simultaneously conducted many activities. Among these activities were the identification and collection of existing reports and data sources that provided us with recent information on the various administrative functions and operations we would review in Montgomery County Public Schools.

More than 100 documents were requested from MCPS. The materials MGT requested included, but were not limited, to the following:

■ School Board policies and administrative procedures.
■ Organizational charts.
■ Program and compliance reports.
■ Technology plan.
■ Annual performance reports.
■ Independent financial audits.
■ Plans for curriculum and instruction.
■ Annual budget and expenditure reports.
■ Job descriptions.
■ Salary schedules.
■ Personnel handbooks.

Data from each of these sources were analyzed, and the information was used as a starting point for collecting additional data during our on-site visit.

Diagnostic Review

A diagnostic review of MCPS was conducted on November 9-10, 2006. MGT consultants interviewed central office administrators, School Board members, and county personnel concerning the management and operations of the division.

Employee Surveys

To secure the involvement of central office administrators, principals/assistant principals, and teachers in the focus and scope of the efficiency review, three on-line surveys were prepared and disseminated in November 2006. Through the use of anonymous surveys, administrators and teachers were given the opportunity to express their views about the management and operations of MCPS. These surveys were similar in format and content to provide a database for determining how the opinions and perceptions of central office administrators, principals/assistant principals, and teachers varied.

MCPS staff were given from November 14, 2006, through December 8, 2006 to respond. The MCPS response rates for the three surveys were as follows: 90 percent for central office administrators, 85 percent for principals and assistant principals, and 36 percent for teachers. MGT compared all survey responses among the three employee groups. We also compared the MCPS responses to those submitted by central office administrators, principals/assistant principals, and teachers in the more than 40 divisions where we have conducted similar surveys.

The survey results may be found in Appendix A. Specific survey items pertinent to findings in the functional areas MGT reviewed are presented within each chapter.

The Formal On-Site Review

A team of seven consultants conducted the formal on-site review of Montgomery County Public Schools during the week of November 27, 2006. As part of our on-site review, we examined the following MCPS systems and operations:

- Division Organization and Management
- Financial Management, Purchasing, and Cost of Education Services
- Human Resources
- Facilities Use and Management
- Transportation
- Administration and Instructional Technology
- Food Service

Prior to the on-site review, each team member was provided with extensive information about MCPS operations. During the on-site work, team members conducted detailed reviews of the structure and operations of Montgomery County Public Schools in their assigned functional areas. The team made 12 school site visits.

Our systematic assessment of MCPS included the use of MGT's *Guidelines for Conducting Management and Performance Audits of School Divisions*. In addition, the Commonwealth of Virginia school efficiency review guidelines were used. Following our collection and analysis of existing data and new information, we tailored our guidelines to reflect local policies and administrative procedures; the unique conditions of Montgomery County Public Schools, and the input of administrators in the school division. We also met with appropriate central office and school-level staff and reviewed documentation provided by these individuals.

1.3   Comparisons to Other School Divisions

To effectively facilitate ongoing, systemic improvement and to overcome the continual challenges of a changing environmental and fiscal landscape, a school division must have a clear understanding of the status of its internal systems and processes. One way to achieve this understanding is to compare the operations of one school division to those of others with similar characteristics. MGT has found that such comparisons yield valuable insights and often form a basis for determining efficient and effective practices for a school division interested in making improvements. For these comparisons to be meaningful, however, the "peer" school divisions must be chosen carefully. Ideally, a school division should be compared with others that are similar not only in size and demographics, but also in operations and funding.

The practice of benchmarking is often used to make such comparisons between and among school divisions. Benchmarking is the use of commonly held organizational characteristics in making concrete statistical or descriptive comparisons of organizational systems and processes. It is also a performance measurement tool used in conjunction with improvement initiatives to measure comparative operating performance and identify best practices.

With this in mind, MGT initiated a benchmarking comparison of MCPS to provide a common foundation from which to compare systems and processes within the school division with those of other, similar systems. It is important for readers to keep in mind that when comparisons are made across more than one division, the data are not as reliable, as different school divisions have different operational definitions and data self-reported by peer school divisions can be subjective.

The Virginia Department of Education (VDOE) has developed a cluster code to identify similar school divisions for comparison purposes. Cluster identifiers were created by using data including, but not limited to the cost per student for each major area, major drivers of costs, and ranking of costs. MCPS is in Cluster 5. MCPS and MGT selected the following five peer school divisions for purposes of comparison:

- Augusta County Public Schools.
- Fauquier County Public Schools.
- Rockingham County Public Schools.
- York County Public Schools.
- Frederick County Public Schools.

Exhibits 1-3 through **1-19** illustrate how the peer school divisions compared to Montgomery County Public Schools in terms of enrollment, demographics, staffing, and funding for the most current school year available from the VDOE Web site.

EXHIBIT 1-3
OVERVIEW OF PEER SCHOOL DIVISIONS
2004-05 SCHOOL YEAR

SCHOOL DIVISION	CLUSTER IDENTIFICATION	TOTAL STUDENT POPULATION	STUDENT POPULATION PER 1,000 GENERAL POPULATION	PERCENTAGE STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES	PERCENTAGE ECONOMICALLY DISADVANTAGED	TOTAL NUMBER OF SCHOOLS
Montgomery County Public Schools	**5**	**9,634**	**115.20**	**12.10%**	**30.80%**	**20**
Augusta County Public Schools	5	11,045	168.33	21.00%	24.90%	20
Fauquier County Public Schools	5	10,940	198.41	13.20%	14.70%	17
Rockingham County Public Schools	5	11,613	171.47	12.30%	29.10%	20
York County Public Schools	5	12,838	228.04	6.20%	13.20%	19
Frederick County Public Schools	5	12,211	206.24	14.30%	17.70%	16
PEER DIVISION AVERAGE	**N/A**	**11,729**	**194.50**	**13.40%**	**19.92%**	**18**

Source: Virginia Department of Education Web site, 2006; United States Census Bureau, 2000 Census Data.

EXHIBIT 1-4
TEACHER STAFFING LEVELS AND PUPIL: TEACHER RATIOS
PEER SCHOOL DIVISIONS
2004-05 SCHOOL YEAR

SCHOOL DIVISION	TOTAL TEACHERS PER 1,000 STUDENTS*	RATIO OF PUPILS TO CLASSROOM TEACHING POSITIONS FOR GRADES K-7**	RATIO OF PUPILS TO CLASSROOM TEACHING POSITIONS FOR GRADES 8-12
Montgomery County Public Schools	**83.85**	**14.70**	**7.70**
Augusta County Public Schools	79.41	12.80	12.20
Fauquier County Public Schools	79.50	14.40	9.40
Rockingham County Public Schools	78.85	13.50	9.60
York County Public Schools	63.58	14.30	11.90
Frederick County Public Schools	78.01	13.50	10.10
PEER DIVISION AVERAGE	**75.87**	**13.70**	**10.64**

Source: *2005 Superintendent's Annual Report for Virginia*, Virginia Department of Education Web site, 2006.
*Ratios based on end-of-year enrollments.
**Pupil/teacher ratios for elementary and secondary may vary because of the reporting of teaching positions for middle school grades 6 through 8.

EXHIBIT 1-5
RECEIPTS BY FUND SOURCE
PEER SCHOOL DIVISIONS
2005 FISCAL YEAR

SCHOOL DIVISION	SALES AND USE TAX	STATE FUNDS	FEDERAL FUNDS	LOCAL FUNDS	OTHER FUNDS	LOANS, BONDS, ETC.
Montgomery County Public Schools	**9.49%**	**37.03%**	**6.63%**	**41.44%**	**2.97%**	**2.43%**
Augusta County Public Schools	9.11%	40.32%	8.15%	31.84%	3.19%	7.40%
Fauquier County Public Schools	8.24%	20.58%	4.14%	64.03%	3.01%	0.00%
Rockingham County Public Schools	10.06%	37.95%	6.60%	41.75%	3.55%	0.09%
York County Public Schools	9.11%	39.94%	12.32%	34.37%	4.23%	0.04%
Frederick County Public Schools	6.69%	30.65%	3.60%	44.57%	2.49%	12.01%
PEER DIVISION AVERAGE	**8.64%**	**33.89%**	**6.96%**	**43.31%**	**3.29%**	**3.91%**

Source: *2005 Superintendent's Annual Report for Virginia*, Virginia Department of Education Web site, 2006.

EXHIBIT 1-6
DISBURSEMENTS PER PUPIL FOR
INSTRUCTION AND ADMINISTRATION
PEER SCHOOL DIVISIONS
2005 FISCAL YEAR

SCHOOL DIVISION	INSTRUCTION PER PUPIL[1]	ADMINISTRATION PER PUPIL[2]
Montgomery County Public Schools	**$6,348.53**	**$170.19**
Augusta County Public Schools	$5,911.74	$148.05
Fauquier County Public Schools	$7,290.82	$122.30
Rockingham County Public Schools	$6,375.27	$151.05
York County Public Schools	$5,693.53	$353.08
Frederick County Public Schools	$6,665.53	$194.78
PEER DIVISION AVERAGE	**$6,387.38**	**$193.85**

Source: *2005 Superintendent's Annual Report for Virginia*, Virginia Department of Education Web site, 2006.

[1] Represents expenditures for classroom instruction, guidance services, social work services, homebound instruction, improvement of instruction, media services, and office of the principal. This column does not include expenditures for technology instruction, summer school, or adult education, which are reported in separate columns within this table. This column also excludes local tuition revenues received for divisions 001 - 207, and prorates the deduction of these revenues across administration, instruction, attendance and health, pupil transportation, and operations and maintenance categories. Local tuition is reported in the expenditures of the school division paying tuition.

[2] Represents expenditures for activities related to establishing and administering policy for division operations including Board services, executive administration, information services, personnel, planning services, fiscal services, purchasing, and reprographics.

**EXHIBIT 1-7
STAFF PER 1,000 STUDENTS
PEER SCHOOL DIVISIONS
2004-05 SCHOOL YEAR***

SCHOOL DIVISION	STUDENTS AVERAGE DAILY MEMBERSHIP	PRINCIPALS/ ASSISTANT PRINCIPALS PER 1,000 STUDENTS	TEACHERS PER 1,000 STUDENTS	TECHNOLOGY INSTRUCTORS PER 1,000 STUDENTS	TEACHER AIDES PER 1,000 STUDENTS	GUIDANCE COUNSELORS/ LIBRARIANS PER 1,000 STUDENTS
Montgomery County Public Schools	**9,436.37**	**3.50**	**83.85**	**0.00**	**22.43**	**5.46**
Augusta County Public Schools	10,082.66	4.07	79.41	0.00	11.31	4.93
Fauquier County Public Schools	10,724.38	3.64	79.50	0.84	17.25	4.20
Rockingham County Public Schools	11,150.46	3.86	78.85	0.63	14.49	4.98
York County Public Schools	12,617.78	3.41	63.58	1.43	19.31	4.08
Frederick County Public Schools	11,663.04	3.55	78.01	0.00	13.81	5.60
PEER DIVISION AVERAGE	**11,247.66**	**3.71**	**75.87**	**0.58**	**15.23**	**4.76**

Source: Virginia Department of Education Web site, 2006.
*Ratios based on ADM.

**EXHIBIT 1-8
INSTRUCTIONAL PERSONNEL
PEER SCHOOL DIVISIONS
2004-05 SCHOOL YEAR**

SCHOOL DIVISION	INSTRUCTION			
	ADMINISTRATIVE	TECHNICAL AND CLERICAL	INSTRUCTIONAL SUPPORT	OTHER PROFESSIONAL
Montgomery County Public Schools	**7.00**	**84.00**	**12.50**	**2.00**
Augusta County Public Schools	1.50	95.27	12.50	3.50
Fauquier County Public Schools	21.00	111.30	1.90	2.00
Rockingham County Public Schools	10.00	90.31	0.00	6.50
York County Public Schools	7.05	96.37	0.00	3.00
Frederick County Public Schools	8.50	102.59	26.93	0.00
PEER DIVISION AVERAGE	**9.61**	**99.17**	**8.27**	**3.00**

Source: Virginia Department of Education Web site, 2006.

**EXHIBIT 1-9
ADMINISTRATION, ATTENDANCE,
AND HEALTH PERSONNEL
PEER SCHOOL DIVISIONS
2004-05 SCHOOL YEAR**

SCHOOL DIVISION	ADMINISTRATION, ATTENDANCE, AND HEALTH		
	ADMINISTRATIVE	TECHNICAL AND CLERICAL	OTHER PROFESSIONAL
Montgomery County Public Schools	**13.10**	**13.00**	**15.76**
Augusta County Public Schools	10.00	25.52	17.33
Fauquier County Public Schools	9.00	21.00	8.40
Rockingham County Public Schools	10.00	7.00	30.00
York County Public Schools	9.00	36.45	37.00
Frederick County Public Schools	12.00	20.77	33.24
PEER DIVISION AVERAGE	**10.00**	**22.15**	**25.19**

Source: Virginia Department of Education Web site, 2006.

EXHIBIT 1-10
TECHNOLOGY PERSONNEL
PEER SCHOOL DIVISIONS
2004-05 SCHOOL YEAR

	TECHNOLOGY		
SCHOOL DIVISION	**ADMINISTRATIVE**	**TECHNICAL AND CLERICAL**	**INSTRUCTIONAL SUPPORT**
Montgomery County Public Schools	**1.00**	**16.00**	**4.00**
Augusta County Public Schools	0.00	21.00	4.00
Fauquier County Public Schools	1.00	9.00	0.00
Rockingham County Public Schools	2.00	28.00	2.00
York County Public Schools	1.00	34.00	0.00
Frederick County Public Schools	1.50	30.36	0.00
PEER DIVISION AVERAGE	**1.10**	**24.47**	**1.20**

Source: Virginia Department of Education Web site, 2006.

EXHIBIT 1-11
TRANSPORTATION PERSONNEL
PEER SCHOOL DIVISIONS
2004-05 SCHOOL YEAR

	TRANSPORTATION			
SCHOOL DIVISION	**ADMINISTRATIVE**	**TECHNICAL AND CLERICAL**	**OTHER PROFESSIONAL**	**TRADES, OPERATIVES, AND SERVICE**
Montgomery County Public Schools	**1.00**	**3.00**	**1.00**	**122.25**
Augusta County Public Schools	0.00	5.25	4.00	208.21
Fauquier County Public Schools	1.00	5.00	0.00	173.00
Rockingham County Public Schools	1.50	4.00	0.00	201.71
York County Public Schools	0.00	8.00	0.00	119.63
Frederick County Public Schools	1.00	21.07	1.97	176.27
PEER DIVISION AVERAGE	**0.70**	**8.66**	**1.19**	**175.76**

Source: Virginia Department of Education Web site, 2006.

EXHIBIT 1-12
OPERATIONS AND MAINTENANCE PERSONNEL
PEER SCHOOL DIVISIONS
2004-05 SCHOOL YEAR

SCHOOL DIVISION	OPERATIONS AND MAINTENANCE			
	ADMINISTRATIVE	TECHNICAL AND CLERICAL	OTHER PROFESSIONAL	TRADES, LABOR, AND SERVICE
Montgomery County Public Schools	**4.00**	**3.00**	**0.70**	**136.50**
Augusta County Public Schools	0.00	1.00	2.00	78.35
Fauquier County Public Schools	2.00	3.00	3.00	95.00
Rockingham County Public Schools	2.00	2.50	0.50	93.78
York County Public Schools	1.00	10.00	0.00	108.80
Frederick County Public Schools	1.00	2.21	2.00	112.76
PEER DIVISION AVERAGE	**1.20**	**3.74**	**1.50**	**97.74**

Source: Virginia Department of Education Web site, 2006.

EXHIBIT 1-13
FOOD SERVICE DISBURSEMENTS
PEER SCHOOL DIVISIONS
2004-05 SCHOOL YEAR

SCHOOL DIVISION	FOOD SERVICE	PER PUPIL COST
Montgomery County Public Schools	**$3,424,820**	**$362.73**
Augusta County Public Schools	$3,176,834	$291.98
Fauquier County Public Schools	$3,647,424	$338.91
Rockingham County Public Schools	$3,748,275	$333.41
York County Public Schools	$3,823,923	$303.04
Frederick County Public Schools	$3,419,309	$291.80
PEER DIVISION AVERAGE	**$3,563,153**	**$311.83**

Source: Virginia Department of Education Web site, 2006.

EXHIBIT 1-14
DROPOUT PERCENTAGE
PEER SCHOOL DIVISIONS
2004-05 SCHOOL YEAR

SCHOOL DIVISION	GRADES 7-11 ENROLLMENT	TOTAL DROPOUTS	DROPOUT PERCENTAGE
Montgomery County Public Schools	**4,368**	**58**	**1.33%**
Augusta County Public Schools	5,247	78	1.49%
Fauquier County Public Schools	5,161	26	0.50%
Rockingham County Public Schools	5,119	93	1.82%
York County Public Schools	6,375	30	0.47%
Frederick County Public Schools	5,600	68	1.21%
PEER DIVISION AVERAGE	**5,500**	**59**	**1.10%**

Source: Virginia Department of Education Web site, 2006.

EXHIBIT 1-15
FREE AND REDUCED-PRICE LUNCH
PEER SCHOOL DIVISIONS
2005-06 SCHOOL YEAR

SCHOOL DIVISION	ENROLLMENT	TOTAL FREE LUNCH	PERCENT FREE LUNCH	TOTAL REDUCED LUNCH	PERCENT REDUCED LUNCH	PERCENT FREE/REDUCED LUNCH
Montgomery County Public Schools	**9,457**	**2,440**	**25.80%**	**761**	**8.05%**	**33.85%**
Augusta County Public Schools	11,029	2,212	20.06%	863	7.82%	27.88%
Fauquier County Public Schools	11,191	1,278	11.42%	456	4.07%	15.49%
Rockingham County Public Schools	11,550	2,689	23.28%	946	8.19%	31.47%
York County Public Schools	12,964	1,068	8.24%	787	6.07%	14.31%
Frederick County Public Schools	12,162	1,721	14.15%	715	5.88%	20.03%
PEER DIVISION AVERAGE	**11,779**	**1,794**	**15.43%**	**753**	**6.41%**	**21.84%**

Source: Virginia Department of Education Web site, 2006.

EXHIBIT 1-16
BREAKFAST PRICES
PEER SCHOOL DIVISIONS
2005-06 SCHOOL YEAR

SCHOOL DIVISION	ELEMENTARY PAID BREAKFAST	MIDDLE SCHOOL PAID BREAKFAST	HIGH SCHOOL PAID BREAKFAST	ELEMENTARY REDUCED BREAKFAST	MIDDLE SCHOOL REDUCED BREAKFAST	HIGH SCHOOL REDUCED BREAKFAST
Montgomery County Public Schools	**$0.85**	**$0.85**	**$0.85**	**$0.30**	**$0.30**	**$0.30**
Augusta County Public Schools	$0.50	$0.75	$0.75	$0.30	$0.30	$0.30
Fauquier County Public Schools	$1.05	$1.15	$1.30	$0.30	$0.30	$0.30
Rockingham County Public Schools	$0.75	$0.75	$0.75	$0.30	$0.30	$0.30
York County Public Schools	$0.85	$1.05	$1.05	$0.30	$0.30	$0.30
Frederick County Public Schools	$0.90			$0.30		
PEER DIVISION AVERAGE	**$0.81**	**$0.93**	**$0.96**	**$0.30**	**$0.30**	**$0.30**

Source: Virginia Department of Education Web site, 2006.
*Shaded areas indicate combined schools or no program participation.

**EXHIBIT 1-17
LUNCH PRICES
PEER SCHOOL DIVISIONS
2005-06 SCHOOL YEAR**

SCHOOL DIVISION	ELEMENTARY PAID LUNCH	MIDDLE SCHOOL PAID LUNCH	HIGH SCHOOL PAID LUNCH	ELEMENTARY REDUCED LUNCH	MIDDLE SCHOOL REDUCED LUNCH	HIGH SCHOOL REDUCED LUNCH
Montgomery County Public Schools	**$1.70**	**$1.75**	**$1.75**	**$0.40**	**$0.40**	**$0.40**
Augusta County Public Schools	$1.50	$1.75	$1.75	$0.40	$0.40	$0.40
Fauquier County Public Schools	$1.55	$1.80	$2.00	$0.40	$0.40	$0.40
Rockingham County Public Schools	$1.50	$1.50	$1.75	$0.40	$0.40	$0.40
York County Public Schools	$1.75	$1.85	$1.85	$0.40	$0.40	$0.40
Frederick County Public Schools	$1.60	$1.85	$1.85	$0.40	$0.40	$0.40
PEER DIVISION AVERAGE	**$1.58**	**$1.75**	**$1.84**	**$0.40**	**$0.40**	**$0.40**

Source: Virginia Department of Education Web site, 2006.

**EXHIBIT 1-18
GRADUATES BY DIPLOMA TYPE
PEER SCHOOL DIVISIONS
2005-06 SCHOOL YEAR**

SCHOOL DIVISION	STANDARD DIPLOMA	ADVANCED STUDIES DIPLOMA	SPECIAL DIPLOMA	CERTIFICATE OF PROGRAM COMPLETION	GED CERTIFICATE	ISAEP	MODIFIED STANDARD DIPLOMA	TOTAL GRADUATES AND COMPLETERS BY DIPLOMA TYPE
Montgomery County Public Schools	**33.17%**	**55.45%**	**2.72%**	**0.48%**	**0.80%**	**5.45%**	**1.92%**	**624**
Augusta County Public Schools	42.23%	45.71%	6.70%	0.27%	0.00%	1.74%	3.35%	746
Fauquier County Public Schools	35.43%	54.03%	1.90%	1.07%	0.00%	5.33%	2.25%	844
Rockingham County Public Schools	47.36%	45.10%	3.77%	1.13%	0.50%	0.00%	2.14%	796
York County Public Schools	42.48%	53.13%	0.10%	0.29%	2.05%	1.17%	0.78%	1,024
Frederick County Public Schools	40.80%	43.66%	2.24%	0.37%	0.12%	10.20%	2.61%	804
PEER DIVISION AVERAGE	**41.66%**	**48.32%**	**2.94%**	**0.63%**	**0.54%**	**3.69%**	**2.23%**	**843**

Source: Virginia Department of Education Web site, 2006.

EXHIBIT 1-19
GRADUATES BY CONTINUING EDUCATION PLANS
PEER SCHOOL DIVISIONS
2005-06 SCHOOL YEAR

SCHOOL DIVISION	ATTENDING TWO-YEAR COLLEGES	ATTENDING FOUR-YEAR COLLEGES	OTHER CONTINUING EDUCATION PLANS	EMPLOYMENT	MILITARY	NO PLANS	TOTAL GRADUATES AND COMPLETERS BY CONTINUING EDUCATION PLANS
Montgomery County Public Schools	**25.96%**	**46.47%**	**0.80%**	**20.51%**	**1.92%**	**4.33%**	**624**
Augusta County Public Schools	26.41%	31.77%	4.56%	31.77%	1.88%	3.62%	746
Fauquier County Public Schools	23.82%	47.27%	2.84%	23.22%	2.37%	0.47%	844
Rockingham County Public Schools	21.73%	39.57%	9.30%	23.74%	2.76%	2.89%	796
York County Public Schools	0.00%	95.61%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	4.39%	1,024
Frederick County Public Schools	12.69%	63.31%	6.72%	14.05%	2.61%	0.62%	804
PEER DIVISION AVERAGE	**16.93%**	**55.51%**	**4.68%**	**18.56%**	**1.92%**	**2.40%**	**843**

Source: Virginia Department of Education Web site, 2006.

1.4   *Overview of Final Report*

MGT's final report is organized into nine chapters. Chapters 2.0 through 8.0 discuss the results of the School Efficiency Review of Montgomery County Public Schools. Findings, commendations, and recommendations are presented for every operational area of the school division that we were required to review. In each chapter, we analyze the various functions within the school division based on the current organizational structure. The following data are included for each component:

- Description of the current situation in Montgomery County Public Schools.

- A summary of study findings derived from various data sources and through site visits.

- Relevant commendations and recommendations.

- Implementation strategies and a completion timeline for each recommendation.

- The projected five-year fiscal impact of any recommended costs or cost savings, stated in 2006-07 dollars.

The report concludes with a summary of the fiscal impact of all study recommendations (Chapter 9.0).

2.0 DIVISION ORGANIZATION AND MANAGEMENT

2.0 DIVISION ORGANIZATION AND MANAGEMENT

This chapter presents findings and recommendations pertaining to the overall organization and management of Montgomery County Public Schools (MPCS). The five major sections of the chapter include:

2.1   Introduction and Legal Foundation
2.2   School Board Governance
2.3   Policies and Procedures
2.4   Legal Services
2.5   Organization and Management

CHAPTER SUMMARY

MCPS is led and managed by a superintendent who assumed the position in March 2005. The recommendations in this chapter focus essentially on issues relating to Board training, improved administrative communication, and reorganization of the administrative structure.

Notable commendations include:

- The MCPS School Board, superintendent, administration, and staff develop a comprehensive Board meeting agenda and information packet that are provided to members of the School Board.

- The superintendent has developed numerous internal and external advisory groups to assist in enhancing communication.

- MCPS and the Montgomery County Board of Supervisors have renovated a joint facility for the use of both organizations.

- The division's policy manual is kept up-to-date.

Key recommendations that should assist the superintendent and the Board as they continue to consider all aspects of improving the school division include the following:

- Develop a committee structure to address planning and budgetary issues with the Board.

- Reassign the current director of management services as the new assistant superintendent for administrative services.

- Restructure the positions of curricular expertise supervisors to directors of secondary and elementary education.

- Improve problem solving and communication by allowing people at the lowest level possible to address issues before they move up the chain of command.

2.1 *Introduction and Legal Foundation*

Interviews with MCPS administrative staff revealed a number of challenges facing the division. Among these are the fiscal dependency of the division on external funding, the financing of facilities, and the growth of the school division.

MCPS is fiscally dependent upon the Montgomery County Board of Supervisors since Commonwealth of Virginia, Code of Virginia, Title 22.1, and other controlling regulations assign fiscal budget approval and appropriations authority to the Board of Supervisors.

The superintendent, administrative staff, School Board, and county representatives stated in interviews with MGT that the most significant challenge is finding the resources necessary to fund new school facilities. Additional items of concern included the accreditation of all schools and maintenance of full accreditation.

2.2 *School Board Governance*

The educational organization of Montgomery County Public Schools is the result of Commonwealth of Virginia legislation authorizing the establishment of city and county school divisions. The seven-member School Board is elected from resident districts for four-year terms.

Exhibit 2-1 provides an overview of the members of the MCPS School Board. The exhibit shows that:

■ Four members have less than two years' experience.
■ Three members' terms started in January 2006.

EXHIBIT 2-1
SCHOOL BOARD
MONTGOMERY COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS
DECEMBER 2006

NAME	TITLE	DISTRICT	TERM EXPIRES	YEARS OF SERVICE AS OF JANUARY 1, 2007	OCCUPATION
Penny J. Franklin	Chair	B	12/31/07	6	Hubbell Lighting
B. Wendell Jones	Vice Chair	E	12/31/07	2	Process Improvement Leader with Moog Components Group
Amy Lythgoe		A	12/31/09	1	Homemaker, Bradley Method Childbirth Educator, and Transcriptionist
David Dunkenberger		C	12/31/09	1	V.P. of Operations for C.A.W.H. Rehabilitation Services
Jamie Bond		D	12/31/09	1	Owner/Operator of Old Town Barber
Susan Morikawa		F	12/31/09	1.5	Accounting/Bookkeeping
W. Wat Hopkins		G	12/31/07	10	Professor of Communications, Virginia Tech.

Source: MCPS superintendent's office and Web site, December 2006.

School Board meetings are held on the first and third Tuesday of each month in the administrative facility. The meeting room easily accommodates the public. Regular meeting locations, dates, and times are posted on the MCPS Web site and advertised as

required by law. School Board meetings are held at 7:30 p.m. unless otherwise noted. The public is welcome to attend all meetings, and citizens wishing to address the Board are given an opportunity to do so during the public address item established on the agenda.

Prior to the regular meeting, the School Board may hold closed session meetings for certain purposes. Closed meetings may include:

- Discussion of personnel issues.

- Student disciplinary hearings.

- Negotiations of material terms for purchase of property or a specific contract for employment.

- Attorney-client privilege as it relates to litigation preparation and execution.

- Other matters as permitted under Virginia law.

Minutes of all regular meetings are recorded and transcribed by the Board clerk and approved by the Board during the first regular meeting of each month. Approved minutes are then published on the MCPS Web site. Minutes are not maintained for closed meetings; rather, the Board clerk prepares a record of motions and related votes.

FINDING

The School Board has adequate preparation time and is provided sufficient background materials to successfully conduct monthly business meetings. The Board packets are delivered to each Board member on the Friday preceding the School Board meeting the following Tuesday. The superintendent, in consultation with her leadership council and the Board chair, develop an agenda and background information for each item as necessary. The Board meeting packet is provided to Board members in a hardcopy format. Unless there is an emergency, no action items are placed on the School Board agenda for action until that item has been discussed at a prior Board meeting. Allowing the School Board time to study the issues and deliberate at some length before acting creates stability in the decision-making process.

COMMENDATION

MCPS uses a consistent and thorough process for the development and dissemination of materials necessary to conduct data-driven Board meetings.

FINDING

The MCPS School Board agendas and meeting packets utilize a consent agenda. The consent agenda includes the approval of minutes of previous meetings, field trips, grants, and donations. The use of a consent agenda allows the School Board to group these routine items in one motion and proceed on to issues requiring discussion and

more important issues. The use of a consent agenda conveys that the Board desires to focus on policy issues, set priorities, and maximize its use of time.

COMMENDATION

The MCPS School Board effectively uses a consent agenda for Board meetings.

FINDING

During interviews with MGT, Board members indicated that the School Board does not conduct any type of a self-evaluation to provide ongoing feedback for improvement. An ongoing Board evaluation process allows a School Board the opportunity to make any adjustments that might be necessary for it to function as effectively as possible.

Recommendation 2-1:

Implement a self-evaluation process for the School Board.

Governing Boards in any organization can improve their performance through some type of a formal or informal self-evaluation. By conducting a self-evaluation, the Board models for its organization the importance of the evaluation process. A better organization and improved performance are the end results. **Exhibit 2-2** is one example of a Board meeting self-assessment instrument.

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

EXHIBIT 2-2
SAMPLE BOARD SELF-ASSESSMENT INSTRUMENT

Adequate	Needs Improvement	Meeting Evaluation
Directions: By evaluating our past meeting performance, we can discover ways to make future meetings shorter and more productive. Check the box for either "Adequate" or "Needs Improvement." If you check "Needs Improvement," please include suggestions.		
		Our meeting was businesslike and results-oriented, and we functioned like a team.
		Our discussion was cordial and well balanced (not dominated by just a few members).
		We confined our discussion to agenda items only.
		We discussed positive issues as well as problems.
		We discussed policy issues rather than day-to-day management issues.
		We followed parliamentary rules and consulted legal or professional counsel when needed.
		The chairperson controlled and guided the meeting.
		We dealt successfully with controversial items and attempted to develop solutions acceptable to all members.
		Everyone contributed to the meeting.
		All members were prepared to discuss material that was sent to them in advance.
		Reports were clear and well prepared, and provided adequate information for decision making.
		Printed materials given to us were easy to understand and use.
		Our meeting room was comfortable and conducive to discussion and decision making.
		All members were in attendance and on time. The meeting began and ended on time.
		For committees and ad hoc groups: There was adequate reason for us to meet.

Source: Created by MGT of America, 2006.

FINDING

The MCPS School Board does not have an established committee structure. The Board does appoint ad hoc committees for the study of temporary issues. Primary functions of the Board include the adoption of an annual budget and approval of all expenditures.

The School Board has not established a mechanism for direct involvement in the development of policy, budgetary or strategic planning, and community relations; rather, it depends on the administration for all primary work in these areas. Consequently, the Board has limited knowledge of the processes involved in the development of policy, the annual budget, or long-range planning.

Exhibit 2-3 shows the results of a survey of the three employee groups concerning the effectiveness of budgeting, strategic planning, community relations, and internal communications.

EXHIBIT 2-3
COMPARISION OF SURVEY RESPONSES WITHIN THE SCHOOL DIVISION
BUDGETING, STRATEGIC PLANNING, COMMUNITY RELATIONS, AND
INTERNAL COMMUNICATIONS

SCHOOL DIVISION OPERATION	(%SI + MI) / (%A+O)*		
	CENTRAL OFFICE ADMINISTRATORS	PRINCIPALS/ ASSISTANT PRINCIPALS	TEACHERS
Budgeting	33/61	37/58	62/18
Strategic Planning	47/39	62/34	45/18
Community Relations	21/61	27/72	37/51
Internal Communications	60/39	62/38	44/45

Source: MGT survey, November 2006.
*Percentage responding *Needs Some Improvement* or *Needs Major Improvement*/Percentage responding *Adequate* or *Outstanding*. The *Neutral* and *Don't Know* responses have been omitted.

As shown, the survey results indicate that approximately two-thirds of the teachers responding feel there needs to be improvement in the budgeting process. Over 58 percent of the administrators believe the budgeting process is outstanding. Two-thirds of the principals/assistant principals expressed that improvement is needed in the strategic planning process. Thirty-nine percent of the central office administrators indicates that the strategic planning process is adequate or outstanding. Over 60 percent of both central office administrators and principals/assistant principals indicated that improvement is needed in the processes concerning internal communications. Each employee group indicates that the community relations for the division are adequate or are outstanding. Forty-five percent of the teachers indicate that internal communications are adequate or outstanding.

Recommendation 2-2:

Establish planning, policy, budget and finance, and community relations standing committees of the School Board in addition to ad hoc committees.

The implementation of this recommendation will result in the creation of four standing committees, with each having both School Board and community representation. The first step should be to develop and adopt a policy to guide the establishment and operation of each committee.

This policy should address the following areas:

- Committee membership, composition, and size.
- Responsibilities of School Board members.
- Guidelines for community members.
- Scope of responsibility.
- Administrative representation and support.

Exhibit 2-4 presents a possible committee structure, specifies suggested numbers of representatives for committee membership and the MCPS administrative position that may serve as liaison. As shown, each committee should have at least one member of

the School Board and four community members representing the four strands within the school division. This structure would allow each Board member to serve and further ensure that each geographical area in the county would be represented. Any School Board member could attend any committee meeting. Consideration should be given to establishing additional internal committees that would assist in the communication between the committees and the internal constituents.

EXHIBIT 2-4
PROPOSED COMMITTEE STRUCTURE
SCHOOL BOARD
MONTGOMERY COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

RECOMMENDED BOARD COMMITTEE	NUMBER OF BOARD MEMBERS	NUMBER OF COMMUNITY MEMBERS	STAFF REPRESENTATIVES
Community Relations	2	4	Superintendent, Director of Public Relations
Budget and Finance	2	4	Superintendent, Assistant Superintendent for Administrative Services
Policy	2	4	Superintendent, Division's Legal Counsel
Planning	2	4	Superintendent, Assistant Superintendent for Administrative Services Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction

Source: Created by MGT of America, 2006.

The responsibilities of the School Board should include:

■ Selecting Board members and community membership.

■ Establishing, in concert with the administration, a committee work plan and meeting agendas.

■ Appointing committee chairs who will facilitate the meetings.

■ Circulating minutes to ensure that all Board members are apprised of committee activity.

Guidelines for community committee members should include that they:

■ Have experience, are open-minded, and are interested in the topics that come before the specific committee on which they will be serving.

■ Be available to attend at least three-quarters of the scheduled meetings.

■ Provide input and offer recommendations to the committee for full Board review and decision.

■ Receive an orientation before serving on the committee.

The staff representatives should be required to:

■ Ensure that appropriate training is provided to all committee members and assigned staff.

■ Record minutes, then develop executive summaries of meetings and provide for their prompt distribution to committee members and the School Board.

■ Work with the committee chair to form committee agendas.

■ Provide materials to the committee for review, work/study, or approval.

By establishing the Board planning committee, the strategic planning activities will be focused within one primary standing committee. The accomplishment of this recommendation will provide the School Board and the administration with the framework needed to develop all long-and short-term plans to support Board goals.

The policy committee will serve as a catalyst to review and update the current policy manual. As Commonwealth legislation is developed and federal laws and rules change, the need for new policy and policy modification becomes evident.

The budget and finance committee will provide the School Board with important input into budgeting and lend greater credibility to the development process and final budget document.

Community relations should be a formal responsibility of all stakeholders. The establishment of a community relations committee should focus efforts in this area.

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources. The Virginia School Board Association (VSBA) may provide training as part of its membership services.

FINDING

Although some MCPS records are properly stored, many important records and documents are not appropriately stored to ensure institutional memory. Fire or severe weather could result in a loss of essential records. Best practices for safe storage are to keep duplicates of valuable records off the premises or to file records in fire-rated cabinets on the premises.

The records of School Board meetings and supporting information are prepared by the School Board clerk. Some hard copies of the records are stored in the vault; however, due to limited space, some of the records are currently stored in the clerk's office. The minutes and supplemental materials for the School Board meetings are stored electronically through the normal backup process of the division computer system.

Recommendation 2-3:

Provide fire-rated storage for valuable MCPS School Board meeting records.

The implementation of this recommendation should result in the purchase of one four-drawer, fire-rated, lockable file cabinet. This should ensure that important documents will not be lost in the event of a catastrophe. The file cabinet could be housed in the clerk of the Board's office and would serve as a secure method of storing these records until they could be permanently archived.

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation could be accomplished by purchasing a four-drawer, fire-rated, lockable file cabinet. Office suppliers sell file cabinets meeting these requirements for approximately $1,500.

Recommendation	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12
Purchase One Four-Drawer, Fire-Rated, Lockable File Cabinet	($1,500)	$0	$0	$0	$0

FINDING

Three members of the School Board are completing their first year of a four-year term. A fourth Board member was appointed to replace a vacancy and has been on the Board less than two years.

When the majority of a Board is comprised of new members, training becomes very important to ensure that all members understand their role and how to accomplish their duties. The new members of the School Board have taken advantage of training opportunities provided by VSBA and in some cases the National School Board Association (NSBA). The initial training provided by the school division for new Board members lasted half a day and primarily focused on the introduction of administrative staff and the roles they play within the division.

Following their election, all Board members received correspondence from the superintendent containing copies of documents required by Virginia law and information she sent to familiarize them with the division. Each of the new members was encouraged to contact the superintendent with any questions or concerns about their role as a Board member.

COMMENDATION

The members of the MCPS School Board are commended for attending state and national meetings to assist them in performing their Board members duties.

FINDING

New Board members attend a one-half day orientation but a formal, locally organized, ongoing orientation process is not in place for newly elected members of the Board. During the last election, MCPS elected the majority of the Board as new members. In order for a Board to function they must be provided specific training that will assist them in understanding their role and duties as they pertain to Virginia law, established policies and procedures, and the fiscal well-being of the school division.

Recommendation 2-4:

Develop and implement a full local orientation and development program for new members of the School Board.

The implementation of this recommendation should result in the development of a comprehensive local Board development program that, minimally, should cover the following topics:

- A review of the MCPS's planning documents and related processes for their development-updating.

- A review of the MCPS's budget and associated development and adoption timelines.

- The role of the Board member as reflected in Virginia law and by best practices. NSBA and VSBS can provide valuable information for this portion of the training.

- Policy development.

- Effective community and media relations.

- Boardmanship.

- Effective committee development and work.

- Development of strategies to enhance relationships with other governmental bodies.

- A review of Robert's Rules of Order.

The program should be implemented over a scheduled series of meetings, allowing the participants time to assimilate information gradually.

FISCAL IMPACT

The program can be developed and implemented with existing resources by obtaining information about the topics to be presented from VSBA and NSBA.

FINDING

MCPS and the Montgomery County Board of Supervisors have agreed to share an administrative facility. The shared facility has been renovated to meet the administrative needs of MCPS and will be occupied by the division administration once the renovation of the county courthouse is completed. This occupancy has been delayed due to the temporary relocation of courthouse personnel into the renovated space while the courthouse is being remodeled. The estimated occupancy date for the school division is 2009-10.

COMMENDATION

MCPS and the Montgomery County Board of Supervisors are commended for establishing shared facilities that will reduce administrative costs.

FINDING

While MCPS and the County Board of Supervisors are commended for establishing shared administrative facilities, they have not adopted a policy or memorandum of agreement concerning the utilization and governance of shared services. As a result, there are no mutually agreed upon guiding principles to ensure effective results.

Examples of current and proposed shared services include utilization of a shared accounting software package, sharing of recreational fields and facilities, sharing of ground maintenance associated with recreational fields, and a shared transportation and maintenance facility.

No provisions exist to guide a study of other services that might be shared by the county and MCPS. Shared services can lead to reductions in costs to the taxpayers of Montgomery County.

Recommendation 2-5:

Establish a collaboratively developed memorandum of agreement with the Board of Supervisors to identify shared or consolidated services, their periodic review, and expansion of the review to consider additional areas of cooperation.

Accomplishment of this recommendation should result in the drafting and adoption of a policy and procedures manual or a memorandum of agreement to guide the assessment of possible joint services as well as the implementation and annual review of such services.

The types of additional services could include the following:

- Building and grounds service maintenance facilities (planned).
- Transportation facilities (planned).
- Warehousing.
- Capital projects management.
- Courier and mail services.
- Technology services.

- Records management.
- Risk management including related training.
- Staff development.
- Surplus property and storage.
- Workers' compensation.
- Human resources.

Such a memorandum of agreement should address the following considerations:

- Protocol for the review of potential shared services, the review of progress in implementation and status of savings (annually), team member selection, community representation, and the identification of all pros and cons.

- Process for resolving disputes that may arise during the implementation of a shared service and during the term of its existence by an outside neutral body.

- Development of a realistic plan of action with thoroughly developed procedures for implementation and management of shared services.

- Expressed understanding of the reasonable coordinating agency and department within the assigned agency.

- Specific provisions for funding and other needed resources.

- Requirements for evaluation of those shared services that are developed, including timelines and benchmarks for assessment.

- Other considerations as deemed necessary.

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

2.3   *Policies and Procedures*

Policies and procedures are the means by which an organization can communicate expectations to its constituents. Through the development of policies and procedures, the philosophy and position of the School Board are revealed.

The MCPS policy manual has been placed on-line and is readily available to all division personnel and community members. A current copy of division policies is kept in the library of each school and in every public library in the county.

Exhibit 2-5 presents the MCPS policy manual classification (sections), titles, and policy codes.

EXHIBIT 2-5
ORGANIZATION OF POLICY HANDBOOK
SCHOOL BOARD
MONTGOMERY COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

CLASSIFICATION	SECTION TITLES	POLICY CODES
Section One	By Laws	Articles I –VI 1-1 through 1-5
Section Two	Community Relations	Articles I-V 2-1 through 2-5
Section Three	Business Operations	Articles I-IV 3-1 through 3-4
Section Four	Support Services	Articles I-V 4-1 through 4-5
Section Five	Personnel	Articles I-IX 5-1 through 5-9
Section Six	Instruction	Articles I-VI 6-1 through 6-6
Section Seven	Students	Articles I-V 7-1 through 7-5

Source: MCPS School Board Policy Manual, December 2006.

The policy manual contains seven sections. The sections are broken into articles, and the individual Board policies are identified under each article using the section number, article number, and a number for the specific policy. For example, Policy 6-6.1 is policy Section 6 (instruction), Article 6 (evaluation and reporting), Policy 1 (reporting to parents).

FINDING

The MCPS School Board completed a total revision of the Board policy manual in 2004. Since 2004, numerous policies have been further revised. Policy 1-5.4 clearly explains the process for adopting and suspending policies. The policy states that all School Board policies shall be reviewed at least every five years and revised as needed.

COMMENDATION

The MCPS School Board and administration are commended for keeping an up-to-date policy manual.

FINDING

During the policy revision process in 2004, numerous procedures were eliminated from the manual. These procedures are now developed by and housed in the appropriate administrative area. For example, procedures and forms associated with travel expenses can be obtained through the office of business services. Additional procedures can be found in the personnel manual. While MGT consultants were able to review some of these documents, they were unable to identify a complete list of all such materials. A central list of all reference documents was unavailable. This suggests that the School Board, administrators, and staff could not, if required, identify and review these documents in an expeditious manner.

Recommendation 2-6:

MCPS should develop Web-based links to forms and procedures associated with Board policy.

Consistency in the procedures, processes, and forms utilized by employees increases the overall efficiency of a school division. Having the information that is needed to complete tasks associated with Board policy readily available decreases the amount of time spent, and reduces the frustration associated with locating the appropriate processes or forms. In order to implement this recommendation, the following activities should be completed:

- A comprehensive review of the Board policy manual and identification of internal procedures, processes, and forms associated with the policies.

- Review of identified procedures, processes, and forms and modification as needed.

- Categorization of procedures, processes, and forms based on the section and articles of the associated Board policies.

- Establishment of Web-based links so that employees can easily access the procedures, processes, and forms from the MCPS home page.

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

2.4 *Legal Services*

Virginia law (22.1-82) provides authority for school boards to:

…employ legal counsel to advise it concerning any legal matter or to represent it, any member thereof or any school official in any legal proceeding to which the School Board, member or official may be a party, such proceeding is instituted by or against it or against a member or official by virtue of his actions in connection with his duties as such member or official.

FINDING

Legal services for MCPS staff and the School Board are provided by the firm Harrell & Chambliss, Attorneys at Law. Since December 2004, Mr. Brad King has provided legal services to the MCPS School Board and administration. In this capacity, the attorney attends School Board meetings and provides legal advice to the superintendent, central office administrators, and principals. The attorney bills MCPS a flat rate of $150 per hour.

The offices of Harrell & Chambliss are located in Richmond, Virginia. Mr. King commutes to Montgomery County twice a month to attend School Board meetings. In addition, he is available to the superintendent or her appointed representative via email or telephone. Travel expenses include mileage and overnight accommodations if needed. Legal counsel does not bill the division for travel time.

■ MGT interviews show positive support for the services rendered by Mr. Brad King of Harrell & Chambliss, Attorneys at Law.

Exhibit 2-6 shows the billing history for legal services for the three-year period of 2003-04 through 2005-06.

EXHIBIT 2-6
MCPS HISTORY OF LEGAL AND RELATED EXPENDITURES
2003-04 THROUGH 2005-06 SCHOOL YEARS

ACTIVITY	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06	TOTAL
Monthly Consultation	$75,757.99	$53,880.95	$75,867.48	$205,506.42
Due Process Hearings			$31,287.82	$31,287.82
Total	**$75,757.99**	**$53,880.95**	**$107,155.30**	**$236,794.24**

Source: MCPS financial reports, November 2006.

The significant increase in dollars spent for legal counsel in the 2005-06 fiscal year, which was mandated by federal law, concerned due process hearings associated with special education. It is anticipated that the hearing costs will decline in the next fiscal year.

Exhibit 2-7 presents a comparison of the legal expenses of MCPS and Fauquier County Public Schools, a peer school division. The chart does not include costs for special education due process hearings.

EXHIBIT 2-7
COMPARISON OF LEGAL COSTS PER STUDENT
MONTGOMERY AND FAUQUIER COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

SCHOOL DIVISION	2004-05	2005-06	TOTAL	AVERAGE	TOTAL STUDENT ENROLLMENT 2004-06	COST PER STUDENT
Montgomery County Public Schools	**$53,880**	**$75,867**	**$129,747**	**$64,873**	**9,072**	**$7.15**
Fauquier County Public Schools	$63,007	$52,525	$115,532	$57,766	21,556	$2.68

Source: Fauquier Co. and Montgomery Co. budget and enrollment information, November 2006.

As shown, MCPS legal costs for the past two years have averaged $4.47 per student more than those of Fauquier County Public Schools.

Recommendation 2-7:

Evaluate ways to reduce the division's legal expenses by 10 percent based upon the comparative data of the peer institution.

Legal counsel attends all School Board meetings. Consideration should be given to organizing the agenda so that legal counsel need attend only one Board meeting per month. This may be difficult, as student disciplinary issues have to be dealt with in a timely manner. MCPS should investigate the use of interactive video conferencing for disciplinary hearings or other limited Board activity that would require legal counsel. The

division would also realize an additional savings for the cost of overnight accommodations.

FISCAL IMPACT

If the Board is successful in reducing the cost of legal services by 10 percent annually, the savings per year would equal $7,586 per year ($75,867 X 10%). This would put MCPS more in line with its peer division with regard to legal costs.

Recommendation	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12
Reduce the Costs Associated with Legal Services by 10 Percent	$7,586	$7,586	$7,586	$7,586	$7,586

FINDING

While Harrell & Chambliss provides legal services to MCPS and its School Board, the firm does not have an executed written agreement or contract defining services and rates of compensation. The rates of compensation are agreed upon through action of the School Board on an as needed basis.

Recommendation 2-8:

Develop and approve a contract for legal services and assess those services annually.

Good business practices dictate that the School Board have a duly executed contract of agreement for professional services paid for with division funds. A contract for legal services should include, minimally, the following provisions:

- Definition of services to be provided.

- Conditions for securing the services of legal expertise from outside the contracted firm.

- Compensation rates for attorney, including consultation and litigation fee structures.

- Compensation rates for clerical and/or paralegal services if offered.

- Reimbursement for out-of-pocket expenses.

- Evaluation of legal services.

- Terms of contract.

- Other provisions as deemed necessary.

- Renewal and termination clause.

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

2.5   *Organization and Management*

The effective structuring and management of a large organization typically involves the incorporation of executive and management functions into a division arrangement. Each division contains a series of functional areas determined by its mission and related goals. The successful contemporary organization has among its central characteristics the capacity to reorganize its structure to meet changing client requirements. The more the existing culture of the organization restricts this response, the less likely it is that the organization will meet client requirements and thus achieve success.

This section reviews the Montgomery County Public Schools' organization and management, as well as the division's methods of decision-making, planning, accountability, internal and external communication, and public information.

2.5.1   *Division Organization*

MCPS executive and administrative functions are managed through a division that is organized into line and staff relationships that define official spans and communication channels. School divisions are typically pyramidal organizations with clear lines of authority leading from the School Board and its chief executive officer (superintendent) down through the divisions, departments, and schools.

The organizational chart of the school division has been developed to graphically depict this scheme as well as responsibility for staff evaluations. Large school divisions may have multiple layers within the organization. These layers create special challenges related to ensuring effective and efficient communication of information throughout the organization and to the public.

MCPS conducts its operations with a larger number of administrators than the peer division average. With a student enrollment of 9,272 during the 2004-05 school year, MCPS operated the division with 26.1 administrators, (i.e., 355 students per administrator or 80 students per administrator less than the peer division average.) Its peer divisions had an average of 11,157 total students and 25.63 administrators, or 435 students per administrator.

Exhibit 2-8 details the comparative data on administrative ratios.

**EXHIBIT 2-8
ADMINISTRATIVE RATIOS
MONTGOMERY COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS AND
PEER SCHOOL DIVISIONS
2004-05 SCHOOL YEAR**

SCHOOL DIVISION	STUDENT ENROLLMENT	ADMINISTRATORS	STUDENTS PER ADMINISTRATOR
Montgomery County Public Schools	**9,272**	**26.10**	**355**
Fauquier County Public Schools	10,664	34.00	314
Rockingham County Public Schools	10,963	25.50	430
Frederick County Public Schools	11,658	24.00	485
York County Public Schools	11,342	19.05	595
PEER DIVISION AVERAGE	**11,157**	**25.63**	**435**

Source: 2004-05 Superintendent's Annual Report for Virginia, VDOE Web site, 2006.

Implementation of recommendations 2-9 and 2-11, which are found later in this chapter, would reduce the administrator/student ratio and bring MCPS more in line with its peer divisions.

FINDING

The superintendent has too many subordinates directly reporting to her. The current superintendent, Dr. Tiffany Anderson, was selected to serve in this position beginning in March 2005. MCPS has developed a relatively flat organizational structure. There are three primary layers of authority—superintendent, assistant superintendent, and directors. The 22 building principals shown to report directly to the superintendent are evaluated by the superintendent, and work directly with the superintendent and assistant superintendent of curriculum and instruction.

Exhibit 2-9 shows that the superintendent has 31 direct reports: the assistant superintendent, six directors, one coordinator, one administrative assistant and 22 building principals.

Because of the work that necessarily occurs with the School Board and community, the superintendent needs to have fewer subordinates that directly report to her. This will enable her to focus on the major goals of the School Board.

The current organizational chart for MCPS is detailed in **Exhibit 2-9**.

EXHIBIT 2-9
ORGANIZATIONAL CHART
SUPERINTENDENT
MONTGOMERY COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

```
                    ┌──────────────────────────────────┐
                    │   Citizens of Montgomery County   │
                    └──────────────────────────────────┘
                    ┌──────────────────────────────────┐
                    │            School Board            │
                    └──────────────────────────────────┘
    ┌─────────────────────────┐        ┌──────────────────────────────┐
    │     School Attorney      │        │  Clerk of the School Board/Public │
    │                          │        │     Information Officer        │
    └─────────────────────────┘        └──────────────────────────────┘
                    ┌──────────────────────────────────┐
                    │           Superintendent           │
                    └──────────────────────────────────┘
    ┌─────────────────────────┐        ┌──────────────────────────────┐
    │  Administrative Assistant │        │   Assistant Superintendent      │
    │                          │        │ Curriculum and Instruction-Student │
    │                          │        │           Services             │
    └─────────────────────────┘        └──────────────────────────────┘
                                        ┌──────────────────────────────┐
                                        │ Director of Professional Development │
                                        └──────────────────────────────┘
                                        ┌──────────────────────────────┐
                                        │   Director of Human Resources   │
                                        └──────────────────────────────┘
                                        ┌──────────────────────────────┐
                                        │  Director of Management Services │
                                        └──────────────────────────────┘
                                        ┌──────────────────────────────┐
                                        │  Director of Special Education  │
                                        └──────────────────────────────┘
                                        ┌──────────────────────────────┐
                                        │     Director of Technology      │
                                        └──────────────────────────────┘
                                        ┌──────────────────────────────┐
                                        │      Director of Facilities     │
                                        └──────────────────────────────┘
                                        ┌──────────────────────────────┐
                                        │        School Principals        │
                                        │             (22)                │
                                        └──────────────────────────────┘
```

Source: Montgomery County Public Schools, November 2006.

The role of the director of management services for Montgomery County Public Schools should be elevated to the assistant superintendent level. Currently, the director of management services interacts closely with the superintendent and the assistant superintendent for curriculum and instruction. Often other directors on the organizational chart come to the director of management services for guidance and coordination of their services even though they report directly to the superintendent.

Exhibit 2-10 shows the current organizational structure of the director of management services.

EXHIBIT 2-10
ORGANIZATIONAL CHART
DIRECTOR OF MANAGEMENT SERVICES
MONTGOMERY COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

```
                    ┌──────────────────────────────┐
                    │ Director of Management Services │
                    └──────────────────────────────┘
        ┌──────────────────────────┐
        │     Accounts Payable      │
        └──────────────────────────┘
    ┌──────────────────────┐  ┌──────────────────────────┐  ┌──────────────────────────┐
    │ Supervisor of Purchasing │  │ Supervisor of School Nutrition │  │ Supervisor of Transportation │
    └──────────────────────┘  └──────────────────────────┘  └──────────────────────────┘
```
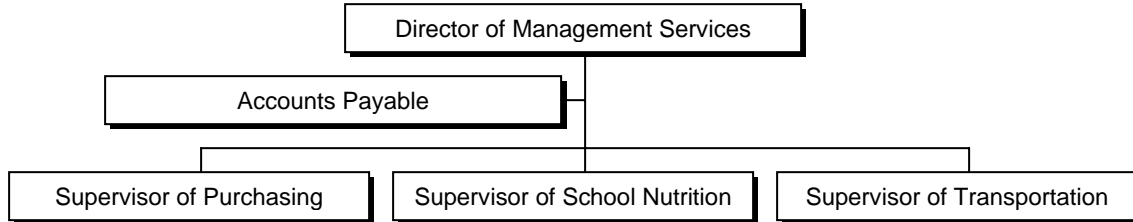
Source: Montgomery County Public Schools, November 2006.

Recommendation 2-9:

Change the role of the director of management services to the assistant superintendent for administrative services to include responsibility for the human resources, finance, business, facilities, transportation, nutrition, and technology departments.

Redefining the director of management services as an assistant superintendent position should make it possible for the various jobs in human resources, facilities, business, finance, transportation, nutrition, and technology to be more effectively coordinated and managed. The higher-level position that answers directly to the superintendent will allow for more efficient decision making within the administrative and support areas, as every decision will not have to be taken to the superintendent. Implementation of this recommendation will significantly reduce the number of direct reports to the superintendent.

FISCAL IMPACT

The change in the role of the director of maintenance services to an assistant superintendent for administrative services should cost an estimated $9,720 per year in additional salary and benefits. This amount was derived by using the 2006-07 administrative salary scale for a 12-month contract, level IX position and calculating the difference between the two existing positions ($7,200 + 35% benefits at $2,520 = $9,720).

Recommendation	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12
Change the Role of the Director of Management to Assistant Superintendent of Administrative Services	($9,720)	($9,720)	($9,720)	($9,720)	($9,720)

FINDING

The implementation of Recommendation 2-9, to elevate the current director of management services to an assistant superintendent of administrative services, may create a void in the finance department. MCPS currently has one individual who fully understands the budget process and the related computer software sufficiently to implement the budget on an annual basis. That individual is the current director of

management services. The need to cross-train additional staff in the budget development processes and to ensure their ability to assume many of the duties that are currently completed by the director of management should be a priority.

Recommendation 2-10:

Hire a controller who would be responsible for managing the budgeting processes and monitoring division receipts and expenditures.

In order to allow the current director of management services to assume the expanded role of an assistant superintendent of administrative services, an additional position in the finance office is needed. During the interview process, it was expressed that the only individual who has the ability to compile and implement the division budget is the director of management services. Having an additional individual within the division who has the skills to assist in the development and implementation of a budget is imperative. This individual would also assume the role of controller for MCPS and help monitor the fiscal condition of the division on a continuous basis.

Exhibit 2-11 shows the proposed organizational chart for the assistant superintendent of administrative services, including a controller position.

EXHIBIT 2-11
PROPOSED ORGANIZATIONAL CHART
ASSISTANT SUPERINTENDENT OF ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES
MONTGOMERY COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS
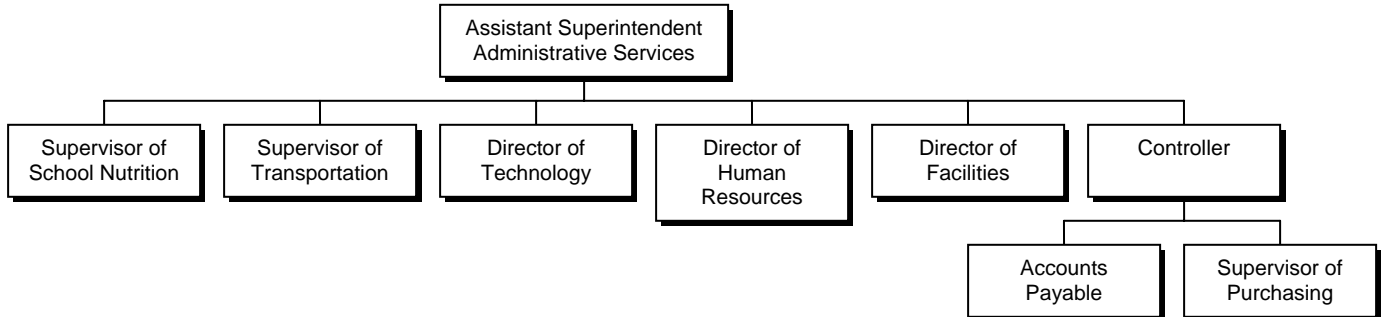
Source: Created by MGT of America, Inc., 2006.

FISCAL IMPACT

The cost estimate for hiring a controller was based on the salary level for a director (level VIII) with five years of experience ($78,785) plus 35 percent benefits ($27,575). The total compensation package for the controller position is thus estimated at $106,359.

Recommendation	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12
Hire a New Controller	($106,359)	($106,359)	($106,359)	($106,359)	($106,359)

FINDING

MCPS has one assistant superintendent's position for curriculum and instruction and student services.

The assistant superintendent for curriculum and instruction and student services has a total of 18 direct reports that include:

- Supervisor of gifted programs/advanced placement/Governor's School/events placement.

- Grant writer/research proposal coordinator.

- Assessment coordinator.

- Seven supervisors representing seven different curricular areas who are responsible for those areas for all grade levels.

- Seven administrative assistants.

The curricular areas for the seven supervisors are:

- Fine arts.

- Language arts/foreign-language ESL.

- Math/robotics.

- Science, physical education, and athletics.

- Social sciences and character education.

- Career and technical education and business partnerships.

- Reading, remediation, librarians, Title I, preschool, and media services.

The reporting and working relationship between the school principals and the office of the assistant superintendent of curriculum and instruction – student services is not well defined. In the organizational chart, the principals report to and are evaluated by the superintendent; however, during interviews with MGT, the principals indicated they reported to, or worked directly with, the assistant superintendent of curriculum and instruction – student services.

During interviews, MCPS staff expressed that it is difficult for one curriculum specialist to be well versed in the total curriculum for kindergarten through grade 12. Other comments revealed that curriculum specialists with an emphasis in elementary education were hesitant to make recommendations on the secondary level and vice versa.

Exhibit 2-12 is the current organizational chart for the office of the assistant superintendent of curriculum and instruction – student services.

EXHIBIT 2-12
CURRENT ORGANIZATIONAL CHART
ASSISTANT SUPERINTENDENT OF CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION –
STUDENT SERVICES
MONTGOMERY COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

```
                        ┌─────────────────────────┐
                        │ Assistant Superintendent │
                        │ Curriculum and Instruction│
                        └─────────────────────────┘
┌──────────────────────┐         ┌───────────────────────────────┐
│ Administrative Assistants │     │ Director of Professional Development │
│         (3)          │         └───────────────────────────────┘
└──────────────────────┘         ┌───────────────────────────────┐
                                 │    Curriculum Supervisors     │
                                 │             (7)               │
                                 └───────────────────────────────┘
                                 ┌───────────────────────────────┐
                                 │  Supervisor of Gifted/Advanced │
                                 │ Placement/Governor's School   │
                                 └───────────────────────────────┘
                                 ┌───────────────────────────────┐
                                 │  Grant Writer/Research Proposal │
                                 └───────────────────────────────┘
                                 ┌───────────────────────────────┐
                                 │   School Health Coordinator    │
                                 └───────────────────────────────┘
                                 ┌───────────────────────────────┐
                                 │    Assessment Coordinator     │
                                 └───────────────────────────────┘
                                 ┌───────────────────────────────┐
                                 │   Administrative Assistants    │
                                 │             (4)               │
                                 └───────────────────────────────┘
```
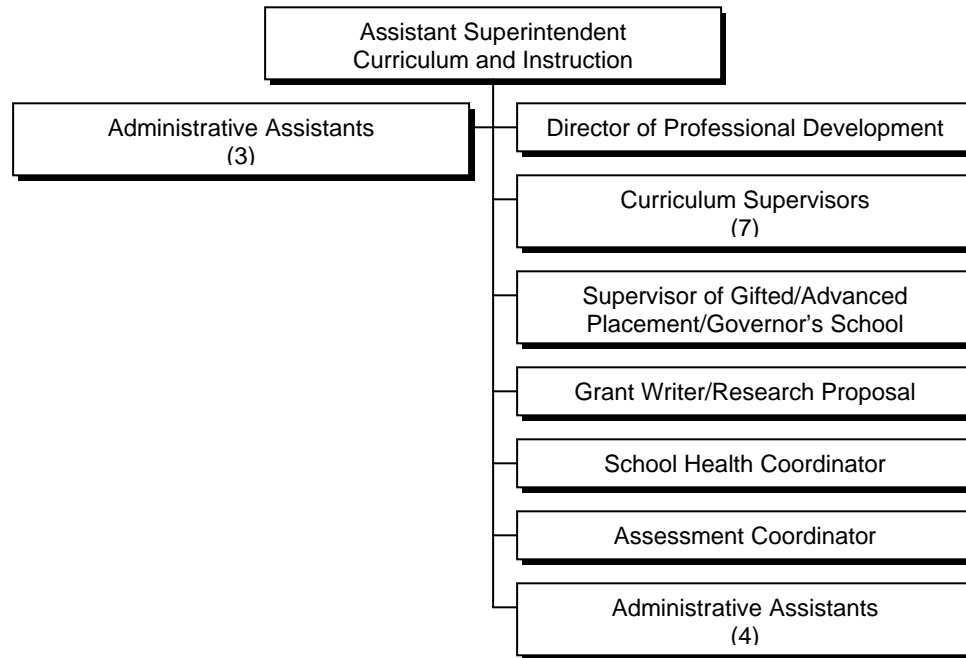
Source: Montgomery County Public Schools organizational chart, 2006.

Recommendation 2-11:

Hire a director of secondary education and a director of elementary education; requiring the building principals and appropriate curriculum supervisors to report to a director of education.

Hiring two new directors of education would make the reporting line for the 22 building principals very clear. The secondary principals would report to the director of secondary education, and the elementary principals would report to the director of elementary education. Determining which curriculum coordinators would report to which director should be a thoughtful and deliberate process. Having the principals and the appropriate curriculum specialists report to the same director would enhance communication concerning educational programming and promote a strong team concept for the decision-making processes.

FISCAL IMPACT

The directors of secondary and elementary education would be level VIII positions on the 2006-07 administrators' salary schedule for 12 months. The beginning salary with zero years experience is $69,944, and the maximum salary with 20 years of experience is $100,706. Based on step five on the salary schedule for these two positions, each position would equal $78,785. Benefits calculated at a rate of 35 percent represent an additional $27,574, for a total compensation package of $106,359 per educational

director. The total dollar amount for these two director positions would thus equal $212,718 per year.

Recommendation	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12
Hire Two Directors of Education	($212,718)	($212,718)	($212,718)	($212,718)	($212,718)

FINDING

The current organizational chart for the direct reports to the assistant superintendent of curriculum identifies seven individuals who serve as administrative assistants. Currently, these administrative assistants assist 13 individuals, including the seven curriculum supervisors. Seven administrative assistants would appear to be excessive for the staff reporting directly to the assistant superintendent of curriculum and instruction – student services.

Exhibit 2-13 is the proposed organizational chart for the assistant superintendent of curriculum and instruction – student services.

Recommendation 2-12:

Develop an administrative assistant pool or reassign administrative assistants to the areas with the greatest need.

The creation of an administrative assistant pool would make it possible to provide assistance to those areas with the highest demand without making permanent assignments to specific departments or individuals. This would provide the necessary flexibility to accomplish administrative tasks without hiring additional individuals. If specific departments or offices have additional administrative assistant needs reassignments could be made to meet those needs without increasing staff.

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with the current resources; however, the creation of a pool may reveal that workloads may not warrant the continued need for seven administrative assistants.

FINDING

One area of concern is the reporting structure of the principals. The organizational chart shows the principals report directly to the superintendent. In interviews, the principals revealed some confusion about their reporting structure. The principals indicated that they also report directly to the assistant superintendent of curriculum and instruction – student services. The principals meet monthly with the superintendent. The principals are not represented on the superintendent's leadership council (see Recommendation 2-14.) Clarification on the reporting structure is needed since the superintendent performs the formal evaluation of all principals.

Recommendation 2-13:

Clarify the reporting structure of principals by having them report to the appropriate director of secondary or elementary education.

Having the principals report directly to the appropriate director of education would allow for a clearly defined reporting structure and chain of command. The evaluation of the principals should be conducted by the responsible director of education.

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

EXHIBIT 2-13
PROPOSED ORGANIZATIONAL CHART
OFFICE OF THE ASSISTANT SUPERINTENDENT OF CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION – STUDENT SERVICES
MONTGOMERY COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS
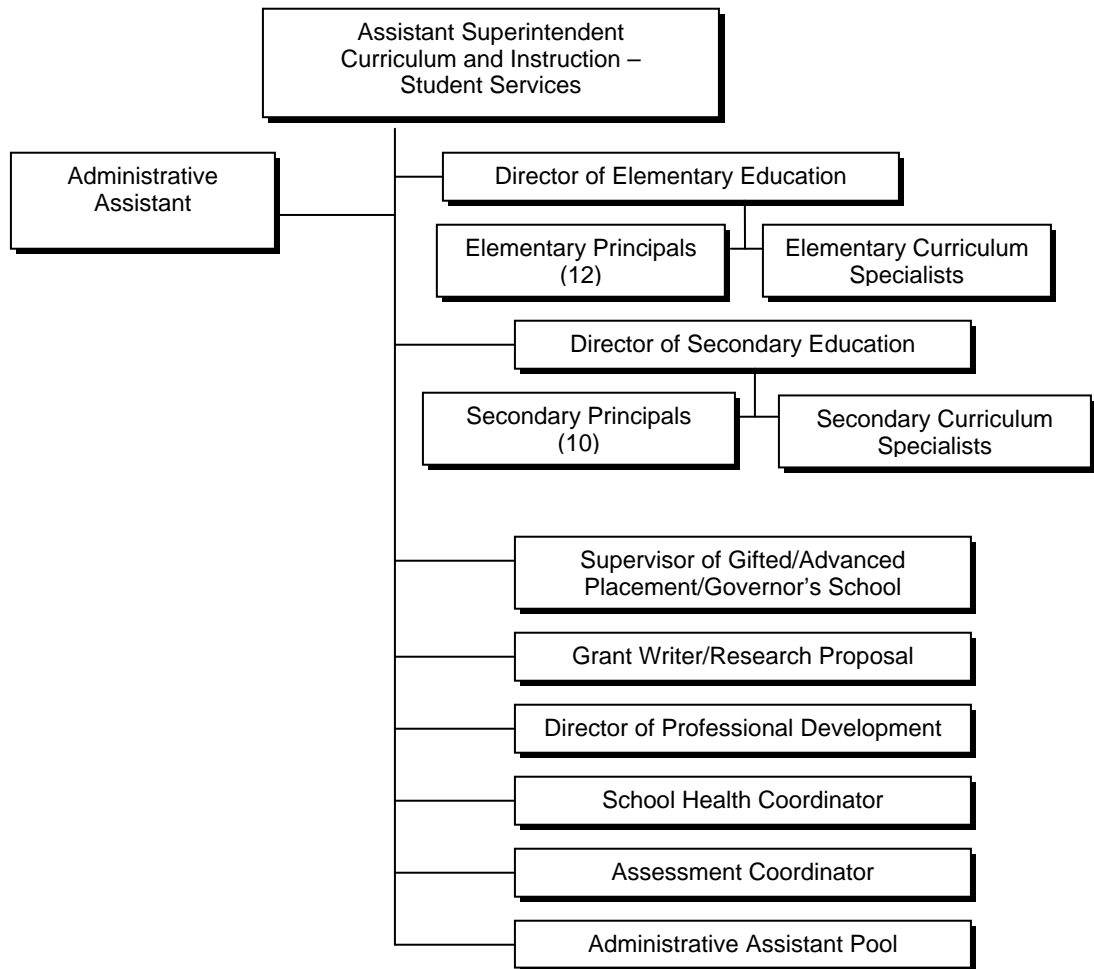
Source: Created by MGT of America, Inc., 2006.

In this document, numerous recommendations have been suggested for the reorganization of the administrative structure of MCPS. If each of the recommendations were implemented, the new organizational structure for the office of the superintendent would incorporate the following changes:

■ There would be a new assistant superintendent of administrative services.

■ School principals and the directors of human resources, technology, facilities, and management services would not report directly to the superintendent.

■ The director of professional development would report solely to the assistant superintendent of curriculum and instruction – student services.

Exhibit 2-14 presents the proposed organizational chart for the superintendent's office.

EXHIBIT 2-14
PROPOSED ORGANIZATIONAL CHART
OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDENT
MONTGOMERY COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS
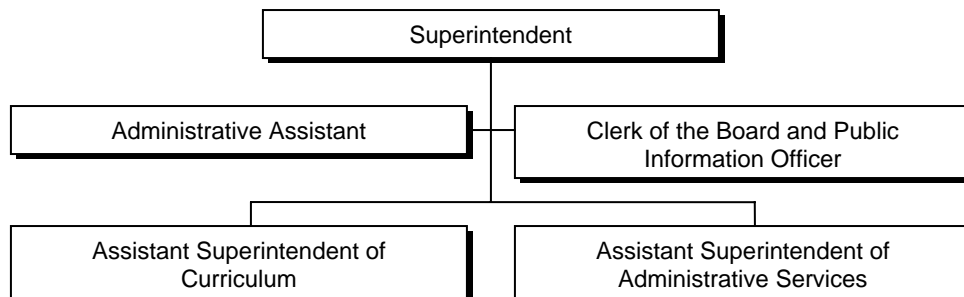
Source: Created by MGT of America, Inc., 2006.

The direct reports to the superintendent would be reduced from 31 individuals to four. This is a significant reduction. This reorganization would allow the superintendent to remain focused on planning, setting goals, and directing the vision for the division in the interest of all constituents.

2.5.2   *Decision-Making, Communications, Planning, and Accountability*

The superintendent is in her second year of service as the executive officer of MCPS. Prior to assuming her current position, she earned administrative experience as an assistant superintendent for two years in Missouri, in the Rockwood School District, the largest district in St. Louis County and was an elementary principal in St. Louis City. This is her first position as a superintendent.

FINDING

Currently, the superintendent's executive leadership is provided through the leadership council that is composed of the following seven positions:

- Assistant superintendent of curriculum and instruction – student services.

- Director of professional development.

- Director of special education.

- Director of management services.

- Director of human resources.

- Director of facilities.

- Director of technology.

The leadership council meets weekly and has an agenda with suggested time frames for each item. The principals are not represented on the leadership council. The superintendent does meet with the secondary, middle school, and elementary principals on a monthly basis. A quarterly all-staff meeting includes the principals and all administrative staff.

The superintendent's leadership style is all inclusive. She has established various advisory groups, including:

- Parents and presidents of the various parent-teacher associations.

- A support staff advisory group.

- A faculty advisory group.

Related initiatives and activities include:

- Weekly visits to the schools, riding buses quarterly, and serving as a teacher for the day each month.

- The implementation of "Ask the Superintendent" on the Web site to elicit suggestions and feedback from the community.

- Regular meetings with the Montgomery County Board of Supervisors.

The superintendent holds high expectations for the performance of personnel and the quality of instruction, as exemplified by the successful accreditation of seven schools that were not accredited prior to her tenure.

COMMENDATION

The superintendent has established and uses multiple internal and external advisory committees to assist in enhancing communication and meets regularly with the Montgomery County Board of Supervisors.

FINDING

The employee survey results for Part M: School District Operations, shows a majority of the principals/assistant principals expressing a need for some or major improvement in internal communications and the personnel evaluation processes. Central administrators indicate a need for improvement in internal communications and responded with a 64 percent approval rate for personnel evaluations. Forty-five percent of the teachers responding to MGT's survey rated internal communications as adequate or outstanding and sixty-four percent of the reporting teachers rated personnel evaluations as adequate or outstanding.

Exhibit 2-15 shows the survey results for MCPS central office administrators, principals and assistant principals, and teachers.

EXHIBIT 2-15
COMPARISON OF SURVEY RESPONSES WITHIN THE DIVISION
SCHOOL DISTRICT OPERATIONS

SCHOOL DIVISION OPERATION	(%SI + MI) / (%A + O)*		
	CENTRAL OFFICE ADMINISTRATORS	PRINCIPALS/ ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL	TEACHERS
Internal Communications	60/39	62/38	44/45
Personnel Evaluations	50/64	75/24	30/64

Source: MGT survey, November 2006.
*Percentage responding *Needs Some Improvement* or *Needs Major Improvement*/Percentage responding *Adequate* or *Outstanding*. The *Neutral* and *Don't Know* responses have been omitted.

Comments from interviews, focus groups, and the community open house reinforced the survey results.

Recommendation 2-14:

Establish a superintendent's leadership council composed of the following positions: assistant superintendent of curriculum and instruction – student services, assistant superintendent of administrative services, public information officer, and a minimum of three principals representing kindergarten through grade 12.

With the implementation of the proposed organizational restructuring, a newly configured leadership council composed of six positions should be developed. This leadership council should be designed to enhance communication and provide a group more fully representative of the major units and functions within the division. There will be times when it will be appropriate to bring other directors into the leadership council meetings based upon the topics that are being discussed.

The superintendent and the superintendent's leadership council should perform the following functions:

- Coordinate development of the strategic plan.

- Review projections and alternative "What If" analysis as part of the long-range planning process.

- Establish and maintain focus on mission, goals, and related initiatives of the division.

- Analyze and interpret data to ensure decisions are based on accurate and complete information.

- Ensure community involvement.

- Monitor internal communication to ensure effective explanation of decisions and related information.

- Communicate the vision of the organization to all stakeholders.

- Guide program evaluation.

- Identify and participate in training designed to ensure that the team functions effectively.

- Orchestrate the specific and purposeful abandonment of obsolete, unproductive practices and programs.

- Maintain focus on continuous division and school improvement.

- Monitor the division's organizational climate.

- Coordinate the development and equitable allocation of resources (fiscal, personnel, facilities, technology, etc.).

Decisions should be based on the best information available and on appropriate input. Day-to-day operational decisions should rest with the administrators responsible for their respective units and departments. Various people such as the assistant superintendents, administrative assistants, controller, clerk of the Board, director of human resources, and director of facilities would maintain effective, frequent communication with the superintendent to ensure consistency and effective monitoring of activities.

The implementation of this recommendation should provide the superintendent and MCPS administration and staff with a clear and understandable means for communicating and managing the division effectively and efficiently.

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING

As the superintendent has expanded opportunities for communication through internal and external advisory committees, email access, and active visitations in the schools, employees and constituents may choose to communicate directly with her, which has the potential of bypassing the appropriate individual who may directly address questions or issues. Some supervisors indicate that often they hear about an issue for the first time from the superintendent.

This issue is extremely difficult to address. It is important to allow people the opportunity to communicate directly with the superintendent while at the same time ensuring that the chain of command is being followed when addressing employee and constituent concerns. In reviewing some of the emails the superintendent sent to MGT subsequent to our site visit, her selected examples indicate attempts have been made to involve appropriate staff in decision-making.

Recommendation 2-15:

Empower individuals at the lowest possible level to make decisions and direct individuals who have questions and concerns to contact the appropriate individual within the chain of command.

Empowering people to make decisions within their defined role and responsibilities increases efficiency and holds them accountable. Adherence by all parties to the established chain of command and policies associated with the reporting structure of the division are imperative in an organization of this size. Directing people to first ask if the individual has spoken to the teacher, or principal before bringing the problem to the superintendent will help them understand the need to follow the chain of command.

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING

Data shows that MCPS employees receive a high volume of daily emails. With today's technology and rapid communication via the Internet and email, it is difficult not to rely heavily on this technology as a primary means of communication. The MGT interview process revealed that upper-level administrators are becoming more dependent on email as their primary communication method. Many times email messages can be misinterpreted. If the author is in a hurry, the messages may be interpreted as rude or demeaning. These situations lead to decreased morale and declining productivity. Individuals who receive email that they feel is not needed or is written in an unprofessional manner are hesitant to respond and notify their supervisors of important information.

Attempts to control the volume of MCPS email have been initiated such as the Principal's Weekly Update that is distributed each Friday.

Recommendation 2-16:

Monitor the quantity of email received and sent by top-level administrators, including the superintendent, and assess the amount of time spent each day reading and responding to email.

If specific offices use email as their primary means of correspondence, the chances for miscommunication and misinterpretation of messages are greatly enhanced. The continual use of email can also make employees feel negligent in their roles if key administrators are responding to messages late at night or in the very early hours of the morning. The implementation of this recommendation would require administrators' administrative assistants to monitor the time administrators commit to processing email. Empowering administrative assistants to respond on behalf of administrators to routine matters will reduce the time administrators spend processing email. Training on effective use of email and other communication methods should be incorporated into the leadership council and staff meetings.

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with current resources.

FINDING

MCPS has a six-year Continuous Improvement Plan (strategic plan) that was developed in 2002 and revised in 2006. Each school uses the Continuous Improvement Plan to develop its own building improvement plans.

COMMENDATION

MCPS has a divisional six-year Continuous Improvement Plan that is used by each school to identify its specific-building goals.

FINDING

The original continuous improvement planning committee has not met since the plan was developed in 2002. The revision of the continuous improvement plan and its relationship to the building continuous improvement planning processes are not well defined or monitored. MCPS administrators and supervisors provided the information used for the 2006 update.

Recommendation 2-17:

Utilize the six-year continuous improvement planning committee to update and revise the improvement plan on an annual basis.

The division's six-year Continuous Improvement Plan should be the document that guides the local schools in establishing their priorities. Implementation of the division priorities in the individual schools' Continuous Improvement Plans will ensure that all aspects of the division are moving in a united direction.

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

2.5.3   *Public Information*

The clerk of the Board also serves as a part-time public information officer. This joint position serves on the superintendent's leadership council. The public information office is important to the enhancement of communication both externally and internally. School divisions are judged on the amount and quality of information that is disseminated to the public.

FINDING

The primary emphasis of the clerk of the Board/public information office is to produce the annual calendar/annual report and the "Good News Train." These documents are produced regularly during the school year and are informative and well received by staff and community members.

COMMENDATION

The public information office produces quality annual calendars/reports and "Good News Train" publications.

2.5.4   *School Organization and Management*

To meet the requirements of providing appropriate administrative and instructional support for schools, school systems typically adopt standards to guide the determination of positions to be budgeted and assigned to each school.

MCPS provides instructional programs to students in four high schools, four middle schools, and 14 elementary schools. Each school is staffed with a principal and assistant principal. Activities/athletic directors, guidance counselors, and library positions are available to each school where appropriate.

Exhibit 2-16 shows data related to the various positions in the Montgomery County Public Schools as compared to the five peer divisions. MCPS has fewer school-based administrators than the peer division average and more teachers and teacher's aides than the average.

FINDING

The instructional support staffing of MCPS is consistent with and meets all state standards. When MCPS is compared to peer divisions in the Commonwealth of Virginia, its staffing ratios are generally higher than the peer division average. This can be attributed to the distance between the schools and the philosophy of trying to maintain community schools throughout the county.

**EXHIBIT 2-16
STAFF PER 1,000 STUDENTS
MONTGOMERY COUNTY SCHOOLS AND
PEER SCHOOL DIVISIONS
2004-05 SCHOOL YEAR***

SCHOOL DIVISION	STUDENTS AVERAGE DAILY MEMBERSHIP	PRINCIPALS/ ASSISTANT PRINCIPALS PER 1,000 STUDENTS	TEACHERS PER 1,000 STUDENTS	TECHNOLOGY INSTRUCTORS PER 1,000 STUDENTS	TEACHER AIDES PER 1,000 STUDENTS	GUIDANCE COUNSELORS/ LIBRARIANS PER 1,000 STUDENTS
Montgomery County Public Schools	**9,436.37**	**3.50**	**83.85**	**0.00**	**22.43**	**5.46**
Augusta County Public Schools	10,082.66	4.07	79.41	0.00	11.31	4.93
Fauquier County Public Schools	10,724.38	3.64	79.50	0.84	17.25	4.20
Rockingham County Public Schools	11,150.46	3.86	78.85	0.63	14.49	4.98
York County Public Schools	12,617.78	3.41	63.58	1.43	19.31	4.08
Frederick County Public Schools	11,663.04	3.55	78.01	0.00	13.81	5.60
PEER DIVISION AVERAGE	**11,247.66**	**3.71**	**75.87**	**0.58**	**15.23**	**4.76**

Source: Virginia Department of Education Web site, 2006.
*Ratios based on average daily membership (ADM).

COMMENDATION

The MCPS School Board meets or exceeds the minimum Commonwealth school administrative and instructional staffing criteria set forth in the revised Standards of Quality.

3.0 FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT, PURCHASING, AND COST OF EDUCATION SERVICES

3.0 FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT, PURCHASING, AND COST OF EDUCATIONAL SERVICES

This chapter reviews financial management, purchasing, and the cost of education service delivery in Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS). It is divided into the following major sections:

3.1 Organization and Management
3.2 Accounting Services
3.3 Budgeting
3.4 Grants Administration and Management
3.5 School Activity Funds
3.6 Payroll and Benefits
3.7 Records Management
3.8 Fixed Assets Management
3.9 Purchasing and Contract Administration
3.10 Warehousing
3.11 Cost of Educational Services

CHAPTER SUMMARY

The finance, purchasing, and warehousing operations of MCPS are managed by the director of management services with a staff of eight. (Other management services employees focus on school nutrition and transportation; their activities are covered in other chapters.) These employees have the primary responsibility for managing division finances (including accounting services, budgeting, revenue forecasting, and risk management), purchasing, and warehousing.

The finance and purchasing staff have adopted a number of innovations to improve operational effectiveness. For example, the accounts payable system is efficient and effective, and the warehouse efficiently manages and distributes the most commonly used school supplies. The budget process includes input from school principals and department heads. School activity funds for the most part are managed with policies and procedures that allow for monthly monitoring by the central office. The payroll and purchase order systems have been automated. Related policies and procedures have been defined and documented, and staff have been cross-trained to ensure that these functions run smoothly when key personnel get sick, go on vacation, or retire.

MGT identified a number of exemplary practices in MCPS. This chapter thus includes the following commendations, among others:

- MCPS is commended for having an inclusive and collaborative budget process that includes input from school principals and department heads.

- MCPS is commended for having a grants office that proactively targets and seeks grant funding and for managing grant funds efficiently.

- MCPS is commended for its warehouse management and the efficiency with which it competitively procures, manages, and distributes those items most commonly used by the school division.

- MCPS is commended for initiating and implementing innovative programs that serve different student populations and for seeking new funding and creating partnerships to carry out such programs.

- Auburn Elementary School and MCPS are commended for implementing a successful and effective program through a partnership with an institution of higher education, to the mutual benefit of both parties.

MGT has developed recommendations to assist the finance and purchasing staff in building on these successes. These recommendations are as follows:

- Review and adopt specific policies for the finance department and establish a process for creating well-written and organized procedures with periodic reviews and regular updates.

- Document the entire budget process in a policies and procedures manual and immediately begin cross-training another finance department employee.

- Educate all division staff in the budget process and institute a forum that allows department heads and principals to receive input from teachers and staff.

- Produce a budget that serves as a policy document, a financial plan, and a communication device that appropriately articulates the Board-adopted priorities of the division.

- Provide monthly budget-to-expenditure reports to the School Board.

- Update the School Activity Fund Manual and Internal Control Procedures, provide annual training to bookkeepers, and increase oversight over bookkeepers, to include site visits.

- Adopt a comprehensive records management policy using Virginia and federal retention and disposal regulations, and appropriately distribute procedures governing this policy to all schools and departments; dispose of original records once they are microfilmed; and expand the records clerk's responsibilities to include all records at MCPS.

- Develop and implement a comprehensive fixed assets tracking system for identifying, inventorying, and managing valuable school division assets.

- Implement a divisionwide purchasing card program for purchases of less than $1,000 to reduce costs and to improve purchasing efficiency.

- Immediately change the policy of providing "free" supplies and replace this with a budget for each school and department for all major supplies.

This chapter will focus on financial and purchasing services provided by the finance department of MCPS and payroll and benefits management provided by the human resources (HR) department.

The last section of the chapter will focus on evaluating the cost of delivering education services in MCPS; it will not address the effectiveness of those services.

MCPS serves its special education students in the least restrictive environment using the philosophy of full inclusion; special education students at MCPS are served in regular classrooms. Similarly, MCPS's gifted and talented students are also served in regular general education classrooms. MCPS has several innovative programs, including Rivendell, for students removed from schools due to disciplinary actions; the Phoenix Center, an alternative to out-of-school suspension; and acclaimed collaborations with universities, such as the Mathematics Specialist Program for training teachers, developed in partnership with Virginia Tech.

Recommendations in this section include the following:

- Develop and implement divisionwide policies for the purchase of supplemental instructional programs by evaluating the effectiveness and suitability of such programs.

- Review MCPS course offerings and teacher assignments at the high schools to improve the division's capacity to meet the priority goals set by the School Board, and review the pupil/teacher ratio and class size goals for grades K-3 to ensure that the educational benefits are sufficient to merit the additional cost to meet Board goals.

- Compare the effectiveness of MCPS's special education inclusive model to the high inclusion models of peer school divisions in Virginia once the Virginia Department of Education releases its special education report in February 2007.

- Institute a pay rate of $20 an hour for summer school teachers to match the homebound instruction teacher hourly rate and stop paying sign-on bonuses to all teachers for summer school.

- Increase the hours for middle school nurses to 32.5 hours at three middle schools to match those at the elementary schools.

3.1 *Organization and Management*

Montgomery County Public Schools, like all Virginia school divisions, is a fiscally dependent school division. This means that it does not have taxing or appropriating authority but rather relies on Montgomery County and its Board of Supervisors to levy local taxes, appropriate funds, and issue debt on its behalf.

Under such fiscal dependency, the school division undertakes its own budget process and has a proposed superintendent's budget that the School Board deliberates on and approves. This approved budget is sent to Montgomery County, where the Board of Supervisors adopts the budget for the school division as part of its total county budget. In 2005-06, MCPS made up 62.2 percent of the Montgomery County budget.

Exhibit 3-1 compares receipts for peer school divisions by funding source for fiscal year 2004-05. It shows that MCPS received lower amounts of funds in all categories, including the total, than the peer division average. As **Exhibit 3-2** shows, MCPS received $37.75 million, or 42 percent of its funding in fiscal year 2004-05, from Montgomery County; this was comparable to the peer division average of 43 percent.

EXHIBIT 3-1
RECEIPTS BY FUND SOURCE
MONTGOMERY COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS AND PEER SCHOOL DIVISIONS
FISCAL YEAR 2004-05

SCHOOL DIVISION	STATE SALES AND USE TAX	STATE FUNDS	FEDERAL FUNDS	CITY, TOWN AND COUNTY FUNDS	OTHER FUNDS	LOANS, BONDS, ETC.	ALL SOURCES
Montgomery	**$8,648,023**	**$33,727,228**	**$6,042,367**	**$37,751,724**	**$2,704,099**	**$2,216,917**	**$91,090,358**
Augusta	$9,188,698	$40,675,431	$8,224,682	$32,119,972	$3,215,955	$7,467,641	$100,892,380
Fauquier	$9,037,239	$22,562,647	$4,533,933	$70,201,956	$3,297,306	$700	$109,633,781
Frederick	$8,827,658	$40,445,354	$4,745,680	$58,799,395	$3,281,173	$15,840,276	$131,939,535
Rockingham	$10,320,663	$38,917,307	$6,764,893	$42,819,351	$3,645,002	$92,218	$102,559,434
York	$9,306,537	$40,813,717	$12,586,838	$35,122,505	$4,321,281	$38,833	$102,189,711
PEER DIVISION AVERAGE	**$9,221,470**	**$36,190,281**	**$7,149,732**	**$46,135,817**	**$3,410,803**	**$4,276,098**	**$106,384,200**

Source: Superintendent's Annual Report, fiscal year 2004-05, Table 12. Virginia Department of Education Web site, 2006.

EXHIBIT 3-2
REVENUE BY SOURCE
MONTGOMERY COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS
FISCAL YEAR 2004-05
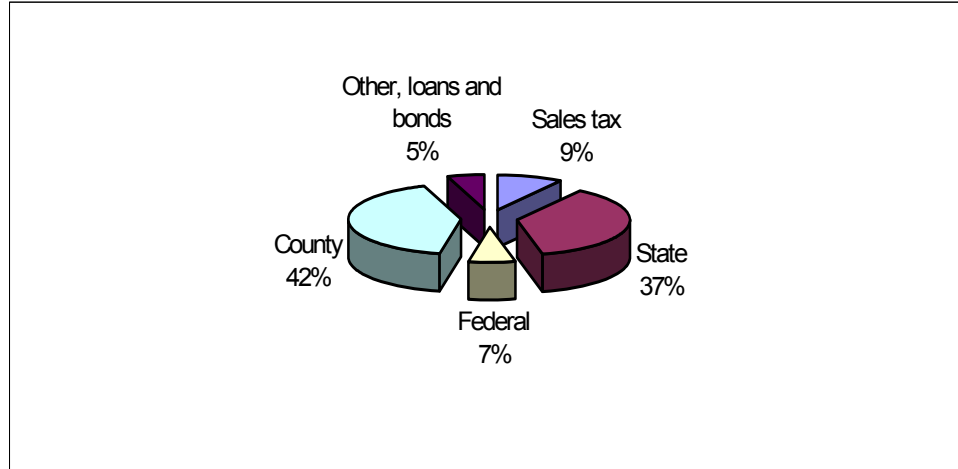
Source: Superintendent's Annual Report, fiscal year 2004-05, Table 12. Virginia Department of Education Web site, 2006.

The director of management services at MCPS heads the finance and purchasing departments, as shown in the organizational chart in **Exhibit 3-3**. He also oversees warehousing, transportation, and food service. The finance function includes one accounts payable administrative assistant; the director of management services is responsible for accounting, budgeting, and risk management. Purchasing is headed by the supervisor of purchasing, who reports to the director of management services. The supervisor of purchasing oversees a staff of six, including a purchasing administrative assistant and a warehouse supervisor, who oversees three warehousing employees and a mailroom clerk.

The payroll and benefits function at MCPS is under the HR department. A payroll supervisor oversees three payroll and benefits personnel, and reports to the HR director.

**EXHIBIT 3-3
ORGANIZATIONAL CHART
FINANCE AND PURCHASING DEPARTMENT
MONTGOMERY COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS**

```
                    Director of Management
                          Services

  Accounts Payable
Administrative Assistant

  Supervisor of School      Supervisor of       Supervisor of
      Nutrition              Purchasing         Transportation

          Purchasing            Warehouse
         Administrative         Supervisor
           Assistant

                           Warehouse Assistants (3)
                              Mail Clerk (1)
```
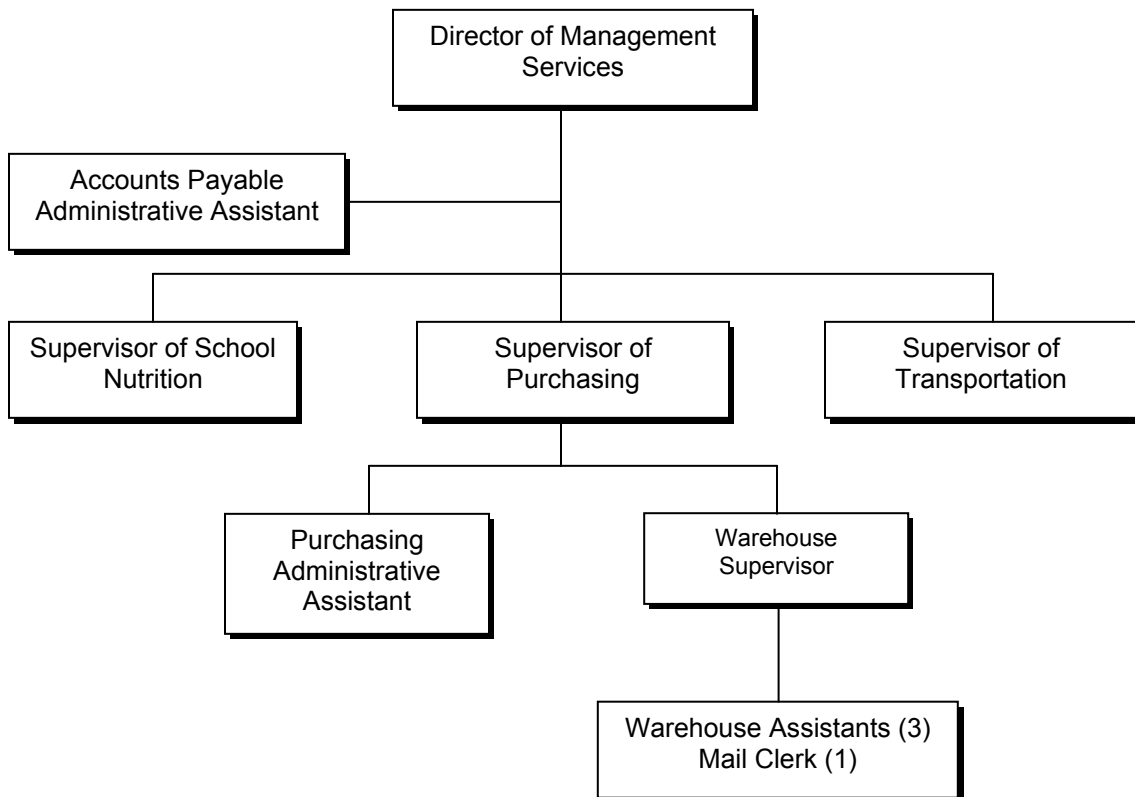
Source: Montgomery County Public Schools, finance department, 2006.

3.2 Accounting Services

The finance department of MCPS consists of two people, whose responsibilities include accounting services, budgeting, revenue forecasting, and risk and asset management. In addition, the director of management services is responsible for and has oversight over food service and transportation.

The finance department uses the MUNIS® School Business Offices financial management system for budgeting, accounts payable, and purchasing. The administrative assistant, the other finance employee, is responsible for accounts payable for MCPS. The division handled over 22,000 invoices totaling in excess of $14 million in fiscal year 2005-06.

The automated accounts payable function is backed by an organized and well-managed system in which purchase orders, invoices, and checks are filed in a systematic manner. The schools and departments also understand and follow the system. MCPS has a good relationship with the county treasurer's office and is able to ensure that checks are transmitted electronically and issued efficiently.

FINDING

Although MCPS has a well-managed accounts payable system, the division does not have written policies and procedures for this function. On two occasions when the accounts payable administrative assistant had to be on leave for a few weeks, the purchasing administrative assistant had to take on this responsibility. This involved a quick overview of the procedures and phone calls to the accounts payable administrative assistant during her leave. This could have been prevented had procedures been documented in a manual or had there been cross-training. Cross-training of personnel provides stability and assurance that all necessary functions will continue even during unplanned personnel gaps.

MCPS has stable, long-serving employees. The accounts payable administrative assistant is a long-time MCPS employee who knows her responsibilities very well. Many such employees know their duties and responsibilities well enough not to need written procedures for themselves. On the other hand, this often means that other employees are unable to step in and do the work when the need arises. Written policies and procedures are critical in school divisions, where personnel may have distinct roles that do not overlap with other functions.

Currently, MCPS has only a one-page, Board-adopted set of policies on financial accounting and reporting. The division does not have any written procedures for its finance-related functions. The director of management services has issued specific memoranda to augment policies adopted by the School Board or the superintendent; however, the department relies on state and federal guidelines and standards. This leaves a gap in specific, MCPS-relevant procedures.

Effective school financial management is based on sound, clearly written, legally valid policies that are consistent and up to date. Documenting step-by-step procedures for implementing these policies is important for several reasons:

- Written procedures protect institutional knowledge so that when experienced employees leave, new employees have a "road map" for performing their duties. Long-time employees may have to leave their positions due to unexpected circumstances such sudden illness, death, or spousal job transfer.

- Written procedures ensure that Board-adopted policies and statutory requirements are implemented.

- Written procedures facilitate training for new employees.

- The act of documenting current procedures is useful as a tool for process engineering. By questioning long-standing procedures for their validity and appropriateness, MCPS may be able to improve on them.

Recommendation 3-1:

Review and adopt specific policies for the finance department and establish a process for creating well-written and organized procedures with periodic reviews and regular updates.

MCPS should set up an implementation schedule to formally document all accounts payable procedures, and establish a system for regular updates. The purchasing administrative assistant should be formally cross-trained in the accounts payable function.

FISCAL IMPACT

The accounts payable administrative assistant and the director of management services will have to dedicate time to documenting the procedures and cross-training the purchasing administrative assistant. The purchasing administrative assistant documented procedures for her own use during the two instances when she had to fill in, and her notes should provide a good starting point for a procedures manual. This recommendation can, however, be implemented using current resources and should be carried out soon.

3.3   *Budgeting*

FINDING

At MCPS, the entire responsibility for the budget process lies with the director of management services, who, in addition to supervising the financial and purchasing functions, is also responsible for the transportation and school nutrition departments. At MCPS, no other personnel are currently trained or have knowledge of the budget process. Budgeting policies and procedures are not documented, and the current final budget documents are very simple. MCPS does adopt a budget calendar and does include input from principals and department heads.

As stated in Section 3.2 (Accounting Services), it is important to have cross-trained personnel as well as documented policies and procedures so that school division work continues without interruption when key personnel are not available to continue their job even for a short time.

Recommendation 3-2:

Document the entire budget process in a policies and procedures manual and immediately begin cross-training another finance department employee.

Should **Recommendations 2-9** and **2-10** (promote the current director of management services to assistant superintendent for administrative services and create a new controller position) be implemented, there would be two staff members with knowledge of the MCPS budgeting process. The new controller, however, would still be the only one responsible for the day-to-day functions of the finance department, and hence the only

one with budgeting and financial responsibility. To avoid this, the current purchasing supervisor should be trained in the budgeting process immediately.

FISCAL IMPACT

Implementing this recommendation will require time and effort on the part of the current director of management services and the purchasing supervisor. It can, however, be done with little fiscal impact other than that identified under **Recommendations 2-9** and **2-10**.

FINDING

MCPS's months-long budget process follows a set budget calendar that includes the statutorily required public hearing; stakeholder input from teachers, principals, and administrators; and numerous School Board work sessions before adoption of the budget by the School Board and the Montgomery County Board of Supervisors.

School principals and department heads submit their budget requests in a uniform format and send them to the director of management services electronically, along with justification for their requests. These requests are then compiled and discussed in a meeting with all principals and department heads. The requests form the basis for the superintendent's proposed budget presentation to the School Board.

According to the Government Finance Officers Association's (GFOA) publication *Best Practices in Public Budgeting,* a budget planning process includes "the need for a budget calendar, specific guidelines and instructions for each participant, a mechanism for coordinating the budget preparation and review, discussion, modification, and adoption, and opportunities for stakeholder input." In interviews with MGT, department heads and principals revealed the process and format used by MCPS for budget development. This included clear instructions from the finance department, detailed budget requests, and opportunities for discussion and input.

COMMENDATION

MCPS is commended for having an inclusive and collaborative budget process that includes input from school principals and department heads.

FINDING

Although MCPS has a well-defined budget process, many teachers and central office personnel are not familiar with the department's budget process, priorities, and rationale for allocating funds. According to GFOA, "A government should develop mechanisms to identify stakeholder concerns, needs, and priorities." Teachers and personnel in various departments need to take an active part in this stakeholder discussion.

School divisions make program and service decisions and allocate resources to programs and services through the budget process. An effective budget process:

- Allows stakeholders—principals, teachers, staff, administrators, parents, and taxpayers—to participate effectively in the development, implementation, and evaluation process.

- Allows for input to and from the decision makers—the School Board and the Board of Supervisors—that results in financial resources being allocated to meet the goals and priorities of the school division.

- Results in an easy-to-read budget.

GFOA provides recommendations on an ideal budgeting process, and the National Advisory Council on State and Local Budgeting (NACSLB) states that:

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

The MGT survey of teachers, principals and assistant principals, and central office administrators revealed disparities in perception. Whereas the majority of administrators and principals were satisfied with the budget process and how funds were managed, teachers were not (see **Exhibit 3-4**). All three groups surveyed agreed that strategic planning needed some or major improvement, as shown in **Exhibit 3-5**. The survey respondents included 282 teachers.

EXHIBIT 3-4
COMPARISON OF SURVEY RESPONSES WITHIN THE DIVISION

	(%A + SA) / (%D + SD)*		
STATEMENT	**CENTRAL OFFICE ADMINISTRATORS**	**PRINCIPALS/ ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL**	**TEACHERS**
Funds are managed wisely to support education in this school district.	68/4	65/10	30/25
The budgeting process effectively involves administrators and staff.	82/4	66/21	29/29
School administrators are adequately trained in fiscal management techniques.	43/7	31/35	16/5
My school allocates financial resources equitably and fairly.	57/4	86/3	48/19

Source: MGT survey, November 2006.
* Percentage responding *Agree* or *Strongly Agree*/Percentage responding *Disagree* or *Strongly Disagree*. The *Neutral* and *Don't Know* responses have been omitted.

EXHIBIT 3-5
COMPARISON OF SURVEY RATINGS WITHIN THE DIVISION

SCHOOL DIVISION OPERATION	(%SI+ MI) / (%A + O)*		
	CENTRAL OFFICE ADMINISTRATORS	PRINCIPALS/ ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL	TEACHERS
Budgeting	33/61	37/58	62/18
Strategic Planning	47/39	62/34	45/18
Financial Management and Accounting	7/79	17/75	32/31

Source: MGT survey, November 2006.
*Percentage responding *Needs Some Improvement* or *Needs Major Improvement*/Percentage responding *Adequate* or *Outstanding.* The *Neutral* and *Don't Know* responses have been omitted.

Recommendation 3-3:

Educate all division staff in the budget process and institute a forum that allows department heads and principals to receive input from teachers and staff.

It may be necessary to allow input both in the proposed budget and in the allocation of the approved budget. This should include curriculum supervisors as well as departmental supervisors.

FISCAL IMPACT

There is no significant fiscal impact associated with this recommendation.

FINDING

MCPS does not currently issue a comprehensive budget that states the goals adopted by the School Board. Nor does the budget reflect how allocations are tied to division goals. The annual budget includes neither narrative nor information on past revenues and expenditures. The MCPS Web site includes a paragraph on the budget process and a three-page summary of the adopted budget, but it does not include an explanation of the implications of and reasons for all allocations or of the effects of the adopted budget on the school division and its priorities.

Budgeting for a school division is a very important function in that it provides the process by which the School Board, the county Board of Supervisors, the superintendent, and school division staff are able to articulate the needs of the school division against the scarce resources available. Further, the budgeting process can allow all stakeholders, the tax-paying public, parents, teachers, and school division staff and administrators to sort through priorities as they provide input to the School Board and the Board of Supervisors. A properly presented and articulated proposed budget in turn allows them to make decisions against adopted goals of the School Board and community.

GFOA has a Distinguished Budget Award Program that reflects best practices in budget presentation and issuance for local governments. Although MCPS has neither the personnel nor a sophisticated enough budget process or budget document to apply for

this award at this time, the minimum requirements for consideration provide good guidelines regarding the ideal components of a budget. A budget should be:

- A policy document that includes entity-wide long-term financial policies and a budget message (adopted by the School Board and the superintendent) that articulates priorities and issues for the budget for the new fiscal year.

- A financial plan that provides a summary of revenues and expenditures for the prior year, the current year (both budgeted and estimated actual), and the proposed budget year. It should describe major revenue sources, explain the underlying assumptions for revenue estimates, and discuss significant revenue trends. It should include financial data on current debt obligations, describe the relationship between current debt levels and legal debt limits, and explain the effects of existing debt levels on current and future operations. It should explain the basis of budgeting for all funds and the activities, services or functions carried out by organizational units. It should also include an organizational chart for the entire organization, and a summary of personnel or position counts for prior, current, and proposed years.

- A communication device that describes the process for preparing, reviewing, and adopting the budget for the coming fiscal year. It also should describe the procedure for amending the budget after adoption.

Recommendation 3-4:

Produce a budget that serves as a policy document, a financial plan for the school division, and a communication device that appropriately articulates the priorities of the division as adopted by the School Board.

MCPS should use the budget process for strategic planning and goal setting for the division. This will ensure that budgetary decisions are tied to the stated goals; over time, budget allocations will serve as benchmarks to measure how well those goals are met. Five school divisions in Virginia received this award in 2005; the list can be found at http://www.gfoa.org, with links to the individual budgets.

FISCAL IMPACT

If the school division implements **Recommendation 2-10**, to hire a controller, one of the responsibilities of this position should be to create an adequate budget document for a school division the size of MCPS. Further, this budget document should be user-friendly, easy to understand, and readily available to all stakeholders, including on the MCPS Web site. This would be part of the controller's duties and thus have no additional fiscal impact.

FINDING

The MCPS School Board currently meets twice a month, but does not receive regular expenditure updates. Due to a long-standing practice, updates are only provided to the School Board once a quarter. MCPS provides budget-to-actual expenditure reports to principals and department heads both on a monthly basis and upon request. Such reports are important, especially when they include information on encumbrances such as outstanding purchase orders. Although it is important for the School Board to appropriately delegate authority to school administrators, it is also important that in their oversight role Board members review summary financial reports at the school division level. According to GFOA:

> *Regular monitoring of budgetary performance provides an early warning of potential problems and gives decision makers time to consider actions that may be needed if major deviations in budget-to-actual results become evident. It is also an essential input in demonstrating accountability.*

York County is one school division that provides its School Board with monthly reports containing budget-to-actual revenue and expenditures. Such information allows the School Board to compare budgeted amounts against revenue and expenditures. **Exhibit 3-6** presents one of these exemplary reports.

EXHIBIT 3-6
OPERATING BUDGET
MONTHLY FINANCIAL REPORT SUBMITTED TO THE SCHOOL BOARD
YORK COUNTY SCHOOL DIVISION
MONTH OF OCTOBER 2005

REVENUE	BUDGETED FY 06	RECEIVED TO DATE	UNCOLLECTED BALANCE	PCT REC'D
Local Sources	$94,5800	$327,285	$61,8515	35%
State	$4,296,2575	$12,733,844	$3022,8731	30%
State Sales Tax	$1,013,3054	$2,452,012	$768,1042	24%
Federal	$1,319,6585	$6,131,914	$706,4671	46%
Transfer/Appropriation	$3,615,5631	$36,155,631	$0	100%
Transfer/Local Appn-Grounds	$102,0270	$510,135	$510,135	50%
Total Revenue	**$10,441,3915**	**$58,310,821**	**$46103,094**	**56%**
Prior Year	**$394,4046**	**$3,944,046**	**$0**	**100%**
Total Fund 050	**$10,835,7961**	**$62,254,867**	**$46103,094**	**57%**

EXPENDITURES	BUDGETED FY 06	EXPENDITURES TO DATE	ENCUMB	UNENCUMB BALANCE	PCT ENCUMB
Instruction	$80,433,341	$14,466,721	$2,460,045	$63,506,575	21%
Admin/Attend/Health	$7,258,061	$2,005,604	$30,104	$5,222,353	28%
Pupil Transportation	$5,871,303	$1,107,622	$702,773	$4,060,909	31%
Operations & Maintenance	$10,851,210	$3,270,971	$2,273,982	$5,306,257	51%
Total Operating Fund	**$104,413,915**	**$20,850,918**	**$5,466,903**	**$78,096,094**	**25%**
Prior Year	**$3,944,046**	**$1,990,624**	**$2,018,273**	**($64,851)**	**102%**
Total Fund 050	**$108,357,961**	**$22,841,542**	**$7,485,176**	**$78,031,243**	**28%**

Source: York County School Division, Chief Financial Officer, 2005.

Recommendation 3-5:

Provide monthly budget-to-expenditure reports to the School Board.

The finance department should use a template similar to the one shown above to formulate a budget-to-expenditure report to include in the Board packet once a month. This would allow the School Board and the superintendent to learn of potential problems.

FISCAL IMPACT

There is no significant fiscal impact associated with this recommendation.

3.4   *Grants Administration and Management*

FINDING

MCPS has well-managed and effective grants administration and management. It has a grants office staffed by a full-time grant writer. The office is set up with two main goals:

- Securing grant funding for projects aligned with the overall goals and objectives of MCPS educational programs.

- Promoting increased communication and sharing of information among all stakeholders in the grant process.

The MCPS grant writer provides direct support to division personnel applying for grant funding and identifies potential sources of funding. This support includes helping write, review, and edit proposals and providing materials. Basic information about services offered by the grants office and useful links on sources of funding are available on the grants office page on the MCPS Web site.

Through this process, MCPS is able to proactively participate in competitive grant funding. Between 1995 and 2005, the division submitted 434 proposals while receiving funding for 248, thus bringing in over $16 million. In calendar year 2006, MCPS submitted 49 proposals, receiving funding for at least 24 of them. (Several of these proposals were under review at the time of this writing.)

When grant funding of any type is received, the finance department sets it up in the MUNIS® financial system and helps the director of management services monitor expenditures on this system. He monitors and oversees the financial aspects of the grants, while the grant writer manages the performance reporting along with each individual grant originator. This is a well-managed and efficient process that results in effective reimbursements of grant funding. The majority of the grants for MCPS, both state and federal, are administered through the Virginia Department of Education (VDOE) and managed through the VDOE On-line Management of Education Grant Awards system referred to as OMEGA.

COMMENDATION

MCPS is commended for having a grants office that proactively targets and seeks grant funding and for managing grant funds efficiently.

3.5   *School Activity Funds*

School activity funds cover numerous extracurricular school activities, groups, and clubs at each school for the benefit of that school. The extracurricular activities include entertainment, athletics, clubs, yearbook sales, band activities, and fund raisers. Funds collected from the activities are held for student use. The principal at each school has authority and oversight over the school activity funds. The bookkeeper/secretary at each school assists the principal in managing the school activity funds.

Chapter 240, Section 20 of Virginia's Administrative Code states the following in regard to school activity funds:

> *Each school shall keep an accurate record of all receipts and disbursements so that a clear and concise statement of the condition of each fund may be determined at all times. It shall be the duty of each principal to see that such records are maintained in accordance with this chapter and rules promulgated by the local School Board. The principal or person designated by him shall perform the duties of school finance officer or central treasurer. The school finance officer shall be bonded, and the local School Board shall prescribe rules governing such bonds for employee who are responsible for the funds.*

FINDING

MCPS has well-documented policies and procedures regarding school activity funds. In each of the 21 schools, a bookkeeper is assigned to manage the school activity funds. In elementary schools, the bookkeepers serve as secretaries to the principals, among a multitude of other duties. In secondary schools, several bookkeepers manage the school activity funds as their primary responsibility.

MCPS has a School Activity Fund Manual and Internal Control Procedures that document Code of Virginia requirements, specific responsibilities, procedures, and internal controls. The director of management services provides training to bookkeepers on managing school activity funds according to the necessary procedures. Each school is required to maintain a record of all receipts and disbursements in accordance with the School Activity Fund Manual.

In addition, MCPS has established a uniform chart of accounts for its school activity funds and has provided uniform accounting software to each school for managing the funds. Each school is required to send a monthly reconciliation report to the director of management services, who uses the documents for internal control monitoring.

Recently, the director of management services followed up on a school with missing and incorrect monthly reconciliation reports through a site audit. The audit revealed embezzlement, and MCPS was able to prosecute the bookkeeper successfully.

COMMENDATION

MCPS is commended for compiling and adopting the School Activity Fund Manual and Internal Control Procedures; for making this document available to schools; for training the bookkeepers responsible for managing school activity funds; for adopting a uniform chart of accounts and accounting software system; and for requiring and monitoring monthly reconciliation reports from each school.

FINDING

A review of the independent auditors' report for fiscal year 2006, issued June 30, 2006, shows that MCPS needs to strengthen its internal controls and operating efficiency. The independent auditors helped MCPS document its policies and procedures in 2003 but recommended an update to those as well as better adherence to division procurement policy and timely deposits. Nineteen of the 21 schools were cited in the report as having problematic practices that needed improvement.

Further, the independent auditors recommended training bookkeepers and principals on new risk assessment auditing standards and their effect on future audits of school activity funds.

The review team identified a model school accounting manual prepared and used by the Salt Lake City School District (SLCSD) in Utah. The manual was prepared by staff at SLCSD and addresses school activity fund responsibilities for principals, school bookkeepers, and central office accounting staff as well as providing detailed information on policies relating to school activity funds.

In terms of bank accounts, SLCSD recommends having interest-bearing school checking accounts with minimal or no service charges. This can be accomplished by obtaining bids from several institutions to get the best terms. Although most MCPS schools have accounts with one of two area banks, one school, Blacksburg High School, has six accounts with four institutions.

SLCSD makes its accounting manual available electronically so that all users have convenient access to the most current version. The manual can be located on the Internet at http://www.slc.k12.ut.us/depts/accounting/manual/tablebus.htm.

Recommendation 3-6:

Update the School Activity Fund Manual and Internal Control Procedures, provide annual training to bookkeepers, and increase oversight over bookkeepers, to include site visits.

The updating of the manual based on the internal auditors' findings and the SLCSD manual should be complemented by periodic training of the bookkeepers. This training should specifically address the problematic practices cited by the internal auditors.

Finally, periodic site visits to the schools should be part of the oversight role of the finance department.

FISCAL IMPACT

Updating the current manual and improving oversight, procedures, and training should be part of the ongoing responsibilities of the finance department, bookkeepers, and principals. These activities should not result in significant additional costs, especially if **Recommendations 2-9** and **2-10**, to promote the current director of management services and hire a new controller, are implemented.

3.6   *Payroll and Benefits*

FINDING

Payroll functions at MCPS are well managed. Payroll is managed by a payroll supervisor, who has three payroll coordinators assisting him. MCPS has automated payroll on the MUNIS® financial system. As part of the automation process, the payroll staff created a comprehensive policies and procedures manual to reflect the new procedures.

The three payroll personnel are cross-trained to do each other's work. Beyond implementing and using the MUNIS® payroll system, the current supervisor is also automating other processes.

COMMENDATION

MCPS is commended for automating payroll, cross-training payroll staff, and having comprehensive payroll policies and procedures.

3.7   *Records Management*

MCPS does not have a comprehensive or efficient records management system. As statutorily required, the division has a designated records clerk. This clerk is responsible solely for academic records. Schools do not have appropriate information on records management, storage, retention, or disposal. Some School Board records are maintained at the central office and others at the records room at the Old Christiansburg Middle School (Old CMS). However, due to lack of storage space, schools are required to store some records. Interviews for this review revealed that there is no systematic approach to the way the records are moved or stored at various sites or moved to the Old CMS, nor are records appropriately inventoried and disposed of. Further, the Old CMS has records that are stored with no ultimate plans for disposal of these documents. No one person is in charge of managing HR personnel records that are also stored at the Old CMS and other sites.

The records clerk's sole and primary duty is to microfilm academic student records. The senior records for all graduating students are microfilmed, and it takes the records clerk an entire year to microfilm the records for all the students that graduated the previous

year. As of January 2007, the records clerk had finished microfilming records for only one high school for the previous fiscal year out of over 800 records for the year.

The records clerk catalogs all microfilmed records in a database. However, the original records are not destroyed; they are filed and retained at the Old CMS. The purpose of using a storage medium such as microfilm is to effectively retain documents in a manageable and efficient manner so that bulky physical records do not have to be stored. Once microfilmed, the original records can be disposed of as long as proper disposal procedures are used and records to be archived are saved as such.

Proper records management requires an appropriate records retention policy that tracks state and federal requirements and guidelines. Procedures should outline retention schedules by type of record and dictate policies and procedures on the safe storage of current and past records and the appropriate disposal of records at the end of the required retention period. These requirements are covered under Virginia statutes and rules set by the Virginia Library Board as well as federal regulations governing academic, School Board, financial, and personnel records. Generally, records should be maintained in the legally allowable format that provides greatest density and easiest access.

MCPS currently has Policy 3-1.3, Record Keeping, adopted in April 2004, which specifies that the superintendent and the designated records manager must ensure that all records are "retained in a safe, economical and efficient manner." The legal reference for the policy, however, includes a rule that has since been repealed. The records clerk is responsible only for academic records, and the schools, departments, and warehousing staff who move the records do not have any division guidelines to follow for comprehensive and efficient records management.

Recommendation 3-7:

Adopt a comprehensive records management policy using Virginia and federal retention and disposal regulations, and appropriately distribute procedures governing this policy to all schools and departments; dispose of original records once they are microfilmed; and expand the records clerk's responsibilities to include all records at MCPS.

The records management policy should be provided to all schools and departments that handle any records, and the records clerk should train all school and departmental personnel handling records. This policy and related procedures should be modified as state and federal statutes are updated. All records currently stored at the Old CMS should be sorted, inventoried, and disposed of if past the retention schedule requirements or if already microfilmed. Documents that are required to be archived should be transferred to the Virginia Library or properly archived at MCPS. This should create a lot of space at the Old CMS records room to allow for transfer of records currently stored at various sites around the school division.

MCPS should strongly consider storing records in a digital format using a digital scanner. The current microfilming equipment is old and inefficient. In addition, MCPS should immediately purchase the currently budgeted commercial-grade shredder for disposal of superfluous records.

FISCAL IMPACT

Recommendation	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12
Acquire a Digital Scanner	($2,000)	$0	$0	$0	$0

Should MCPS decide to obtain a digital scanner, it should do so through consultation with the technology department to match the records scanning needs of MCPS by volume, types, and sizes of records scanned, and format for long-term electronic storage of data. Further, an electronic records management filing system should be set up prior to scanning and storing the data electronically. Depending on the budget and MCPS needs, a digital scanner may be purchased for an average of $2,000.

Updating the records management policy and procedures will require staff time and effort to properly inventory, retain, transfer, and dispose of records. However, this can be handled without a significant impact if the actual inventory, proper storage, and disposal are done during the summer months at the schools as well as at various departments dealing with records by working with the records clerk and warehouse staff.

3.8   *Fixed Assets Management*

Fixed assets for a school division include all property, vehicles, equipment, and building contents. Accounting for all assets requires continuous tracking as new items are added and old ones are disposed of and deleted from the list. There are several important reasons for identifying, inventorying, and managing fixed assets:

- Fixed assets records provide a basis for appropriate and adequate insurance coverage, and for financial reporting.

- Systematic physical inventory of fixed assets provides the basis for surveying physical condition of assets and the need to repair, maintain, or replace the items.

- Periodic assessment of the inventory's capacity to meet current and future needs is useful for budgeting and planning purposes.

- Regular physical inventory provides information on loss or damage of assets and makes it possible to implement adequate controls to recover lost property or reduce loss and damage.

- A well-managed and well-recorded system demonstrates accountability and meets reporting requirements.

FINDING

Currently, MCPS has no requirement, policy, or procedure to ensure that assets such as furniture and equipment are labeled, recorded, and tracked. MCPS tags, records, and tracks all assets with an acquisition value in excess of $5,000. Information on the assets

is maintained on the MUNIS® financial system's fixed assets listing. Records for equipment, vehicles, and mobile classrooms are maintained at individual schools, whereas Montgomery County maintains all records for land and buildings. The purchasing department conducts an annual inventory of all assets listed in the MUNIS® system.

Each school performs a manual inventory of assets such as furniture by requiring every teacher to fill in and submit a standard form listing the number of items and their condition. The forms are then entered into a spreadsheet maintained by the purchasing administrative assistant. There is, however, no centralized system for tracking or inventorying assets valued at less than $5,000. Information is not reconciled from one year to the next; it merely serves as a count of all assets.

Technology assets valued at less than $5,000 are inventoried if they are network-connected devices. School-based technology equipment that is not on the network, such as scanners, desktop printers, VCRs, televisions, and PDAs are to be tracked by individual schools.

MCPS cannot adequately safeguard its assets or manage them in a comprehensive divisionwide manner. MCPS does not have written policies on fixed assets management except for comprehensive policies and procedures pertaining to the disposal of surplus property. A school division the size of MCPS needs to have a system to protect its investment in furniture and equipment, as well as identify missing or stolen assets. Furthermore, an asset management system would allow the division to better manage and allocate the resources among schools and departments.

School divisions that have sound fixed assets management systems with adequate controls are better able to protect their investments in furniture, equipment, and other valuable items and are able to identify missing or stolen assets in a timely manner. Clay County Public Schools (CCPS) in Florida, for instance, uses controls that help it to keep fixed assets losses to a minimum. CCPS requires that all fixed assets be added to the school's asset database upon receipt. Each school principal or department head, or his or her designee, is responsible for entering the asset data. The accounting department monitors this process to ensure that assets are entered in a timely manner and that asset data are correct.

Each CCPS principal or department head is then required to conduct a physical inventory of assets on a regular basis. Thefts must be reported to the county sheriff immediately to increase the chances of identifying a responsible party. Further, any assets that simply cannot be located are reported to the Board on a quarterly basis. This process helps to ensure that all assets are properly recorded and tracked, thereby avoiding the necessity for the responsible principal or department head to explain the loss to the Board during a public meeting.

Recommendation 3-8:

Develop and implement a comprehensive fixed assets tracking system for identifying, inventorying, and managing valuable school division assets.

MCPS should adopt a comprehensive fixed assets tracking system for assets valued over a certain amount, such as $500 or $1,000, as determined by the School Board. The

finance department, through purchasing and warehousing, should have primary responsibility for such asset management. A policies and procedures manual should be adopted and provided to all schools and departments. A physical inventory as well as the creation of a database of assets that can be managed in conjunction with new acquisitions, storage, and disposal of surplus items should be phased in during the summer months.

MCPS should use the asset management module in the MUNIS® financial system or consider the viability of using the Spectrum library and media control system for this purpose.

FISCAL IMPACT

Although implementing this recommendation will require staff resources, the streamlining of efforts in other areas will allow the current purchasing and warehousing staff to undertake this responsibility. Further, facilities and maintenance staff should help with the physical inventory of assets throughout the school division.

FINDING

During this past year, MCPS completed its first physical inventory of all textbooks at the schools. The assistant superintendent's office created electronic forms so that each school could inventory its textbooks and submit the inventory electronically. This information, in turn, was used by the assistant superintendent's administrative assistant to create a database of textbooks. Many schools had been retaining more textbooks than they needed while others did not have sufficient textbooks.

All excess textbooks were collected by the warehousing staff and deposited in a newly created textbook depository at the Old CMS. Schools experiencing a shortage of textbooks can now call the assistant superintendent's administrative assistant to request additional books; before, principals had to ask each other if anybody had extra textbooks.

Although textbooks are not tagged and tracked, the inventory, database, and depository allow MCPS to manage its textbooks in an efficient manner.

COMMENDATION

The MCPS office of the assistant superintendent is commended for instituting a textbook inventory system and depository.

3.9 *Purchasing and Contract Administration*

The purchasing department at MCPS is headed by a purchasing supervisor who is appointed as the MCPS purchasing agent by the School Board. The purchasing supervisor oversees one purchasing administrative assistant and the warehousing supervisor and his staff of four.

MCPS follows the Virginia Public Procurement Act (VPPA) and has a comprehensive MCPS procurement policies and procedure manual based on the Virginia Agency Procurement and Surplus Property Manual. During the 2006-07 school year, MCPS began automating its purchase order system throughout the school division by implementing it in every school and department.

The purchase order system is now automated so that every bookkeeper and department administrative assistant enters all purchase orders on-line and the system is programmed to trigger necessary approval from principals to central office personnel, on-line as well. The purchasing staff is now in a position to prepare, monitor, and approve all purchase orders on-line. When the purchase order thresholds require it, the director of management services and the superintendent are prompted for their on-line approval. Purchasing staff conducted a pilot program for a year and then trained remaining personnel with purchasing responsibilities at the schools and various departments during the summer of 2006 and provided them with a very user-friendly and practical procedures manual called the MUNIS® Users Handbook.

Beyond the training and procedures manuals for the bookkeepers, at the school level, the teacher's handbooks provide procedures for purchasing from allocated instructional funds. The teacher's handbooks also include procedures for making purchases with school activity funds. The procedures include specific information regarding purchases using both appropriated funds and school activity funds, including approval requirements and thresholds.

COMMENDATION

MCPS is commended for adopting comprehensive policies and procedures that govern purchasing, for automating the purchase order system, and for providing staff with appropriate training and a procedures manual.

FINDING

Currently, MCPS requires purchase orders (POs) for all purchases regardless of the amount. MCPS had a total of 5,746 purchase orders in fiscal year 2004-05 and 5,392 purchase orders in 2005-06. The division's rationale for requiring purchase orders for all purchases is that it helps encumber all funds and thereby provides better control. However, requiring purchase orders for all purchases is cumbersome for the bookkeepers and principals at schools, as well as for the purchasing staff and the director of management services.

School principals and department directors are delegated many responsibilities. These include proper expenditure of funds allocated to them. Ultimately, they are held liable for decisions they make. Well-documented and well-followed procedures with adequate internal controls and checks and balances allow for better delegation of authority while maintaining confidence in the system.

MCPS deals with some regular small purchases by allowing blanket purchase orders. The blanket purchase orders are tied to discount cards at various local retailers. Each school makes its own arrangements if it uses discount store cards or blanket POs. In some ways, this arrangement is similar to the purchasing card (P card) system that

many school divisions use. It is a good way for a school or a department to handle multiple purchases from the same discount store without having to elicit competitive bidding for small purchases. However, such a process should be centralized, with uniform procedures and internal controls, so as to reduce cumbersome and time-consuming purchase order requirements for very small purchases.

P cards are credit cards that are assigned to individual employees with per-transaction and monthly limits. The arrangements for P cards are made with a banking institution and centrally administered. MCPS already uses a credit card system whereby a limited number of cards can be borrowed at the central office for specific purchases. Properly implemented P card systems help school divisions reduce costs and streamline purchasing by eliminating POs for small purchases. Employees are able to make purchases as needed, in store or on-line, and to take advantage of discounts offered for a limited time or only on-line.

The review team found the York County School Division (YCSD) to have a well-managed and administered P card program. The YCSD P card program has about 100 users, with three cardholders per school: the principal, the secretary or bookkeeper, and the media specialist. P cardholders can use P cards to purchase goods and services totaling less than $1,000 per transaction. The majority of cardholders have monthly limits of $5,000, and each card is tied to a separate account.

Each cardholder maintains a log for each purchase and retains receipts for purchases. Twice a year, the YCSD finance department audits each P cardholder's log and purchasing activities. The school division is able to maintain integrity in purchasing through biannual audits, comprehensive policies and procedures, and Web-based and in-person training for P card use.

The move to a P card system has decreased the need for YCSD to process numerous small POs, increasing efficiency in purchasing by cutting down on paperwork. Purchasers also obtain goods in a shorter time period, benefit from purchasing goods on-line, and take advantage of discounts when available.

Recommendation 3-9:

Implement a divisionwide purchasing card program for purchases of less than $1,000 to reduce costs and to improve purchasing efficiency.

MCPS should provide P cards to those employees currently authorized to make purchases. This would include principals, bookkeepers, department heads, and other departmental and central office staff members who routinely need to make purchases. Single transaction limits should be set in the amount of $500 to $1,000. Monthly limits of $5,000 would be appropriate, with a few exceptions such as for the superintendent and high school principals, who may need higher limits. MCPS could contract for a P card system with the current credit card vendor or obtain competitive bids for a purchasing card program through the Virginia program. Other controls and procedures to consider and adopt as part of the P card program are:

- Daily transaction limits.

- Built-in restrictions by merchant category code for restricted goods and services.

- On-line review, reporting, and reconciliation.

- Internal controls and audits guidelines to prevent fraudulent and personal use or abuse of the P cards.

MCPS could calculate the total amount of purchases for POs below a certain threshold, such as $500 or $1,000, by school and department for the past fiscal year. These amounts could be used to determine a miscellaneous small purchases line-item budget for schools and departments that could be appropriated as such and that would allow MCPS to track purchases easily and provide the division with the control it desires.

FISCAL IMPACT

MCPS has very good purchasing policies and procedures in place and has recently implemented a streamlined, automated system. Purchasing staff can easily adapt the current procedures and practices to include a P card system. Time saved in monitoring and approving the many small purchase POs would be spent administering this program. Likewise, any extra time spent by bookkeepers and administrative assistants in training would be quickly relieved by a decreased workload in processing POs.

FINDING

MCPS has well-established contract administration policies and procedures that are part of the purchasing procedures manual. Since the division does not have an in-house attorney, it uses template contracts for the majority of its standard contracts. The template contracts are first vetted by MCPS's outside attorney.

All master contracts are maintained at the central office within purchasing, and a copy of each is sent to the vendor and the contracting school or department. A PO is issued for the contract amount, and all invoices are paid against this PO following the required procedures and sign-offs. Due to the automation of the PO system, this is all done on-line. Purchasing staff oversee and monitor all contracts.

Part of purchasing and procurement responsibility is procuring services. Such services are best procured by appropriately descriptive requests during a competitive bidding process. Once contracts are procured, it is important that they be both well written and well managed. Well managed contract administration processes are cost effective and designed to avoid legal and ethical problems. The simplest way to ensure that the objectives are met on a regular basis is to institute strict contract management procedures and make certain that they are followed by assigning responsibility for compliance to one person or department, as MCPS does. Effective contract management procedures ensure that:

- *Statutory requirements have been met*, by establishing and adhering to announcement and selection procedures that are clearly in compliance with state law.

- *The most cost-effective contractor is selected,* by striking the proper balance between quality and cost.

- *Selected contractors are capable of fulfilling their obligations*, by verifying references and licenses, and considering the outcome of previous contracts with the division to the extent consistent with state law, prior to execution of the contract.

- *Contractors are doing their job*, by monitoring the goods and services received and comparing them to contractual obligations.

COMMENDATION

MCPS is commended for having well-defined contract administration policies and procedures as well as effective contract administration practices.

3.10 *Warehousing*

Efficient warehousing services are important to the efficient delivery of necessary goods. An efficient warehousing and delivery function should have sound management systems that help ensure proper receipt, storage, delivery, and distribution of goods.

FINDING

The MCPS warehouse is well run, with an inventory that is managed through a database of all stored items. Warehousing is managed by a warehouse supervisor, who reports to the purchasing supervisor. The MCPS warehouse is limited to instructional supplies and items needed by custodial staff.

Each year, a catalog of items regularly used by the school division is created. These items are systematically coded and stocked and are readily available to schools as needed. The warehouse supervisor analyzes use of all items on an annual basis and procures competitive bids for those items to be included in that year's catalog. The 2006-07 catalog is available on the MCPS Web site in PDF and Excel formats. It lists almost 900 items with item description, item number, and unit price. Items ordered by the schools are delivered within 48 hours. The warehouse inventory system was recently automated, so schools and departments can now place their orders on-line.

COMMENDATION

MCPS is commended for its warehouse management and the efficiency with which it competitively procures, manages, and distributes those items most commonly used by the school division.

FINDING

Current policies regarding the budgeting and allocation of certain instructional supplies, such as copy paper, result in overuse and waste at MCPS. The MCPS warehouse carries about 900 items that are regularly used by the schools. These range from an assortment of paper to ink cartridges to art supplies to pencils and pens. The catalog lists unit prices to allow the schools to track their expenditures for supplies against school or department budget allocations. Not all items, however, have their true price listed. Because of a long-standing practice apparently implemented many years ago, several of the most commonly used items are budgeted at the division level and are available to schools or departments for "free." Due to the requirements of MUNIS® financial system, the "free" items are listed as penny items for tracking and accounting purposes.

The premise for the policy of providing essential items to schools without regard to cost and budget allocation is understandable. If a budget were allocated for essential items and need exceeded that budgeted amount, then schools would have to request additional funding. Removing a site-based budget allocation for such supplies makes it easier for schools to acquire the most necessary items. **Exhibit 3-7** lists the types of such items at MCPS.

EXHIBIT 3-7
WAREHOUSE CATALOG
LIST OF ITEMS NOT CHARGED TO SCHOOLS
MONTGOMERY COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

DESCRIPTION OF ITEM NOT CHARGED TO SCHOOLS	UNIT OF ISSUE BY WAREHOUSE	DIFFERENT TYPES LISTED IN MCPS CATALOG
Card Stock	Ream	7
Copy Paper, All Sizes and Colors	Ream	15
White, Plain, 8 ½″ x 11″ paper	Case	1
Computer Paper	Case	3
Ink and Toner Cartridges	Each	109
Batteries	Each	7

Source: Montgomery County Public Schools Web site, 2006.

In practice, however, this policy has resulted in overuse and waste according to several personnel interviewed for this review. There are no limits on "free" items, which has resulted in schools making decisions such as to copy certain materials rather than paying for them. It is possible that in some instances copying materials may be a better option for the school division, but under current policies, schools do not have to take costs into account. Another area of concern involves possible copyright issues when teachers and schools copy materials rather than purchasing them. The review revealed no copyright-related policies or guidelines for schools.

In fiscal year 2005-06, MCPS used 4,422 cases of plain white paper. Each case contained 5,000 pieces of paper. At a cost of $22.19 a case for most of the year, MCPS spent about $100,000 on white paper at its 21 schools. These schools, as shown below in **Exhibit 3-8**, used 3,731 cases; the remaining 691 cases were used by the central office and the various special programs and non-school departments. This usage did not

include white paper delivered by the ream or in sizes other than 8 ½″ by 11″, nor did it include any colored paper.

Exhibit 3-8 shows that the number of pages per student used by each school varied from a low of 1,475 at Auburn Elementary School to a high of 3,197 at Eastern Montgomery High School. It is possible that much of the use was legitimate or could be rationalized as being cheaper for the division when compared to purchasing materials when copyright infringement was not a concern.

EXHIBIT 3-8
PLAIN WHITE 8 1/2" BY 11" COPY PAPER USE BY SCHOOL
MONTGOMERY COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS
FISCAL YEAR 2005-06

NAME OF SCHOOL	NO. STUDENTS	NO. CASES	NO. PAGES	NO. PAGES/ STUDENT	COST/ STUDENT
Christiansburg Primary	456	163	815,000	1,787	$7.93
Auburn ES	583	172	860,000	1,475	$6.55
Belview ES	272	109	545,000	2,004	$8.89
Christiansburg ES	383	126	630,000	1,645	$7.30
Elliston - Lafayette ES	211	90	450,000	2,133	$9.46
Falling Branch ES	585	193	965,000	1,650	$7.32
Gilbert Linkous ES	339	148	740,000	2,183	$9.69
Harding Avenue ES	221	96	480,000	2,172	$9.64
Kipps ES	552	175	875,000	1,585	$7.03
Margaret Beeks ES	402	161	805,000	2,002	$8.89
Price Fork ES	225	72	360,000	1,600	$7.10
Shawsville ES	262	90	450,000	1,718	$7.62
Auburn MS	312	137	685,000	2,196	$9.74
Blacksburg MS	825	271	1,355,000	1,642	$7.29
Christiansburg MS	802	338	1,690,000	2,107	$9.35
Shawsville MS	252	123	615,000	2,440	$10.83
Auburn HS	351	160	800,000	2,279	$10.12
Blacksburg HS	1,165	462	2,310,000	1,983	$8.80
Christiansburg HS	1,009	441	2,205,000	2,185	$9.70
Eastern Montgomery HS	319	204	1,020,000	3,197	$14.19
TOTAL	**9,526**	**3,731**	**18,655,000**	**1,958**	**$8.69**

Source: Montgomery County Public Schools, finance department, 2006.

A corresponding analysis of the use of printer ink and copy machine toner cartridges distributed in 2005-06 shows that a total of 3,882 of these were distributed throughout the division. Individual prices ranged from $5.95 to $205 per cartridge for a total of $170,816 for the year for the school division.

The purchasing and warehousing department has instituted new policies that prevent individuals from ordering more than five ink cartridges at a time. This has not prevented wide ranges in use by various schools and departments. As **Exhibit 3-9** shows, for fiscal year 2005-06, among elementary schools, use of cartridges ranged from a low of 18 cartridges for a total of $799 for Shawsville Elementary School to a high of 310 cartridges for a total of $12,206 for Auburn Elementary School.

Although it is difficult to compare per student cost without having information on the numbers and types of printers and copy machines as well as the estimated number of

pages printed per cartridge, the variations in consumption among MCPS schools suggest inefficient distribution, use, and potential waste. Further, the use of ink and toner cartridges does not correspond to the use of paper. A comparison of **Exhibits 3-8** and **3-9** shows that the use of ink and toner did not correspond to the use of paper in fiscal year 2005-06. For instance, Shawsville Elementary School had relatively low cartridge use but did not have a corresponding low pages/student use. On the other hand, Auburn Elementary School, which had the lowest paper use, had the third-highest cost/student for cartridges.

EXHIBIT 3-9
INK AND TONER CARTRIDGE USE BY SCHOOL
MONTGOMERY COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS
FISCAL YEAR 2005-06

SCHOOL	NO. STUDENTS	NO. CARTRIDGES	2005-06 TOTAL COST	COST/ STUDENT
Christiansburg Primary	456	109	$3,264	$7.16
Auburn ES	583	310	$12,206	$20.94
Belview ES	272	76	$2,276	$8.37
Christiansburg ES	383	38	$1,555	$4.06
Elliston - Lafayette ES	211	124	$4,017	$19.04
Falling Branch ES	585	158	$5,677	$9.70
Gilbert Linkous ES	339	64	$3,031	$8.94
Harding Avenue ES	221	50	$2,027	$9.17
Kipps ES	552	138	$5,135	$9.30
Margaret Beeks ES	402	226	$8,404	$20.91
Price Fork ES	225	68	$4,077	$18.12
Shawsville ES	262	18	$799	$3.05
Auburn MS	312	45	$2,414	$7.74
Blacksburg MS	825	294	$13,331	$16.16
Christiansburg MS	802	199	$11,648	$14.52
Shawsville MS	252	135	$4,817	$19.12
Auburn HS	351	160	$7,929	$22.59
Blacksburg HS	1,165	389	$13,641	$11.71
Christiansburg HS	1,009	308	$13,497	$13.38
Eastern Montgomery HS	319	208	$11,588	$36.33
TOTAL	**9,526**	**3,731**	**$131,333**	**$13.79**

Source: Montgomery County Public Schools, finance department, 2006.

Recommendation 3-10:

Immediately change the policy of providing "free" supplies and replace it with a budget for each school and department for all major supplies.

With the exception of a few items such as MCPS logo envelopes and letterhead stationary, all items should be charged to the entity ordering them. This includes postage (handled through the mail room but often without appropriate use of bulk mail) and items such as batteries. The director of management services, along with the purchasing supervisor and warehouse supervisor, should evaluate the use of all items currently provided "free," conduct a realistic analysis of what true use should be, and allocate a budget to each school and department accordingly.

To identify proper use of toner and printer cartridges, the technology department could help provide information on expected consumption and requirements. In addition, the technology department should communicate with the warehouse about the types and numbers of cartridges to be stocked and also about those being distributed. This would help the warehouse and purchasing department better manage both the inventory and the distribution of these supplies as well as providing necessary input on use.

Use of these supplies should be studied to identify schools that may be wasting resources. If a high number of orders are placed at a school but there is a lack of accountability in the use of supplies, then the school should be required to investigate potential waste or theft.

FISCAL IMPACT

There will be savings to the school division from allocating a budgeted amount to each school. The following fiscal impact has been calculated using just the information on white paper use by the case for schools and excludes the central office, departments, and other programs. The same approach should apply for ink and toner cartridge use. Paper and cartridges are the two main types of supplies that are provided "free."

The fiscal impact was calculated by taking the average per student cost for the lower half for elementary schools, middle schools, and high schools, and future budget allocation was based on this average for the students in each of the three categories. It should be noted that this is probably a conservative estimate of savings.

Recommendation	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12
Stop Providing "Free" Supplies	$47,975	$47,975	$47,975	$47,975	$47,975

3.11 *Cost of Educational Services*

The main purpose of public schools is to provide students with an adequate education. Since public schools depend on funding from various public sources, they have limited resources to provide this service. All other functions, regardless of how well they operate, and whether they involve administration, human resources, transportation, or finance, ultimately play the role of supporting the schools so that educational services may be provided in the most efficient and effective manner possible. To truly understand the effectiveness of educational service delivery, the cost of providing these services cannot be evaluated without looking at the variations in service delivery models as well as effectiveness of these models. This review, however, is limited to the cost of educational services in MCPS and does not address the effectiveness of those services.

Other factors are important to note as well. Special education and gifted and talented programs at MCPS follow an inclusive model, so that all services to all such students are provided in the regular classroom. Although comparisons to peer divisions are possible, they may be limited due to the use of different models of educational delivery.

As **Exhibit 3-10** shows, MCPS had slightly higher per student revenue ($9,648) than the peer division average ($9,575) in fiscal year 2004-05. On the other hand, compared to

the state average for all Virginia school divisions, MCPS had more than 10 percent lower per student revenue and expenditures.

EXHIBIT 3-10
PER STUDENT REVENUE AND EXPENDITURES
MONTGOMERY COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS AND PEER SCHOOL DIVISIONS
FISCAL YEAR 2004-05

SCHOOL DIVISION	END-OF-YEAR ADM. 2004-05	REVENUE, ALL SOURCES	TOTAL EXPENDITURES	REVENUE PER STUDENT	EXPENDITURES PER PUPIL
Montgomery	**9,442**	**$91,090,358**	**$88,403,164**	**$9,648**	**$9,363**
Augusta	10,880	$100,892,380	$99,530,079	$9,273	$9,148
Fauquier	10,762	$109,633,781	$109,106,832	$10,187	$10,138
Frederick	11,718	$131,939,535	$130,794,876	$11,259	$11,162
Rockingham	11,242	$102,559,434	$102,545,884	$9,123	$9,122
York	12,618	$102,189,711	$102,393,171	$8,099	$8,115
PEER DIVISION AVERAGE	**11,111**	**$106,384,200**	**$105,462,334**	**$9,575**	**$9,492**
STATE TOTAL, ALL DIVISIONS	**1,196,120**	**$12,855,161,174**	**$12,696,884,660**	**$10,747**	**$10,615**

Source: Superintendent's Annual Report, fiscal year 2004-05, Tables 12 and 13. Virginia Department of Education Web site, 2006.

As **Exhibit 3-11** shows, graduation rates for MCPS for school year 2004-05 were just below 80 percent, which was higher than the state average but lower than the peer division average of 82 percent. The percentage of students with no post-graduation plans was almost twice the peer division or state average, which may indicate gaps in guidance counseling.

EXHIBIT 3-11
GRADUATION RATES AND INTENDED POST-GRADUATION PLANS
MONTGOMERY COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS AND PEER SCHOOL DIVISIONS
2004-05

SCHOOL DIVISION	FALL MEMBERSHIP IN NINTH GRADE 2001-2002	TOTAL GRADUATES 2004-2005	% GRADUATES OF 2001 NINTH GRADE MEMBERSHIP	INTENDED PLANS UPON GRADUATION				
				% ATTENDING TWO-YEAR COLLEGES	% ATTENDING FOUR-YEAR COLLEGES	% OTHER CONTINUING EDUCATION PLANS	% EMPLOY-MENT	% NO PLANS
Montgomery	**783**	**622**	**79.4%**	**27.3%**	**44.2%**	**1.4%**	**14.8%**	**10.5%**
Augusta	924	751	81.3%	30.2%	30.8%	6.3%	27.2%	1.9%
Fauquier	873	796	91.2%	22.1%	43.7%	5.5%	21.2%	5.3%
Frederick	1,028	817	79.5%	10.6%	61.9%	8.7%	12.0%	2.6%
Rockingham	934	703	75.3%	20.8%	46.4%	7.1%	18.5%	5.5%
York	1,083	943	87.1%	0.0%	96.1%	0.0%	0.0%	3.9%
PEER DIVISION AVERAGE	**938**	**772**	**82.3%**	**18.6%**	**53.8%**	**4.8%**	**15.6%**	**4.9%**
State	**100,230**	**76,842.0**	**76.7%**	**24.3%**	**49.3%**	**5.8%**	**12.3%**	**5.5%**

Source: Virginia Department of Education Web site, 2006.

As **Exhibit 3-12** shows, dropout rates for MCPS were 1.35 percent compared to the peer division average of 1.11 percent and state average of 1.87 percent. The York County School Division not only had the lowest per student revenue among peer school divisions but also had the lowest dropout rate, almost a third that of MCPS.

EXHIBIT 3-12
MONTGOMERY COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS AND PEER SCHOOL DIVISIONS
DROPOUT RATES FOR 2004-05 SCHOOL YEAR

SCHOOL DIVISION	TOTAL DROPOUTS SEPTEMBER 30, 2004	MEMBERSHIP GRADES 7-12	DROPOUT PERCENTAGE
Montgomery	**58**	**4,368**	**1.35%**
Augusta	78	5,247	1.49%
Fauquier	26	5,161	0.53%
Frederick	68	5,600	1.28%
Rockingham	93	5,119	1.84%
York	30	6,375	0.48%
PEER DIVISION AVERAGE	**353**	**31,870**	**1.11%**
State	**10,204**	**546,187**	**1.87%**

Source: Virginia Department of Education Web site, 2006.

FINDING

MCPS has several innovative and special programs:

Gifted and Talented (GT) Program. MCPS uses an inclusive model for its GT program that focuses on math and language arts. Services under this program are decentralized and provided within the schools. The program uses a modified pull-out program that includes cluster grouping; otherwise, GT teachers work with classroom teachers to identify and meet needs of the GT students. The GT program had 1,011 or 12 percent of all students identified as GT students in school year 2006. An additional 2 percent of the total school population, or 158 students, in kindergarten through grade five were identified as talent pool students. Talent pool students are so identified because they have advanced skills and talents for their age; these students are later evaluated for GT identification. The GT program has adopted a comprehensive five-year plan, 2005-10 Local Plan for the Education of the Gifted, as required by Virginia statutes.

The Phoenix Center. This alternative educational program for behaviorally disturbed youths is for secondary school students who are suspended for three or more days.

Rivendell Program. MCPS implemented the Rivendell program in 2002 to serve students with disabilities who have been removed from their school-based special education placement due to some disciplinary action. This program targeting grades eight through 12 serves between 20 and 35 students a year. If not for this program, these students would

have to be taught as homebound students at a much higher expense. Annual instructional costs for the program in fiscal year 2007 are $233,000 at an estimated per student cost of $6,657. The cost per student for homebound education is $15,120. In 2005-06, MCPS expanded the Rivendell program to students without disabilities who are under long-term suspension or have been expelled.

Virginia Preschool Initiative. MCPS has a program for at-risk four-year-old children through the Virginia Preschool Initiative. Under this initiative, students attend the school where they will be attending kindergarten. The maximum number of students per classroom for this program is 18, and with an aide assisting the teacher, the pupil/teacher ratio is below 9:1. Funding for this program, which is provided at eight MCPS elementary schools, was $906,300 for fiscal year 2005-06. MCPS also provides inclusive special education to preschool students with disabilities through another grant-funded program and serves children in this program.

MCPS Partnership with Institutions of Higher Education. MCPS has partnered with Virginia Tech (VT) in an On-Campus Transition Program for students with disabilities who are 18 to 21 years old and need special education and transitional services but whose class has graduated from high school. MCPS has also partnered with VT to implement a Mathematics Specialist Program to train elementary and middle school teachers so that they earn a master's degree and credentials to be licensed as K-8 mathematics specialists. Another program, in partnership with VT's Department of History and Education, Radford University's (RU) Department of History, and the Virginia Historical Society, is a comprehensive professional development program for K-12 teachers aimed at increasing teacher knowledge and student achievement.

COMMENDATION

MCPS is commended for initiating and implementing innovative programs that serve different student populations and for seeking new funding and creating partnerships to carry out such programs.

FINDING

MCPS has a partnership with Radford University, initiated in 1997, that sends RU student teachers to Auburn Elementary School (AES). This year-long program is guided by an advisory Board and allows interns to block in the fall at AES and student teach in the spring. RU teaches its classes at AES, and AES teachers are sometimes asked to help teach specific classes.

This partnership is beneficial to both RU and MCPS. RU has one location to supervise interns and a relatively stable group of teachers to work with during the school year. MCPS benefits in several ways:

- The effective use of interns in the classroom reduces the student to teacher ratio.

- There is a ready pool of candidates for hiring in the spring. Nine out of 31 AES classrooms have graduates of this program as teachers, representing 29 percent of all classroom teachers.

- RU-funded technology is in use at AES.

- The RU interns receive essential substitute teacher training and are eligible to substitute in their cooperating teacher's classroom during the teacher's absence, which helps keep instruction consistent.

- From late September to early May, the RU interns provide tutoring to struggling readers twice a week for a total of 1½ hours.

COMMENDATION

Auburn Elementary School and MCPS are commended for implementing a successful and effective program through a partnership with an institution of higher education, to the mutual benefit of both entities.

FINDING

MCPS follows a site-based management approach to allow individual schools to make decisions on supplemental instructional programs. While central office instructional support staff and curriculum supervisors may help teachers and principals make decisions regarding the acquisition and implementation of instructional programs, these decisions are not made using a comprehensive, divisionwide approach. Some programs have come to MCPS through grants funding or special education funding.

In all, 15 types of different instructional programs can be found at MCPS. Four high schools have Plato, the Untapped Freshman Transition Program, and Project Graduation, and all four middle schools have Plato. Seven other programs are at just one or two middle or high schools. The largest number and variation of programs exists among MCPS elementary schools. **Exhibit 3-13** lists the various supplemental instructional programs found at these schools.

**EXHIBIT 3-13
SUPPLEMENTAL INSTRUCTIONAL PROGRAMS
ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS
MONTGOMERY COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS**

ELEMENTARY SCHOOL	READING RECOVERY	BREAK-THROUGH TO LITERACY	PLATO	FAILURE FREE READING*	CONTENT ENHANCE-MENT SERIES	LITERACY LAB	WILSON READING PROGRAM*	EAROBICS	SUCCESS-MAKER	STAR
Christiansburg Primary	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓			
Auburn ES	✓			✓		✓	✓			
Belview ES	✓									
Christiansburg ES	✓	✓							✓	
Elliston - Lafayette ES	✓	✓		✓						
Falling Branch ES	✓	✓								
Gilbert Linkous ES	✓	✓		✓			✓		✓	
Harding Avenue ES	✓	✓		✓			✓			
Kipps ES	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓					
Margaret Beeks ES	✓	✓	✓	✓						✓
Price Fork ES	✓	✓		✓			✓			
Shawsville ES	✓	✓						✓		

Source: Montgomery County Public Schools, 2006.
* These programs are funded and provided through special education.

While individual schools may have unique needs and student populations that require specific instructional programs, as well as changing needs over time that require acquisition of new and different programs, MCPS does not seem to have undertaken a comprehensive divisionwide assessment of the programs. Interviews for the review revealed that schools make decisions about the acquisition of instructional programs without evaluating the effectiveness of those programs, their suitability for needs to be met, their compatibility with existing programs, and any support that might be required from the technology department.

Recommendation 3-11:

Develop and implement divisionwide policies for the purchase of educational instructional programs by evaluating the effectiveness and suitability of such programs.

The assistant superintendent for instructional services should assess the current instructional programs at MCPS, review their effectiveness, and use that information to develop policies for the future acquisition of instructional programs. This policy should cover programs obtained through specific grant funding and affecting a limited number of campuses. It should also cover coordination with the technology department to evaluate compatibility, installation, and long-term technical support required for potential educational programs and any annual costs and fees for updates.

FISCAL IMPACT

Implementing this recommendation will not involve a significant cost but may result in savings for schools through bulk purchasing of effective programs. It will also result in appropriate support from the technology department.

FINDING

MCPS meets minimum staff/pupil ratios required by the state. The Virginia Standards of Quality (SOQ) require minimum staff/pupil ratios that dictate staffing in Virginia schools; **Exhibit 3-14** outlines these ratios. In addition, the SOQ requirements state that instructional personnel at a school should be at a level that produces schoolwide ratios of students in average daily membership (ADM) to full-time equivalent (FTE) teaching positions of 21 to one in middle and high schools. In calculating these ratios, VDOE excludes special education teachers, principals, assistant principals, counselors, and librarians, but includes "resource" teachers who divide their time among several classrooms (for example, art and music teachers).

The MCPS School Board has adopted the following as part of its Priority Goals (2002-2008 Comprehensive Plan for School Improvement) under Policy 1-1.5, Mission, Vision and Priority Goals:

> *Reduce the pupil/teacher ratio to 15:1 at grades K-3, and do not exceed a maximum of 18 students in any K-3 class. Maintain the pupil/teacher ratio of 20:1 at grades 4-8, and do not exceed a maximum of 24 students in any class in grades 4-5. Maintain the pupil/teacher ratio of 22:1 at the high school level.*

These ratios are much lower than those required by Virginia SOQ, as shown in **Exhibit 3-14** under "Classroom Teachers." In addition, MCPS has adopted a more stringent rule than VDOE for calculating the pupil/teacher ratio. At the elementary school level, only the primary classroom teacher or teachers are counted, and not resource teachers. Because this leads to higher ratios, more teachers would be required to attain these goals.

EXHIBIT 3-14
VIRGINIA SOQ MINIMUM STAFF TO PUPIL RATIOS
2006-07 SCHOOL YEAR

POSITION	ELEMENTARY SCHOOL	MIDDLE SCHOOL	HIGH SCHOOL
Principal	1 per school*	1 per school	1 per school
Assistant Principal	1 per 900	1 per 600	1 per 600
Librarian	1 per 300	2 per 1,000	2 per 1,000
Guidance Counselor	1 per 500	1 per 400	1 per 350
Clerical Personnel	1 per 300	2 per 800	2 per 800
Resource Teachers (Art, Music)	5 per 1,000 (Gr. K-2)		
ITRT	2 per 1,000 (Gr. K-12)		
Classroom Teachers	1:24 (Gr. K-3); 1:25 (Gr. 4-6)	1:24 (Grade 6-12)**	

Source: Virginia Standards of Quality, 2006.
*Schools of 900 students or more.
**English classes.

Exhibit 3-15 shows the reported ratio of pupils to classroom teaching positions in MCPS (using the state calculations, including resource teachers). Although the pupil/teacher ratio for K-7 was higher than the peer division or state average in the 2004-05 school year, it was much lower for grades 8 through 12.

EXHIBIT 3-15
RATIO OF PUPILS TO CLASSROOM TEACHING POSITIONS
REGULAR DAY SCHOOL
MONTGOMERY COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS AND PEER SCHOOL DIVISIONS
2004-05 SCHOOL YEAR

SCHOOL DIVISION	ELEMENTARY TEACHING POSITIONS	END-OF-YEAR MEMBERSHIP K-7	PUPIL/ TEACHER RATIO K-7	SECONDARY TEACHING POSITIONS	END-OF-YEAR MEMBER- SHIP 8-12	PUPIL/ TEACHER RATIO 8-12
Montgomery County	**393.3**	**5,791**	**14.7**	**449.4**	**3,470**	**7.7**
Augusta County	498.8	6,398	12.8	351.5	4,304	12.2
Fauquier County	445.4	6,425	14.4	452.2	4,238	9.4
Frederick County	535.3	7,230	13.5	439.9	4,428	10.1
Rockingham County	501.7	6,783	13.5	433.0	4,177	9.6
York County	500.1	7,142	14.3	353.7	4,198	11.9
PEER DIVISION AVERAGE	**479.1**	**6,628**	**13.9**	**413.3**	**4,136**	**10.2**
STATE	**56,781.6**	**722,712**	**12.7**	**39,627.7**	**442,800**	**11.2**

Source: Virginia Department of Education Web site, 2006.

Exhibit 3-16 lists MCPS staffing from the adopted 2006-07 operating budget along with the September 30, 2006, pupil numbers used by the school division to calculate the pupil/teacher ratio. This ratio includes resource teachers but excludes special education and GT teachers as well as nurses and guidance counselors.

**EXHIBIT 3-16
RATIO OF PUPILS TO CLASSROOM TEACHING POSITIONS
MONTGOMERY COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS
2006-07 SCHOOL YEAR**

	ELEMENTARY SCHOOL	MIDDLE SCHOOL	HIGH SCHOOL	TOTAL
Pupils 9/30/2006	4,301.0	2,156.0	3,019.0	9,476.0
Teachers	328.6	159.4	204.9	692.9
Pupil/Teacher Ratio	**13.1**	**13.5**	**14.7**	**13.7**
GT	3.2	1.3	1.0	5.4
Instructional Aides	37.0	6.0	11.5	54.5

Source: *School Profiles*, 2006-07 School Operating Budget, Montgomery County Public Schools, 2006.

Based on the low pupil/teacher ratio shown in **Exhibit 3-16**, MCPS may need to review the allocation of course offerings at the high schools. By combining or eliminating low enrollment classes, MCPS can increase the number of students per class, but still keep it below the pupil/teacher ratio goals adopted by the School Board and well below those required by Virginia SOQ.

If the School Board actively pursues its pupil/teacher ratio and class size objectives, costs will increase further. In 2006-07, eight of the division's 12 elementary schools did not have the staff to meet MCPS classroom size goals for one or more grades (usually K-3). Nine of 12 did not have the staff needed to meet MCPS goals for schoolwide pupil/teacher ratios. At a minimum, MCPS would have to hire 26 additional elementary school teachers to meet its own objectives.

Recommendation 3-12:

Review MCPS course offerings and teacher assignments at the high schools to improve its capacity to meet the priority goals set by the School Board, and review its pupil/teacher ratio and class size goals for grades K-3 to ensure that the educational benefits are sufficient to merit the additional cost to meet Board goals.

FISCAL IMPACT

Reallocating course offerings and combining or eliminating low enrollment classes may result in substantial savings for MCPS if based on an analysis of the effectiveness of current allocations.

Although the Board's goal of small classes for grades K-3 is laudable, attaining this goal would cost the division about $1.5 million per year. This is based on hiring 26 additional elementary school teachers at an average annual salary of $42,474.

<u>Special Education</u>

Special education in schools is governed by the federal *Individuals with Disabilities Education Act* (IDEA), which provides guidance and direction to schools regarding the delivery of special education services to students with disabilities. IDEA defines special

education as specially designed instruction, at no cost to the child's parents, to meet the unique needs of a student with disabilities. A student is eligible for special education and related services if he or she has a disability as identified by IDEA and because of the disability, needs specially designed instruction. IDEA was reauthorized in 2004, when it established six principles that govern the education of students with disabilities. One of the six principles is Least Restrictive Environment (LRE), defined in IDEA as follows:

> *To the maximum extent appropriate, children with disabilities, including children in public or private institutions or other care facilities, are educated with children who are not disabled, and special classes, separate schooling, or other removal of children with disabilities from the regular educational environment occurs only when the nature or severity of the disability of a child is such that education in regular classes with the use of supplementary aids and services cannot be achieved satisfactorily.*

IDEA requires that in seeking the LRE for each special education student, the first consideration must always be the general education classroom that the student would attend if he or she did not have a disability, but supplemented by aids and services. Therefore, special classes or a segregated setting may be considered only when education in the regular classes with the use of aids and services cannot be provided. Further, IDEA provides that a student with a disability be supported with supplementary aids and services as needed so that he or she can succeed in the LRE. Such supplementary aids and services can be provided in general education classes so that students with disabilities may be educated with nondisabled peers. Supplementary aids and services may include resource rooms, modifications of lessons, assistance of a consultant teacher with special education training, computer-assisted devices, the use of note-takers, additional time for tests, and preferential seating.

IDEA encompasses a philosophy known as inclusion. Although the term "inclusion" is not used or defined in IDEA, it is generally accepted to mean that primary instruction, along with other necessary services for a student with a disability, is provided in an age-appropriate general education class in the school the child would otherwise attend. Many school divisions in Virginia follow some level of inclusion in efforts to provide the LRE for their special education students. They use LRE as the statutory basis for the inclusion model of providing education to all students in a general education classroom to the maximum extent possible.

FINDING

MCPS, by its own definition, is a fully inclusive school division that provides special education services in the LRE to special education students within existing school system classrooms right alongside non-special education students. This inclusive approach uses a consulting teacher model whereby special education teachers and instructional aides are in classrooms where special education children are present.

The December 1 special education student count for MCPS for 2005 was 1,299 students. In fiscal year 2006-07, a staff of 287 FTEs and $8.9 million were budgeted for special education. This included 100 teachers and 175 instructional aides for preschool

through grade 12. The instructional aides are hired as needed and may be scheduled to move between buildings. As **Exhibit 3-17** shows, MCPS has about 1,300 students with disabilities, representing 13 percent of enrollment.

EXHIBIT 3-17
NUMBER OF STUDENTS BY DISABILITY
MONTGOMERY COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS
DECEMBER 1, 2004 COUNT, 2004-05 SCHOOL YEAR

DISABILITY	NUMBER OF STUDENTS
Mental Retardation	79
Severe Disability	1
Hearing Impairments	8
Speech or Language Impairments	160
Visual Impairments	4
Emotional Disturbance	99
Orthopedic Impairments	10
Other Health Impairments	275
Specific Learning Disabilities	483
Deaf-Blindness	0
Multiple Disabilities	46
Autism	51
Traumatic Brain Injured	8
Developmental Delay	81
TOTAL	**1305**

Source: Virginia Department of Education Web site, 2006.

MCPS special education has a five-year action plan that is updated annually so that the division can evaluate the program's strengths and weaknesses as well as its compliance with IDEA and Virginia and federal regulations governing special education.

COMMENDATION

MCPS is commended for using an inclusive model to provide education to students with disabilities in the least restrictive environment, following one of the six principles of the federal *Individuals with Disabilities Education Act*.

FINDING

As currently implemented, MCPS inclusive model for special education may be more expensive than the alternatives. Adoption of an inclusive approach has led MCPS to hire 99.5 special education teachers and 163.7 special education teacher aides, for a total cost of about $6.76 million per year. Had MCPS hired only the minimum numbers needed to meet state standards, it would have hired 88 teachers and 129.5 aides, at an estimated cost of $5.84 million.

Exhibit 3-18 shows the numbers of special education teachers and instructional aides in the 2005-06 school year. MCPS employed 7.5 more special education teachers than required by state standards, and 34.2 more special education teacher aides than required. It should be noted that these staffing levels were below the budgeted FTEs for 2004-05; MCPS only hires teachers and instructional aides as needed.

EXHIBIT 3-18
AUGUST 2005 SPECIAL EDUCATION STAFFING
MONTGOMERY COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

	ELEMENTARY SCHOOL	MIDDLE SCHOOL	HIGH SCHOOL	TOTAL
Special Education Teachers	31.5	23.1	33.0	87.6
Special Education Instructional Aides	76.5	33.6	39.0	149.1

Source: Montgomery County Public Schools, 2006.
Note: These numbers vary from budgeted FTEs, which are higher.

On the other hand, it is not clear whether these estimates are realistic. Virginia does not have comparative reports across school divisions for special education; other school divisions that have not adopted an inclusive approach may be exceeding standards themselves.

According to personnel at VDOE's Division of Special Education & Student Services, currently there is no single report that shows how much each Virginia school division spends on special education or how staffing levels compare across divisions. Nor is there a report that shows how much funding for special education comes from non-state funds in Virginia school divisions. Also, many school divisions may be exceeding the minimum Virginia standards of maximum caseloads. Without ready access to this information, it is difficult to compare MCPS with other Virginia school divisions.

In addition, inclusion model peers for MCPS would have to be identified by looking at federally reported LRE data. In February 2007, the Division of Special Education & Student Services will issue its first special education report containing LRE data by school division. This will show how many school divisions provide special education outside the regular classroom by percentage under three categories: less than 20 percent, between 21 and 60 percent, and more than 61 percent. Those divisions providing the lowest percentage of education outside the regular classroom would therefore be the most inclusive, as their students spend the most time inside a regular classroom.

EXHIBIT 3-19
SPECIAL EDUCATION PROVIDED IN LEAST RESTRICTIVE ENVIRONMENT
VIRGINIA SCHOOL DIVISIONS
DECEMBER 1, 2005 COUNT, 2005-06 SCHOOL YEAR

SCHOOL DIVISION	TOTAL STUDENTS	PERCENT OF TIME SPENT BY SPECIAL EDUCATION STUDENTS IN REGULAR CLASSROOM
Roanoke County	2,082	90%
Montgomery County	**1,198**	**89%**
Wise County	899	87%
King and Queen County	162	83%
King William County	301	83%
Patrick County	407	83%
York County	1,059	83%
Floyd County	299	82%
Rockbridge County	332	80%
Lexington	68	79%
Poquoson	262	78%
Carroll County	580	77%
Albemarle County	1,717	77%

Source: Virginia Department of Education, Special Education and Student Services Division,
financial and data services, 2007.

Exhibit 3-19 lists school divisions in Virginia where special education students spend the highest percentage of their time in a regular classroom (least amount of time spent outside the regular classroom). These are the school divisions that provide special education in the least restrictive environment of a regular classroom, and by inference are the most inclusive.

Recommendation 3-13:

Compare the effectiveness of MCPS's special education inclusive model to that of high inclusion models of peer school divisions in Virginia once the Virginia Department of Education releases its special education report in February 2007.

Drawing on VDOE's special education report for information on achievement indicators such as graduation and dropout rates for special education students as well as ad hoc reports from VDOE on staffing and funding (available by special requests), MCPS should compare its special education program with those of the school divisions listed in **Exhibit 3-19**.

MCPS could form a separate peer division group made up of school divisions that follow an inclusive or LRE model, are most like MCPS, or have similar caseloads and then compare funding and staffing allocations against achievement indicators such as graduation and dropout rates. These could include school divisions such as Roanoke, Wise, and York County.

FISCAL IMPACT

No fiscal impact can be determined until the comparative peer data have been analyzed to determine the effectiveness of the current MCPS inclusive model against other models. It should be noted that other models with less integration would require consideration of associated cost increases such as higher costs of providing transportation or equipping segregated special education classrooms.

Summer School

Summer school at MCPS has had higher expenditures than the average expenditures of its peer school divisions. As indicated in **Exhibit 3-20**, at MCPS summer school expenditures were $481,493, nearly 70 percent higher than the peer division average, in fiscal year 2004-05. In summer 2006, expenditures for summer school exceeded the appropriated budget of $443,146 by $108,069. MCPS has historically exceeded its summer school budget, but it should be noted that the division did make some administrative changes for summer 2006. As a result, summer school expenditures exceeded the budgeted amount by less in 2006 than they had the previous summer.

EXHIBIT 3-20
SUMMER SCHOOL EXPENDITURES
MONTGOMERY COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS AND PEER SCHOOL DIVISIONS
FISCAL YEAR 2004-05

SCHOOL DIVISION	SUMMER SCHOOL EXPENDITURES
Montgomery County Public Schools	**$481,493**
Augusta County Public Schools	$258,362
Fauquier County Public Schools	$142,299
Frederick County Public Schools	$124,018
Rockingham County Public Schools	$542,218
York County Public Schools	$176,309
PEER DIVISION AVERAGE	**$287,450**

Source: Virginia Department of Education Web site, 2006.

Summer school is provided to students who need remedial classes as well as to those high school students seeking accelerated or early graduation classes. Summer school classes are provided at six schools in the division, one each at Christiansburg Middle School and Christianburg High School, and at four elementary schools, one in each strand in the school division.

During the 2006 summer session, MCPS had a total of 387 students enrolled in grades K through seven and 234 students in grades 8 through 12. A total of 10 middle school classes and 21 high school classes were offered. At the elementary schools, classes were offered in reading and writing but set in groups rather than by grade level. Eight principals and 160 teachers were supported by 62 aides that included guidance counselors, librarians, and administrative assistants for the summer school academy.

Middle school and elementary school students attend summer school for remediation classes at no cost. High school students pay $75 a class for a remediation class and

$150 a class for a new course. Classes for which fewer than 12 students register are cancelled. Transportation is offered at no cost to the students; however, they are not picked up at all regular stops but at designated stops throughout the school division. During summer 2006, 30 bus drivers provided transportation.

As **Exhibit 3-21** shows, the cost of providing summer school education for the 621 summer school students was very high at $884 a student. Less than a third of the amount expended for summer school in 2006 was from state funds. Even if 234 high school students paid $75 or $150 a course, this would only bring in between $17,550 and $35,100.

EXHIBIT 3-21
SUMMER SCHOOL EXPENDITURES
MONTGOMERY COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS
SUMMER 2006

	2006 EXPENDED BUDGET	NUMBER OF PERSONNEL	COST PER SUMMER SCHOOL STUDENT
Principals	$8,000	8	$13
Teachers	$75,337	130	$121
Instructional Aides*	$378,329	62	$609
Bus Driver Supplements	$48,038	30	$77
Benefits	$39,429	N/A	$63
TOTAL	**$549,133**	**230**	**$884**
State Share	$160,240	N/A	$258
Other Sources	$388,893	N/A	$626

Source: Montgomery County Public Schools, year-to-date budget report, 2007.
* This category includes guidance counselors, administrative assistants, and librarians.

Several long-standing practices at MCPS may be partially responsible for the high cost of the summer program. Due to difficulty in hiring teaching staff for the summer program, a policy was instituted eight to ten years ago to award teachers a sign-on bonus as well as an hourly rate based on their salary for the upcoming fiscal year. The school division does not currently have difficulty hiring summer school teachers. Elementary and middle school teachers are paid a $250 bonus; high school teachers, a $500 bonus. Principals are paid a $1,000 stipend in addition to their contracted salary.

Recommendation 3-14:

Institute a pay rate of $20 an hour for summer school teachers to match the homebound instruction teacher hourly rate and stop paying sign-on bonuses to all teachers for summer school.

FISCAL IMPACT

Recommendation	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12
Institute a Fixed Hourly Rate for Summer School and Eliminate the Sign-on Bonus	$68,500	$68,500	$68,500	$68,500	$68,500

Many classes are five-week classes that meet for five hours, five days a week. Others are three- and seven-week classes. A teacher with 10 years of experience and a bachelor's degree would make over $21.65 an hour for a total of $2,706 for a five-week course, plus a $250 or $500 sign-on bonus. If this teacher were to make $20 an hour, the standard hourly rate for SOL remediation, there would be savings of over $200. Applying this $200 savings as an average to all 130 teachers would result in savings of $26,000. If 40 high school teachers were receiving $500 and the remaining 90 receiving $250, eliminating the sign-on bonus would result in savings of $42,500.

Nursing Services

FINDING

Nursing services at MCPS are not evenly distributed among the schools relative to the workload. The school health coordinator supervises the nursing staff. There are a total of 20 nurses, and they are hired on a part-time hourly basis without benefits. These nurses are assigned to schools so that each elementary school has a nurse for 32.5 hours a week, while middle and high schools have part-time nursing staff for 18 or 20 hours each.

Spending on attendance and health services at MCPS is lower than the average for the peer school divisions. As seen in **Exhibit 3-22**, MCPS, at $113 per student compared to $129 for the peer division average, spends less per student than three other school divisions in its peer group. The attendance and health services category includes nurses, social workers, school psychologists, speech services, and audio and vision services.

EXHIBIT 3-22
ATTENDANCE AND HEALTH SERVICES EXPENDITURES
MONTGOMERY COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS
FISCAL YEAR 2004-05

SCHOOL DIVISION	ATTENDANCE AND HEALTH SERVICES EXPENDITURES	ATTENDANCE AND HEALTH SERVICES EXPENDITURES/STUDENT
Montgomery County Public Schools	**$771,040**	**$113**
Augusta County Public Schools	$1,231,060	$85
Fauquier County Public Schools	$911,053	$179
Frederick County Public Schools	$2,100,909	$82
Rockingham County Public Schools	$1,415,554	$126
York County Public Schools	$2,138,874	$170
PEER DIVISION AVERAGE	**$1,559,490**	**$129**

Source: Virginia Department of Education Web site, 2006.

During interviews for this review, both at the schools and during the public forum, the review team was told that nursing staff was overworked and that more nurses might be needed in secondary schools. Some believed that the inclusive special education model at MCPS resulted in higher demand for nursing services. Specifically, it was noted that middle school nurses did not even have time to take breaks for lunch. **Exhibit 3-23** bears out this anecdotal information. Middle school nurses see by far the greatest number of students per hour, whereas high schools, in spite of having nurses for less than 20 hours a week, experience lower numbers of student clinic visits.

EXHIBIT 3-23
NURSING CLINIC VISITS
MONTGOMERY COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS
FALL 2006

SCHOOL	ADM	WEEKLY NURSE HOURS	CLINIC VISITS			TOTAL		OCT-NOV VISITS / HOUR
			AUG-SEP	OCT	NOV	AUG-NOV	OCT-NOV	
AES	579	32.5	560	348	289	1,197	637	2.2
BES	270	32.5	245	658	340	1,243	998	3.5
CES	374	32.5	1,291	1,101	797	3,189	1,898	6.6
CPS	477	32.5	780	743	567	2,090	1,310	4.6
ELES	212	32.5	414	352	336	1,102	688	2.4
FBES	569	32.5	392	509	588	1,489	1,097	3.8
GLE	332	32.5	664	437	596	1,697	1,033	3.6
HAE	201	32.5	325	253	208	786	461	1.6
KES	551	32.5	641	412	347	1,400	759	2.7
MBE	420	32.5	397	199	303	899	502	1.8
PFE	217	32.5	408	183	398	989	581	2.0
SES	261	32.5	610	577	515	1,702	1,092	3.8
AMS	301	18	129	148	147	424	295	1.9
BMS	820	20	500	368	521	1,389	889	5.1
CMS	789	20	466	577	397	1,440	974	5.5
SMS	246	20	619	512	283	1,414	795	4.5
AHS	402	18	64	109	79	252	188	1.2
BHS	1,219	20	363	349	288	1,000	637	3.6
CHS	1,065	20	226	189	187	602	376	2.1
EMHS	333	18	80	82	45	207	127	0.8

Source: Montgomery County Public Schools, 2007.

Nurses have other responsibilities besides seeing students in their clinics. These include reviewing immunization and physical records, documenting student clinic visits, and compiling monthly reports. Meetings and lunch and break times also occur during these working hours.

Recommendation 3-15:

Increase the hours for nursing staff to 32.5 a week at three middle schools to match the hours at the elementary schools.

Auburn Middle School does not have the same need for nursing staff as the other three schools; increasing the hours at the other three middle schools would decrease the number of students seen to 2.8 per hour.

FISCAL IMPACT

Recommendation	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12
Increase Nursing Hours at Three Middle Schools to 32.5 Hours	($33,125)	($33,125)	($33,125)	($33,125)	($33,125)

Nursing hours would increase by 37.5 hours a week since all the middle schools currently have nurses for 20 hours a week. At an hourly rate of $20.40 over 10 months, this would increase the nursing budget by $33,125 per year.

4.0 HUMAN RESOURCES

4.0 HUMAN RESOURCES

This chapter reviews the personnel and human resources management functions of the Human Resources (HR) Department of Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS). In addition, this chapter also includes a review of the professional development department, which is a separate department in the division. The five areas of review include:

4.1 Organization and Management
4.2 Personnel Policies and Procedures
4.3 Recruitment, Hiring, and Retention
4.4 Compensation and Benefits
4.5 Professional Development

CHAPTER SUMMARY

Montgomery County School Division places great importance on hiring highly qualified employees. A notable feature in the human resources department is the use of an on-line application process to prescreen certified applicants. The division places a high priority on recruiting efforts and the department of human resources has a budget exclusively for recruiting teachers.

The human resources department lacks internal procedural manuals and would benefit from their development. The number of staff in the HR department is competitive with departments in the peer division and this is commendable.

The turnover rate in classified staff in this division is high and greater effort needs to be made to understand the reasons for the staffs' departure to reduce future turnover. The teacher salary schedule in this division is among the lowest when compared to its peer divisions.

An annual survey to solicit input from MCPS employees regarding the services provided by the department of human resources and the quality of these services would be beneficial.

The division places great emphasis on professional development for certified and classified staff. There is a need for the division to develop a more comprehensive professional development plan for classified employees. Registration for all professional development activities is maintained on-line.

There are a number of laudable practices in the department, most notably:

- Having a proactive recruitment plan for the hiring of teachers.

- Implementing an on-line job applicant management system.

- Implementing an automated SubFinder system.

- Decreasing the number of days that teachers are absent from their teaching responsibilities.

To ensure continued success in human resource management, the MCPS human resources department should:

- Develop and implement an on-line employee survey to identify areas that need improvement.

- Post all human resources forms and handbooks on the HR Web site.

- Develop and update an employee handbook for MCPS staff.

- Develop and maintain a comprehensive procedure manual for the HR department.

- Create job descriptions for all positions, and systematically review and update them.

- Automate the data entry process for new employees and new substitutes.

- Acquire an electronic scanning system for fingerprinting new employees.

- Conduct a survey of classified employees to determine reasons for attrition.

- Analyze teacher salaries in relation to the competition and make adjustments as appropriate and as budgets allow.

- Develop division level activities to ensure that certified and classified employees have regular professional development activities.

The mission statement for the human resources department states that the department administers comprehensive programs aimed at attracting, motivating, and retaining an efficient, effective and productive workforce. The department provides the following services:

- Recruitment, selection and retention plans for certified and support employees.

- An automated substitute finder system.

- Custodian of employee personnel files.

- Compensation and benefits programs.

- Worker's compensation.

- Performance management.

- Employee relations.

- Internal investigations regarding employee grievances and/or violations of district policies.

- Diversity efforts.

- Policy review and development.

- Compliance with employment laws and regulations.

- Equal opportunity employer.

MGT surveyed teachers, central office administrators, and school-level administrators on how they felt about a variety of division services. **Exhibit 4-1** presents the survey responses within the district of Montgomery County Public Schools for the human resources division. The three employee groups were asked to respond agree, strongly agree, disagree, or strongly disagree to statements about areas in human resources.

As shown in **Exhibit 4-1**, knowing who to contact regarding human resources issues was rated favorably by all three employee groups, with 100 percent of central office administrators, 97 percent of principals and 82 percent of teachers agreeing that they knew who to contact in human resources. The three groups also concurred that they have a professional growth plan with 61 percent of central office administrators, 62 percent of principals, and 62 percent of teachers responding agree or strongly agree. There were somewhat mixed opinions about the salary levels in the district being viewed as competitive. Only 29 percent of central office administrators, 28 percent of principals and eight percent of teachers agreed that the district has competitive salaries.

EXHIBIT 4-1
COMPARISON OF RESPONSES WITHIN THE DISTRICT
PART E1: HUMAN RESOURCES

STATEMENT	(%A + SA) / (%D + SD)[1]		
	CENTRAL OFFICE ADMINISTRATOR	PRINCIPAL/ ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL	TEACHER
Salary levels in this school district are competitive.	29/54	28/69	8/84
Our district has an effective employee recognition program.	18/36	10/65	13/54
Our district has an effective process for staffing critical shortage areas of teachers.	36/25	24/55	8/47
My supervisor evaluates my job performance annually.	86/7	93/3	85/9
Our district offers incentives for professional advancement.	25/33	34/49	22/46
I know who to contact in the central office to assist me with professional development.	97/4	93/0	77/11
I know who to contact in the central office to assist me with human resources matters such as licensure, promotion opportunities, employee benefits, etc	100/0	97/0	82/10
My salary level is adequate for my level of work and experience.	29/50	24/58	7/83
Our district has an effective teacher recruitment plan.	57/4	38/24	17/22
I have a professional growth plan that addresses areas identified for my professional growth.	61/14	62/28	62/19

[1]Percentage responding *agree* or *strongly agree*/Percentage responding *disagree* or *strongly disagree.* The *neutral* and *don't know* responses are omitted.
Source: MGT of America, MCPS Survey Results, 2006.

4.1 Organization and Management

The human resources department is responsible for planning, implementing, and maintaining a sound system of personnel and human resources management that complies with the Commonwealth of Virginia laws and is consistent with Montgomery County School Division's policies and mission. The human resources department consists of eleven full-time personnel, including one director and two supervisors. There is one receptionist for the department and six administrative assistants.

Exhibit 4-2, the current organizational structure for the human resources department, includes a director of human resources, his administrative assistant, a supervisor of personnel and three administrative assistants, a supervisor of payroll and three administrative assistants and a receptionist for the entire department. The director of human resources reports to the superintendent.

EXHIBIT 4-2
ORGANIZATIONAL CHART FOR HUMAN RESOURCES
MONTGOMERY COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS
2006–07 SCHOOL YEAR
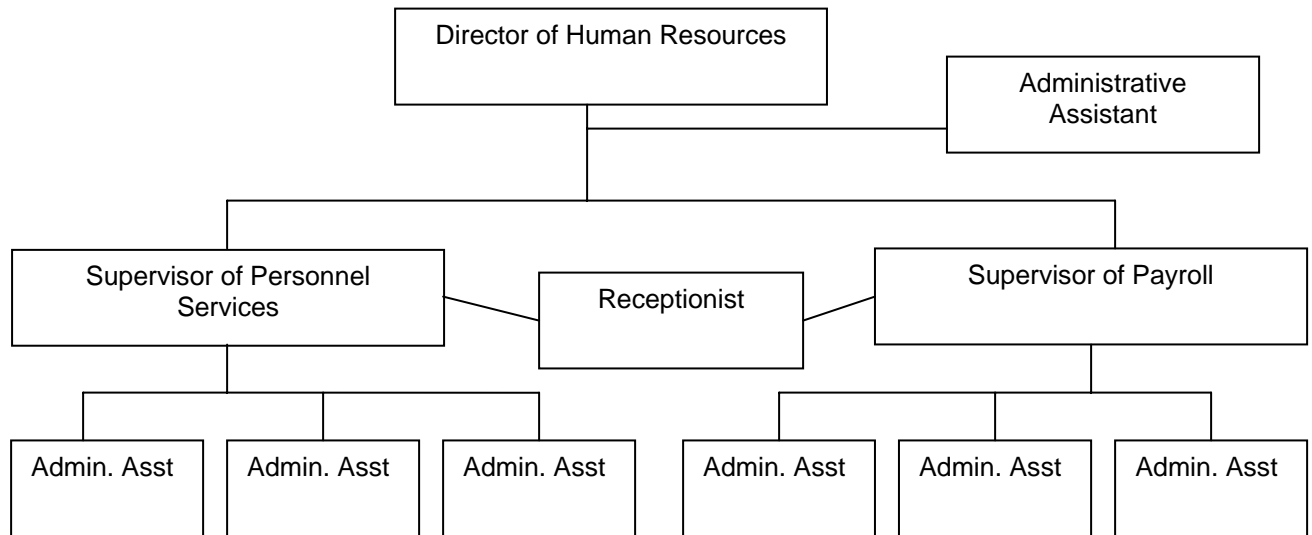
Source: Montgomery County Public Schools, Human Resources Department, 2006.

FINDING

Exhibit 4-3 provides a comparison of staff in the MCPS human resources department to staff in HR departments in five peer divisions that are similar in size. The MCPS department of human resources has the third lowest ratio of employees to HR staff with approximately 180 employees to every staff member. As shown, only Fauquier and York counties have lower ratios of division employees to HR staff.

The highest ratio to staff is in Rockingham County with approximately 310 employees for each human resources staff member. The average ratio of division employees to HR staff is 187.6.

**EXHIBIT 4-3
MONTGOMERY COUNTY SCHOOL DIVISION
HUMAN RESOURCES DEPARTMENT
COMPARED TO HUMAN RESOURCES DEPARTMENTS
IN FIVE PEER SCHOOL SYSTEMS**

SCHOOL DIVISION	STUDENTS	EMPLOYEES	HUMAN RESOURCE STAFF	RATIO Of HR STAFF TO EMPLOYEES
Montgomery County School Division	9,423	1,989	10.0	179
Augusta County Public Schools	11,045	1,730	8.4	205.9
Fauquier County Public Schools	10,940	1,722	10.0	172.2
Frederick County Public Schools	12,211	2,139	10.5	225.2
Rockingham County Public Schools	11,613	1,863	6.0	310.5
York County School Division	12,838	1,725	16.0	107.8
AVERAGE	**11,345**	**1,721**	**9.6**	**187.6**

Source: Figures are from a survey conducted by the consultant of Montgomery County, Augusta County, Fauquier County, Frederick County, Rockingham County and York County. HR staff in Augusta County includes Finance staff.

The HR department recently added a sixth administrative assistant with responsibilities including Family Medical Leave Act, MUNIS® entry, summer school academy, support staff processing and back up for the School Board report and the job applicant management system.

The following summaries describe primary functions and responsibilities of support staff in the human resources department, as well as the functions of payroll staff. These descriptions show that the department engages in the cross training of employees and has a backup system in place.

■ **Administrative Assistant for Human Resources Director**

Personnel support, employee in-processing (transportation, administrative assistants, instructional aides, HVAC, maintenance), department budget/invoices, Board report backup, SubFinder backup, education reimbursement)

■ **Supervisor of Payroll**

Schedules monthly work within the payroll division, coordinates with supervisor of personnel services, orientation(s) of new employees, Wellington Benefits Liaison, coordination of local option retirement benefit and part-time employee benefits, liaison for MCPS, local treasurer for payroll related, conduct meetings as needed, and attend meetings as assigned by director of human resources (sick leave bank committee, calendar)

■ **Payroll Administrative Assistant**

Payroll preparation, employee payroll support, Virginia Retirement system, VRS on-line remittance, VRS buy back, US savings bonds, garnishments, back up for payroll taxes, wellness leave/perfect

attendance, teacher information, verifications, new employee orientations

- **Payroll Administrative Assistant**

  Payroll preparation, employee payroll support, health benefits, school nutrition payroll, data entry, coordinate with treasurer to run regular payroll, Anthem Health Insurance, annuity remittances, coordinate with benefit services for COBRA info

- **Payroll Administrative Assistant**

  Payroll preparation, employee payroll support, workers' compensation, regular operating payroll, data entry, verification collection, credit union, Montgomery County Education Association dues enrollment contact, other insurance products remittances, maintaining paperwork files, financial verifications of employment

- **Supervisor of Personnel**

  Manages the work assignments and work flow within the personnel department. Responsible for employee data entry, files, personnel – payroll data collaboration, contract design, distribution, salary placement, and licensure

- **Administrative Assistant for Personnel**

  Employee in-processing, MUNIS® data entry, certified applicants, substitute teacher applicants/orientations, SubFinder, evaluations, retirement banquet

- **Administrative Assistant for Personnel**

  Instructional personnel reference report (No Child Left Behind), job applicant management system, administrative applicants and committee support, employee in-processing, School Board report, SubFinder backup

- **Human Resources Receptionist**

  Receptionist for personnel and payroll offices, directs phone calls including main line for School Board, processed paper applications, Board letters for retirements, resignations, regret letters, and distributes mail, paperwork packets for new employees, and in-take for employee contracts

COMMENDATION

MCPS human resources department is to be commended for adding staff to the HR department to allow for cross-training and back up system of support.

FINDING

The human resources department does not have a process in place to survey employees with respect to the personnel services that are being provided. No feedback system is in place to survey all school system staff to evaluate customer services. A customer satisfaction survey can be used to evaluate current services and provide insight into the nature and quality of those services.

An annual customer satisfaction survey would offer an objective means for gathering input about the services provided to all employees and provide insight into the high turnover rate discussed later in this chapter. Open-ended items should be included in the survey so that employees can comment more specifically on areas that are in need of improvement.

Recommendation 4-1:

Develop and implement an annual, on-line employee survey that will assist the department of human resources in evaluating the quality of its services and identifying areas that need improvement.

The human resources department should design an on-line survey that uses a set of questions designed to elicit feedback on areas such as:

- What services should be improved or changed?

- What services are being provided exceptionally well?

- What recruitment and retention suggestions can you provide?

- As an employee of this school division, what issues are of concern to you?

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources using current human resources staff and programmers in the technology department.

FINDING

MCPS human resources department maintains a Web site that includes a link to the job applicant management system, employee benefits information, sick and family medical leave forms, address and phone change forms, and physician certification form. However, other forms that would benefit new employees such as the payroll deduction authorization form, I-9 employment eligibility verification, child support questionnaire, directions for obtaining TB screening, VA-4 tax form and W-4 tax form are not yet available on the HR Web site.

Recommendation 4-2:

Post all human resources forms and handbooks for new employees on the human resources Web site.

There are numerous forms that the human resources department uses regularly by all division employees. The department's customer service can be more efficient by posting these forms on-line. This service will also permit departmental personnel to be more efficient by relieving them of routine tasks and allowing them more time to devote to more complex customer service tasks.

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented without additional resources.

4.2   *Personnel Policies and Procedures*

Policies guiding the department of human resources in the delivery of services to MCPS employees are set forth in the *MCPS Policies and Regulations manual: Section 5: Personnel.* Within this section of the manual, policies and regulations regarding personnel are presented and include general administration, hiring, appointment and transfer, conditions of employment-generally, conditions of employment-licensed personnel, conditions of employment-classified, non-licensed and support personnel, employee discipline and grievance procedures, employee pay and fringe benefits, administration and miscellaneous employment matters.

FINDING

There is no divisionwide employee handbook for MCPS staff.

An employee handbook is a comprehensive guide to procedures and policies that affect all employees. Schedules, deadlines, and day-to-day operational guidelines are necessary for the effective and efficient operation of a division's personnel function. An effective employee handbook provides clear expectations about policies and regulations.

Additionally, a comprehensive handbook protects the division by ensuring that employees are well-informed about policies and regulations, particularly those related to conditions of employment, various types of grievance procedures, certification status, performance evaluation, and reclassification. No manual that provides an overview of and timelines for ongoing employee and division responsibilities exists.

Recommendation 4-3:

Develop and annually update an employee handbook for MCPS staff.

The handbook will serve as a guide for all employees. Each employee should be given a copy of the adopted handbook at the beginning of each school year at the orientation for all employees. Employees who are hired during the year should receive a copy of the handbook at the time of employment and should be required to participate in an

orientation with a human resources representative. Some of the information typically discussed in such handbooks includes:

- An overview of services performed by the department of human resources.

- Description of staffing and personnel classifications.

- The terms and conditions employment contracts.

- Finger printing procedures.

- Employment status changes such as transfers.

- Procedures, models and benchmarks for performance appraisal.

- Requirements for certification.

- Guidelines for staff development.

- A description employee benefits.

- Americans with Disabilities Act compliance.

- Employee responsibilities.

- Grievance procedures.

- Payroll requirements and procedures.

- Leave policies and procedures.

- Procedures for obtaining a substitute.

- Timelines for processing all personnel transactions.

- Requirements for submitting records for personnel files.

An employee handbook should also include items such as the mission and goals of the school division, an annual school calendar, emergency procedures, telephone numbers, and a directory of schools, central office personnel, and the names of School Board members.

The manual should also be posted on the school division Web site. This recommendation will make information more easily accessible, should eliminate unnecessary duplication costs, and should facilitate efficient updates.

A best practices example of a human resources Web site that has an electronic employee handbook is the Dinwiddie County Public Schools, Virginia Web site.

The division could provide employees the option of receiving the handbook either electronically or in hard copy. This practice should allow employees easy reference to essential employment policies, procedures, and forms when questions or issues arise. A form for staff to sign affirming that the handbook has been received should be included in the handbook. The signed form should be kept on file in human resources.

FISCAL IMPACT

The fiscal impact of this recommendation cannot be determined until the division decides how the handbook will be published, either in hard copy, electronic format or both. When it has been established exactly what information will be included and how the handbook will be published, the fiscal impact can be determined.

FINDING

The department of human resources does have a procedure manual to ensure effective and efficient implementation of district HR policies and procedures.

However, procedures that relate to the daily work of staff are not contained in one document. Examples are purchasing function in the MUNIS® system, internal Family Medial Leave Act manual, and orientation of new employees in the HR department. Staff members in HR assist each other with duties and are knowledgeable about each other's positions, and in fact are effectively cross-trained; however, if any staff member is absent for a length of time or several members are out at the same time, some crucial day-to-day work is hampered.

An HR manual provides standardized HR activities, serves as a tool for training, minimizes staff errors, and allows for accountability. Specific experience and knowledge are required to maintain and keep current the electronic personnel system that HR uses to maintain records of each employee.

Many districts utilize a procedures manual with guidelines and, in many cases, step-by-step instructions for HR staff regarding:

- Criteria for hiring and processing new employees and substitutes.

- Personnel actions such as applications, assignments, transfers, and exit interviews.

- Orientation of new employees.

- Facts about the equal employment opportunity laws.

- Performance appraisal tools;.

- Procedures for maintaining personnel records.

- Legal requirements.

Exemplars of standards for procedural handbooks can be found in other divisions including Lee County (Florida) and Bryan ISD (Texas). These district manuals are accessible on-line.

Recommendation 4-4:

Develop and maintain a comprehensive procedure manual for the department of human resources.

The district should develop and maintain a personnel procedure manual for HR staff to standardize personnel practices in human resources. The MCPS division's *Standard Operating Procedures*, if necessary, should be incorporated into this manual as well. The manual should be reviewed annually to improve HR procedures and should have an added benefit of personnel staff reviewing present practices and updated as needed. Through this process, the HR department can identify inefficiencies in using or carrying out particular procedures and make adjustments.

The director, coordinators, and administrative assistants should meet to develop an outline of all HR procedures. Once a list is developed, each staff member should then take responsibility for writing up a designated number of detailed procedures. The director should allow at least a month for the procedures to be written. Each procedure detailed should include a step-by-step process for performing the activity and should include a copy of all forms that relate to the activity. Once accomplished, the director should pull the manual together, editing and checking for accuracy.

The procedures should be maintained in a hardback binder with copies made available for the desks of each HR staff member and several others in reserve for additional or temporary staff members. The manual should include the department's mission statement and goals. The procedure manual should be ready for use beginning August 2007 and should be annually reviewed and updated.

FISCAL IMPACT

Staff in human resources can accomplish this recommendation. Each staff member will take approximately one to two hours to write-up detailed procedures for his/her position. The director, supervisors, and administrative assistants will then pull together all procedures, edit, copy, and place in binders, taking approximately four to eight hours. This recommendation does not require additional funding to implement. If the division publishes the manual in an electronic format, the monetary costs would be decreased.

4.2.1 *Job Descriptions*

Job descriptions that are well written and maintained are vital in the hiring and retraining of a qualified and competent staff. When an effective job description is developed, job standards are easily set. When a job description contains all of the necessary elements, the assignment of pay grades is more easily accomplished. Well developed job descriptions can also serve as a basis for annual performance evaluations and are becoming increasingly important in defending against workers' compensation claims and civil lawsuits.

FINDING

The job descriptions reviewed for MCPS are not consistent in format and are often lacking the dates that the job descriptions were written, revised or updated.

The human resources department has a binder of job descriptions with tabbed areas for principal, assistant principal, cafeteria, clerical, coordinators, directors, electrical maintenance, guidance, HVAC maintenance, instructional, librarian, teacher assistants, maintenance custodian, payroll, special program center and transportation.

MGT reviewed numerous job descriptions in the binder and found the following information was provided in most job descriptions:

- Title
- Primary qualifications
- Reports to
- Essential job functions
- Terms of employment
- Evaluation

Although most job descriptions contained essential core information, the format of the job descriptions was not consistent. Also, in many cases, a significant piece of information was missing from the job description – date it was written, revised or updated.

Recommendation 4-5:

Create job descriptions for all positions, and systematically review and update job descriptions on a three-year cycle.

Reviewing and updating job descriptions at least every three years is an industry standard. A full review of all MCPS job descriptions should be conducted and include an analysis of the essential functions of each positions. Job descriptions should be created and written for any positions that do not currently have one.

All job descriptions should be dated. The dates on each job description page should reflect when the job description is developed, reviewed, edited, revised or deleted. Each employee should be provided with a copy of his/her current job description, either electronically or in hard copy.

After all job descriptions are created, reviewed and updated, the human resources department should establish a procedure for updating job descriptions on a three-year cycle. It is recommended that the process be conducted annually, reviewing one-third of the job descriptions each year to complete the three-year cycle. Maintaining updated job descriptions should provide an effective tool for communicating expectations to current and prospective employees.

Exhibit 4-4 provides an example of an effective job description format. The format and style of the job description should be standardized to ensure consistency, clarity and meaning.

EXHIBIT 4-4
ELEMENTS OF AN EFFECTIVE JOB DESCRIPTION

JOB DESCRIPTION CONTENT

Header:
  ▪ Job title
  ▪ School/Department
  ▪ Reports to
  ▪ Supervisor's Superior
  ▪ Supervises
  ▪ Pay Grade
  ▪ Job code [1]
  ▪ Overtime Status

Main Body:
  ▪ Job Goal
  ▪ Qualifications
  ▪ Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities
  ▪ Performance Responsibilities Essential Functions
  ▪ Performance responsibilities Other Duties and Responsibilities
  ▪ Physical Demands (from supplement) [2]
  ▪ Work environment (from supplement)
  ▪ Terms of Employment
  ▪ Evaluation

Footer:
  ▪ Date (developed or revised)
  ▪ Board action if any
  ▪ Prepared by
  ▪ Approved by
  ▪ Work Location
  ▪ Telephone number
  ▪ Personnel Department review (with date)

[1] This is the same as job classification.
[2] A supplement to a job description describes the machines, tools, and equipment that will be used by the employee in the performance of the job. The physical requirements (sedentary, light, medium, heavy work) and activity (sitting, climbing, bending, twisting, and reaching) are also described in the supplement, as well as working conditions (outdoor, indoor, cold, heat, noise, and hazards).

Source: Created by MGT, 2000.

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be accomplished with existing resources.

FINDING

The department of human resources does not effectively integrate the employee databases across the division.

The MCPS division uses the MUNIS® system as their employee database. When a new employee is hired, an administrative assistant enters the employees demographic and other employment information manually into the MUNIS® system. This manual input requires a large amount of man hours. MCPS utilizes the electronic Job Applicant Management system which could be used to import applicant demographic data into the MUNIS® system. Currently, there is a duplication of effort in collecting applicant

information via an electronic system and then manually reentering the demographic data into the MUNIS® system once the applicant is hired. This results in unnecessary employee time entering data manually as well as increasing the incidence of data errors.

The MUNIS® database is also used to produce employee contracts. Currently, as reported by the payroll supervisor, the current cost for staff to produce employee contracts without an additional software program for contract processing is as follows:

- HR supervisor daily time (2.5 weeks=100 hrs X 23.54/hour= $2,354.00)

- Three HR staff daily time (1.5 weeks=120 hrs X average rate $13.40/hour=$1,608.00)

- Overtime for staff daily (64 hrs X $13.40=$857.00)

- Overtime for staff weekends (12 hrs X $13.40 = $160.80)

Using these calculations, the total cost for HR supervisors and staff to engage in the annual processing of all employee contracts is $4,980.40. After the employee contracts are processed, they are sent out to individual employees for signature and then returned to the HR department. The final processing of the contracts by HR staff requires additional time including four payroll staff an average of 100 hours times their average rate of pay $17.93 which equals $1,793.00.

The total HR and payroll cost for the manual production and processing of contracts is $6,773.40.

Recommendation 4-6:

Automate the data entry process for new employees and the updating of current employees in the MUNIS® system to facilitate contract production.

Data collected through the Job Applicant Management system can be extracted on-line and imported into the MUNIS® system directly. The data extraction process will eliminate the need for time consuming manual entry of employee data and further reducing the incidence of data input error. In addition, purchase training for the MUNIS® system projection program module and the Crystal Writer contract processing training.

FISCAL IMPACT

Staff report that the technology is in place to allow for the employee data transfer, but the implementation has not yet occurred. There are cost savings over time for implementing the MUNIS® projection program module as well as the Crystal Writer contract processing program. The initial costs are for the MUNIS® and Crystal Writer training. The MUNIS® training cost is calculated based on an estimate of four hours with at least three employees (12 X $22.34 = $268.08). The Crystal Writer training cost is calculated based on basic training (1 day X 9 employees = $137.52) and advanced training (2 days X 4 employees = $550.08) with a total of $687.60.

There would also be a cost for hiring the MUNIS® consultant to provide the training. Staff estimate the consultant cost to be $5,600.00. The consultant will also assist with transitioning the manual office to a more efficient automated contract print. **Exhibit 4-5** shows the cost of implementing an automated data transfer process. As shown, the total first year costs of the staff training, consultant fee and contract processing system is $6,555.68.

EXHIBIT 4-5
MCPS EMPLOYEE
DATA TRANSFER IMPLEMENTATION COSTS

MUNIS® Projection Program Module	($268.08)
CRYSTAL Writer Contract Processing	($687.60)
MUNIS® Consultant	($5,600.00)
TOTAL INITIALCOST	**($6,555.68)**

Source: Montgomery County Public Schools, Human Resources Department, 2006.

After the implementation of the employee data transfer process, staff estimates an 80 percent reduction in man hours or $3,984.32 saved in HR staff man hours to produce contracts and a payroll staff reduction in man hours of 75 percent or $1,344.75 in cost savings. The total cost savings is $5,329.07 annually.

The first year a cost would be incurred for the training expenses ($6,555.68); however, there would be an estimated cost savings in subsequent years with an automated system.

Recommendation	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12
Automate the Data Entry Process in MUNIS® for Contract Production	($6,555.68)	$5,329.07	$5,329.07	$5,329.07	$5,329.07

FINDING

Currently the staff in the personnel department are manually entering employee data into the MUNIS® system and then re-entering the same basic employee information into the SubFinder system. When a teacher is absent, there is a manual system in place at the school level for entering the teacher absence data back in to the MUNIS® system. This process is labor intensive as well as being a duplication of effort.

On average, it takes 10 minutes per new employee with an average of 500 employees requiring entry into the SubFinder system. The payroll supervisor estimates this cost at 83.33 hours times the average hourly rate of $17.19 equals $1,432.44 to accomplish this task.

Recommendation 4-7:

Automate data entry from the MUNIS® system to the SubFinder system and from the SubFinder system back to MUNIS® for teacher attendance data.

When all data management systems interface, time can be saved. Using inconsistent information on employees will be minimized. This also ensures that each department is using the same information for an employee throughout a division.

FISCAL IMPACT

A cost savings would be realized over time due to the more efficient use of employee time in manually entering demographic data. The exact amount of savings cannot be estimated until the technology interface is implemented; however, it is estimated by the payroll supervisor that 80 percent of staff time to complete this task would be saved using this automated system. The payroll supervisor also reports that the technology is in place to allow for the employee data transfer, but the implementation has not yet occurred.

4.3   *Recruitment, Hiring, and Retention*

4.3.1   *Recruitment*

Nationally, school divisions are facing a critical teacher shortage. The requirements of the No Child Left Behind legislation regarding the hiring of highly qualified teachers has increase the need for divisions to have recruitment plans unique to the needs of the division. MCPS faces, like many divisions, a limited supply of teachers in trying to ensure that every classroom has a qualified teacher.

FINDING

MCPS has an effective recruitment plan developed in the HR department. MGT was presented with the MCPS recruitment plan for the 2006-07 school year. The plan also included the MCPS recruitment training manual for job fairs. **Exhibit 4-6** presents the recruitment events that the staff has scheduled for school year 2006-07.

EXHIBIT 4-6
HUMAN RESOURCES JOB FAIR PARTICIPATION
2006-07 SCHOOL YEAR

2006-2007	JOB FAIR	LOCATION
Nov., 2006	Support Staff Job Fair	MCPS
Jan. , 2007	Education Expo – VT/RU	Christiansburg Rec Center
Feb. , 2007	Spelman Job Fair – HBC	Atlanta, GA
Feb. , 2007	GA Assoc. of Educators & Clark Univ Teacher Recruitment Fair	Atlanta, GA
Feb , 2007	Technology Education Job Fair 804-225-2839 (George Willcox)	Virginia Beach, VA VA Beach Conference Center
Feb., 2007	WVEC – Teacher Recruitment Job Fair Friday/Saturday	Salem Civic Center
March, 2007	Great VA Teach In/VDOE	Richmond Convention Center
Late March	MCPS Elementary and Secondary Fair	MCPS
	NC/SC/VA – HBC	Fayetteville University Fayetteville, NC
	Elizabeth City State University	Elizabeth City, NC
	South Carolina State University	Orangeburg, SC
	Virginia State University	Petersburg, VA
April, 2007	SW Public Ed Consortium Tch Fair SW VA Higher Ed Center for Excellence	Abingdon, VA
	PA Job Fairs	Millersville University
		Slippery Rock
		Clarion University
June, 2007	Support Staff Job Fair	

Source: MCPS Human Resources Department, 2006.

The HR Department utilizes on-line ads, university contacts, MCPS Web site, local newspapers, the Virginia Department of Education Web site, Teachers.com, University Career Service Centers, and University School of education list serves as recruitment tools. Through University Career Services and Schools of Education, the plan is to set up communication for postings of job fairs, vacancies, and the application process. For key, hard to fill positions, ads are placed in national periodicals such as Education Week or specialized journals.

HR staff will conduct two support staff job fairs during 2006-07. Interested candidates can apply on-line before they arrive, but they will also have laptops available and staff to help individuals enter their information. Six job fairs for administrators and teachers are planned within the state and in Pennsylvania, North Carolina and Georgia. The HR department receives many invitations from institutions for job fairs, so participation can be expanded if needed and if the budget allows.

The HR department allocates funds specifically for recruitment. The total human resources budget expended for recruitment during 2005-06 was $29,100.00. These expenditures were made in the following areas for recruitment efforts:

- Advertisements
- Mileage
- Accommodations
- Health screenings
- Photo identification cards
- Job fair registration feeds
- Internal job fair costs
- Rental cars
- Criminal background checks
- Licensing fees

COMMENDATION

MCPS is commended for creating a proactive plan regarding the recruitment, hiring and retention of qualified teachers, the utilization of a variety of venues for recruitment and financially supporting recruitment efforts.

4.3.2   *Hiring*

FINDING

The MCPS human resource department has implemented an on-line job applicant management system (JAM). This electronic system allows applicants to access job postings in the areas of teaching/professional, administrative, support staff, and substitute teaching. A best practice is the availability of a computer that is dedicated to the on-line application process. A human resources staff member is assigned to assist prospective employees who wish to complete their applications in the human resources office. This is a direct service for those who do not have a home computer. It is also beneficial to have a person assisting the applicant who is knowledgeable about the application process.

COMMENDATION

The division is commended for implementing an on-line job applicant management system in January 2006. The more steps in a hiring process that can be conducted electronically, the more quickly the hiring process can be completed.

FINDING

The human resources department effectively maintains and uses an electronic calling system, SubFinder, to obtain substitutes for teachers and teacher aides. The SubFinder system was purchased in 1999 and has effectively been used since then.

The division provides four substitute orientations each year. Substitutes are required to attend a half day orientation in which they receive a handbook for substitute teachers which explains the SubFinder system, responsibilities of all substitutes and salary and payroll information.

The HR department screens the substitute applicants according to their qualifications, giving highest priority to those who are certified teachers, then to those who have four year degrees to increase their focus on quality.

COMMENDATION

MCPS is commended for the implementation of the automated SubFinder system and for providing a quality orientation experience for substitutes that includes valuable materials.

FINDING

MCPS human resources department currently handles the fingerprinting process for new employees manually. All potential employees of the Commonwealth of Virginia must submit to fingerprinting. The manual process handled by the staff consumes valuable time. According to staff interviews, manual fingerprinting for each individual takes an average of 20 minutes. If the fingerprints are not readable, the process must be repeated, consuming even more time. On average, the HR department fingerprints 500 new employees each year. This includes new teachers, substitute teachers, and all support staff. HR staff report that it takes up to 4-6 weeks to receive the results after the fingerprints and paperwork are submitted. This manual process consumes valuable employee time and can cause significant delays in the hiring of employees. In addition, an electronic system provides more accurate information in screening applicants, thus decreasing the incidence of inappropriate hires of ineligible candidates.

Recommendation 4-8:

Acquire an electronic scanning system for fingerprinting new employees. The scan system will improve efficiency, accuracy and timeliness in receiving data for potential new hires in the division.

FISCAL IMPACT

An electronic system suitable for the MCPS fingerprinting needs would cost approximately $8,000 to $10,000, so an average figure of $9,000 is being used as the initial cost of the system. This cost is estimated to occur only in the first year of implementation; however, there may be nominal maintenance fees in subsequent years.

Recommendation	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	20010-11	2011-12
Acquire an Electronic Scanning System for Fingerprinting New Employees	($9,000)	($0)	($0)	($0)	($0)

4.3.3   *Retention*

One of the hallmarks of an effective school and school division is its ability to retain a highly skilled work force. Staff turnover costs the division in terms of administrative and instructional time lost to advertising, checking references and interviewing as well as in training new staff and assimilating them into the culture and practices of the division.

FINDING

As shown in **Exhibit 4-7**, there has been a high turnover rate over the last three years in classified personnel. The highest turnover rate is among custodians, with an average of 28 resigning from the division each year. Staff reported that the turnover rates for 2005-06 were 33 percent for custodians, 19 percent for transportation workers and 19 percent for food service workers. The director utilized a compilation of School Board reports which identify by person, by position, and by work location, every staff revision within the district.

The percent of turnover in classified staff each year is a relatively high rate given the size of the district. Although the division does use exit surveys, the personnel director reports that it is not used routinely. Interviews were conducted with HR personnel to gain insight into the possible causes of the high attrition rate. Personnel indicated that the primary reason custodial staff leave is due to the work load and physical demands of the job. Similar positions with other regional employers do not require as much work or as much square footage to clean. Work hours also seem to be a factor in the attrition of custodians, as their work day is typically from 2:30 P.M. to 10:30 P.M. Staff reports that it is not uncommon for new custodial hires to leave after their first day of work or within their first three days of work. Exit survey responses indicate that maintenance, food service and transportation workers most often leave their positions due to low salaries and a non-traditional work day schedule including early morning or late evening work.

EXHIBIT 4-7
CLASSIFIED PERSONNEL TURNOVER
MONTGOMERY COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS
2003–06 SCHOOL YEARS

	2003-2004			2004-2005			2005-2006		
	Retired	Resigned	Terminated	Retired	Resigned	Terminated	Retired	Resigned	Terminated
Secretary	2	9	1	0	8	0	2	4	0
Transportation	0	9	1	1	8	2	0	9	1
Custodian	1	20	5	2	33	4	1	32	0
Food Service	3	15	0	2	15	2	0	17	1
TOTAL	**6**	**53**	**7**	**5**	**64**	**8**	**3**	**62**	**2**

Source: Montgomery County Public Schools, Human Resources Department, 2006.

Recommendation 4-9:

Conduct a survey of classified employees to determine reasons for attrition.

An on-line survey could be developed and administered annually near the end of the academic year to determine employee's intent to remain with the division for the coming year, and if not, the reasons why they plan to depart. Survey results could be used to improve practices and processes in the division that hinder employee satisfaction. In addition, all employees leaving the district should complete an exit survey at the time of resignation that is used to identify reasons for employee turnover and measure the success of the school division's retention initiatives.

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented without additional resources by routinely conducting exit interviews with personnel leaving the division.

FINDING

MCPS has significantly decreased teacher absences from 2004-05 to 2005-06 by 23.5 percent. The total number of teacher absences during 2004-05 was 13,139. The total number of absences in 2005-06 was 10,055. **Exhibit 4-8** shows the categories of absences included in these totals.

EXHIBIT 4-8
MCPS TEACHER ABSENCES
2004-06

REASONS	2004-05	2005-06
Illness-Personal	3,275.5	3,328.0
Annual Leave	74.0	93.0
Personal Leave	1,441.5	1,308.0
Deduction in Pay	254.5	199.5
Wellness Leave	92.0	130.0
Conference Leave	979.0	666.0
Family/Medical Leave	353.5	685.5
Jury Duty	24.5	5.5
Other	1,369.0	126.5
Illness-Family	1,414.5	1,593.0
Funeral Family	160.5	188.5
Funeral Other	91.5	69.5
Appt w/Dr/Dentist	1,059.0	1,006.0
Sick Leave Bank	100.5	0.5
Subpoena Court	20.5	42.5
Field Trip	490.5	421.5
In Service	1,938.5	191.5
Totals	**13,139.0**	**10,055.0**

Source: MCPS Human Resources, 2006.

Decreasing the number of teacher absences has a positive impact on the instructional service delivery in the division. The HR department analyzed the teacher absence data and decreased the number of days by scheduling more professional development days around instructional time, reducing the number of conference days that conflicted with instructional time, and substantially decreasing the leave without pay days.

COMMENDATION

MCPS is commended for decreasing the number of days that teachers are absent from their teaching responsibilities.

4.4   *Compensation and Benefits*

One of the key determinants in a prospective teacher applicant's decision to work in a school district is starting salary. For young persons coming out of college and entering the workforce for the first time, the ability to earn a livable wage in their chosen professional is highly desirable.

FINDING

Montgomery County Public Schools faces challenges similar to other rural districts from around the country in recruiting an adequate supply of highly qualified teachers. One of the key features of recruitment efforts is to remain competitive in terms of starting salaries. As shown in **Exhibit 4-9**, among comparable districts, Montgomery County's starting salary for teachers is the lowest at $30,750. Additionally, the division has the lowest salary at the Master's degree/step 15 level of the peer districts at $41,357.

As an incentive to recruit more experienced and/or teachers with more extensive educational preparation, as well as reward current teachers who continue their education and remain in the division, MCPS does offer supplements for advanced degrees beginning with $2,000 for the Master's degree and $3,000 for the doctorate.

EXHIBIT 4-9
TEACHER SALARY SCHEDULES
SIX VIRGINIA SCHOOL DIVISIONS
2006-07

DIVISION	BACHELOR'S DEGREE SALARY STEP 0	MASTER'S DEGREE SALARY STEP 15
Montgomery County	**$30,750**	**$41,357**
Augusta County	$34,000	$42,177
Fauquier County	$34,750	$50,723
Frederick County	$37,987	$67,160
Rockingham County	$36,025	$42,990
York County	$36,201	$47,169

Source: Human Resources Department for Montgomery County and 2005/06 Salary Schedules on the web for Augusta County, Fauquier County, Frederick County, Rockingham County and York County.

Exhibit 4-10 shows results from the survey administered in MCPS indicate that only eight percent of teachers agree that salary levels in this school division are competitive.

EXHIBIT 4-10
COMPARISON OF RESPONSES WITHIN MCPS
PART E1: HUMAN RESOURCES

STATEMENT	(%A + SA) / (%D + SD)[1]		
	CENTRAL OFFICE ADMINISTRATOR	PRINCIPAL/ ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL	TEACHER
Salary levels in this school district are competitive.	29/54	28/69	8/84

[1]Percentage responding *good* or *excellent* / Percentage responding *fair* or *poor.* The *don't know* responses are omitted.
Source: MGT of America Survey, 2006

Recommendation 4-10:

Analyze teacher salaries in relation to the competition and make adjustments as appropriate and as budgets allow.

Increasing teacher salaries should provide a means of attracting and retaining quality teachers, which is a growing need in the division. While the cost to increase current salaries would be significant, it is also important to note that a high turnover rate is also very costly.

The salary analysis should include an assessment of all factors related to the issue. For example, the level of increases that are possible, given the budget; the costs of a high level of teacher turnover; the importance of retaining high quality teachers; the number of quality teachers that are near retirement. During these deliberations, it would be important to include members of the Board of Supervisors as a way of informing them of the division's needs in the area of teacher salaries.

FISCAL IMPACT

The analysis of teacher salaries can be conducted with existing resources. The outcome of the analysis will determine the costs. However, if the division's decision is to increase salaries, the costs could be significant.

4.5   *Professional Development*

Comprehensive professional development programs enhance the knowledge, expertise, and performance of employees. Professional development programs should encourage continued professional growth through an employee's career. Federal No Child Left Behind legislation defines professional development as, "high quality, sustained, intensive, and classroom focused in order to have a positive and lasting impact on classroom instruction and the teacher's performance in the classroom." The legislation also states that professional development activities are not "one-day or short-term workshops or conferences."

In MCPS, the professional development office includes one director and one administrative assistant. The director reports to the Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction.

FINDING

MCPS's plan regarding professional development activities for classified and certified staff is not comprehensive and does not include required professional development hours each year.

The current plan was provided to MGT consultants at the division level. MGT consultants were told that the departmental support staff personnel interface with the district professional development office and various professional development opportunities are offered by the department. MGT was also told that since there is no district requirement for professional development that certified staff often do not attend scheduled sessions.

As seen in **Exhibit 4-11**, 54 percent of teachers reported that staff development opportunities provided by this school division for teachers are either good or excellent. Eighty-two percent of central office administrators reported good or excellent opportunities and 80 percent of school level administrators reported good or excellent staff development opportunities.

The survey revealed a much lower approval rating for staff development opportunities provided by this school division for support staff. Only 15 percent of teachers rated these opportunities as either good or excellent.

EXHIBIT 4-11
COMPARISON OF RESPONSES WITHIN THE DISTRICT
PART E2: HUMAN RESOURCES

STATEMENT	(%G + E) / (%F + P)[1]		
	CENTRAL OFFICE ADMINISTRATOR	PRINCIPAL/ ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL	TEACHER
Staff development opportunities provided by this school division for teachers.	82/11	80/21	54/45
Staff development opportunities provided by this school division for school administrators.	46/47	41/55	17/9
Staff development opportunities provided by this school division for support staff.	40/57	27/55	15/19

[1]Percentage responding *good* or *excellent* / Percentage responding *fair* or *poor.* The *don't know* responses are omitted.
Source: MGT of America Survey, 2006

Recommendation 4-11:

Develop a more comprehensive plan to ensure that certified and classified employees have regular professional development activities provided at the division level and that the district set annual professional development requirements.

FISCAL IMPACT

The implementation of this recommendation can be done with existing resources.

FINDING

MGT consultants were presented with the professional development plan for the MCPS division. This plan was developed in response to staff surveys and indicates that the division recognizes that all learners, including teachers, need opportunities for development that are focused and allow for choices based on identifiable needs. MCPS offers a choice-based professional development program. Employees will have a menu of options available to them throughout the year in addition to what is offered on the November staff development day.

The features of the program are:

- A menu of options will be available for the school year. A tentative calendar will be available one semester at a time.

- Teachers will be requested to review professional development course options and register on-line for all sessions including those offered on the November staff development day.

- Professional development offerings will be held after school, on professional workdays, weekends and during summer workshops.

■ To support district wide instructional initiatives, school improvement plans, and the district's policies aimed at instruction and professional development, staff are expected to attend appropriate sessions selected from the MCPS calendar of opportunities as well as those offered at their school site.

■ To support state requirements for certificate renewal and school improvement processes, an annual professional development log should be completed and turned in to the school principal. This log will document the professional development opportunities in which individuals have participated.

■ An annual professional development needs survey will be administered in the spring and will be used, along with other data collected, to determine needs and design appropriate offerings for the following year.

COMMENDATION

The MCPS division is commended for its commitment to the professional development of employees, the variety of options provided and utilizing input from stakeholders in the development of the plan.

5.0 FACILITIES USE AND MANAGEMENT

5.0 FACILITIES USE AND MANAGEMENT

This chapter presents findings and recommendations regarding facilities use and management in Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS). The five major sections of this chapter include:

5.1 Organizational Structure
5.2 Facilities Planning and Construction
5.3 Operations and Custodial Services
5.4 Maintenance
5.5 Energy Management

CHAPTER SUMMARY

MCPS operates four high schools, four middle schools, 12 elementary schools, and two alternative schools.

The buildings are well maintained and every effort is made to keep them in good working order within the budget available. Custodial and maintenance staff work diligently to provide a safe and clean environment for the students of MCPS.

The director of facilities and planning is the primary individual responsible for the facilities. The superintendent is responsible for submitting the facility budget to the School Board, which then submits the budget proposal to the Montgomery County Board of Supervisors for funding.

The following are key commendations pertaining to this facility review:

- The educational facilities of MCPS are well planned, cleaned, and maintained. The facilities use and management functions are effective and utilize several best practices.

- The facilities are based on the educational program and on accurate enrollment projections. The design process involves input from all stakeholders, including administrators, teachers, parents, students, and the maintenance and operations staff.

- The maintenance and operation of the facilities is accomplished in an efficient and effective manner in order to provide a safe and secure environment that supports the educational program and utilizes the school division's resources efficiently. Efficiency and economy of management and operation are critical to ensure that resources for direct instruction are maximized.

- MCPS is involved in ongoing facilities expansion projects. These projects are the result of several years of planning with the Montgomery County Board of Supervisors to address the growth of the county.

- MCPS has a well-established energy conservation management program that continues today thanks to strong leadership and dedicated staff.

- In general, the MCPS maintenance and facilities support department is staffed with capable professionals who take pride in the job they do and the services they provide.

The following are key recommendations found in this chapter:

- Post-occupancy reviews should be conducted upon completion of major facility renovations or new construction projects.

- Sell the modular classrooms that are not needed for the current student enrollment.

- Develop policies that establish cleanliness standards for school facilities.

5.1   *Organizational Structure*

The major facilities management functions in MCPS are administered by the director of facilities and planning, who reports directly to the superintendent of schools. The director has eight direct reports: three administrative assistants, an energy education manager, a construction program manager, an environmental program manager who also manages maintenance service contracts and capital maintenance projects, and two supervisors who report directly to him. The facilities and planning department, which includes the areas of facility planning, design, construction, operation, maintenance, repair and cleaning of all buildings and grounds has a total staff of 136 employees.

Exhibit 5-1 shows the current organizational structure of the facilities and planning department of MCPS.

EXHIBIT 5-1
CURRENT ORGANIZATIONAL CHART
FACILITIES AND PLANNING DEPARTMENT
MONTGOMERY COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

```
                        ┌─────────────────────┐
                        │ Director of Facilities│
                        │    and Planning       │
                        └─────────────────────┘
                                  │
        ┌─────────────────┐              ┌─────────────────┐
        │ Administrative  │              │ Energy Education│
        │  Assistants     │              │    Manager      │
        │     (3)         │              └─────────────────┘
        └─────────────────┘
                                  │
  ┌────────────┬─────────────────┬──────────────────┬──────────────┐
┌──────────┐ ┌──────────────┐ ┌────────────────┐ ┌──────────────┐
│Custodial │ │ Maintenance  │ │ Maintenance    │ │Construction  │
│Manager   │ │ Operation    │ │ Planning       │ │ Programs     │
│and Safety│ │ Supervisor   │ │ Environmental  │ └──────────────┘
└──────────┘ │ Utilities    │ │ Maintenance    │
             │ Coordinator  │ │ Contracts      │
             └──────────────┘ └────────────────┘
┌──────────┐ ┌──────────────┐ ┌────────────────┐
│Head and  │ │ Building and │ │ HVAC and       │
│Senior    │ │ Grounds      │ │ Electrical     │
│Custodians│ │ Foreman      │ │ Foreman        │
└──────────┘ └──────────────┘ └────────────────┘
┌──────────┐ ┌──────────────┐ ┌────────────────┐
│Custodians│ │ Grounds and  │ │ HVAC and       │
└──────────┘ │ Building     │ │ Electrical     │
             │ Trades       │ │ Trades         │
             └──────────────┘ └────────────────┘
```
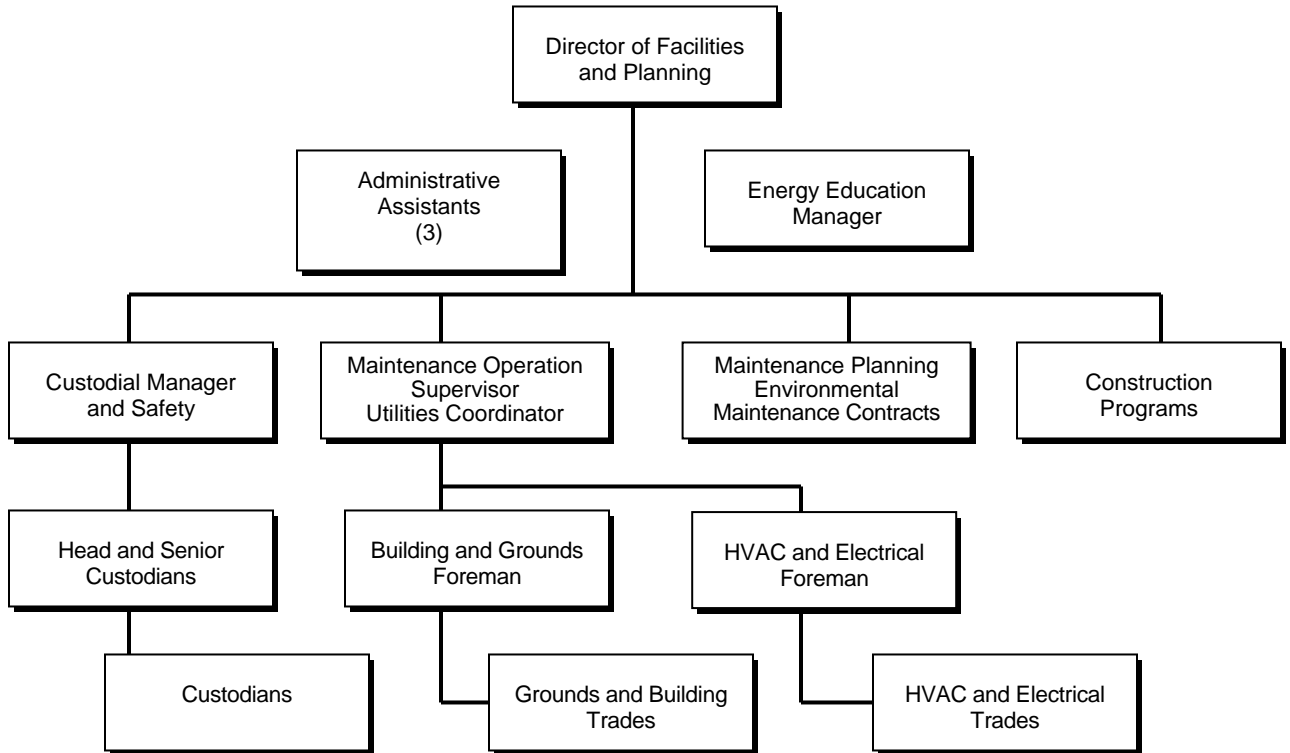
Source: Montgomery County Public Schools organizational chart, 2006.

Chapter 2.0 of this document recommends that the director of facilities and planning report directly to a proposed new assistant superintendent of administrative services rather than the superintendent. The recommendation to establish an assistant superintendent for administrative services is based upon the following:

- The superintendent currently has 31 direct reports, including one current assistant superintendent, six directors, one coordinator, one administrative assistant, and 22 building principals.

- Due to the demands of her work with the School Board and the community, the superintendent needs to have fewer subordinates that report directly to her.

The establishment of a new assistant superintendent of administrative services position would provide for more efficient decision making by effectively coordinating the administrative and support areas of human resources, facilities, business, finance, transportation, nutrition, and technology.

Exhibit 5-2 illustrates the current organizational chart for the superintendent of schools.

EXHIBIT 5-2
CURRENT ORGANIZATIONAL CHART
SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS
MONTGOMERY COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

```
                    ┌─────────────────────────────────┐
                    │  Citizens of Montgomery County  │
                    └─────────────────────────────────┘
                    ┌─────────────────────────────────┐
                    │          School Board           │
                    └─────────────────────────────────┘
  ┌──────────────────────────┐        ┌──────────────────────────────────────┐
  │     School Attorney      │        │ Clerk of the School Board/Public      │
  │                          │        │ Information Officer                   │
  └──────────────────────────┘        └──────────────────────────────────────┘
                    ┌─────────────────────────────────┐
                    │          Superintendent         │
                    └─────────────────────────────────┘
  ┌──────────────────────────┐
  │   Administrative Assistant │
  └──────────────────────────┘
                              ┌────────────────────────────────────────────┐
                              │ Assistant Superintendent                   │
                              │ Curriculum and Instruction – Student Services│
                              └────────────────────────────────────────────┘
                              ┌────────────────────────────────────────────┐
                              │ Director of Professional Development        │
                              └────────────────────────────────────────────┘
                              ┌────────────────────────────────────────────┐
                              │ Director of Human Resources                 │
                              └────────────────────────────────────────────┘
                              ┌────────────────────────────────────────────┐
                              │ Director of Management Services             │
                              └────────────────────────────────────────────┘
                              ┌────────────────────────────────────────────┐
                              │ Director of Special Education               │
                              └────────────────────────────────────────────┘
                              ┌────────────────────────────────────────────┐
                              │ Director of Technology                      │
                              └────────────────────────────────────────────┘
                              ┌────────────────────────────────────────────┐
                              │ Director of Facilities                      │
                              └────────────────────────────────────────────┘
                              ┌────────────────────────────────────────────┐
                              │ School Principals (22)                      │
                              └────────────────────────────────────────────┘
```

Source: Montgomery County Public Schools, November 2006.

FINDING

The current organizational structure, in which the director of facilities and planning, five other directors, and 22 principals report directly to the superintendent, can make it difficult to access the superintendent for approval of day-to-day requests. During interviews with MGT, numerous directors indicated that when they had concerns or questions regarding administrative services, they turned to the current director of management services. Having day–to-day decisions made at the assistant superintendent of administrative services level would enhance communication and allow for greater coordination of efforts.

Recommendation 5-1:

Align the director of facilities and planning position to report to the proposed assistant superintendent for administrative services.

This recommendation should assist the division in making coordinated daily decisions concerning the administrative services departments. These decisions will be made at the assistant superintendent level and will allow the superintendent to work more closely with the School Board and community in establishing the vision for the division.

This recommendation would not prevent the director of facilities and planning from participating in the superintendent's leadership council on an as-needed basis. The director of facilities and planning and the superintendent should communicate regularly about the facility needs of the division.

Exhibit 5-3 presents the proposed organizational chart for the assistant superintendent of administrative services.

EXHIBIT 5-3
PROPOSED ORGANIZATIONAL CHART
ASSISTANT SUPERINTENDENT OF ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES
MONTGOMERY COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS
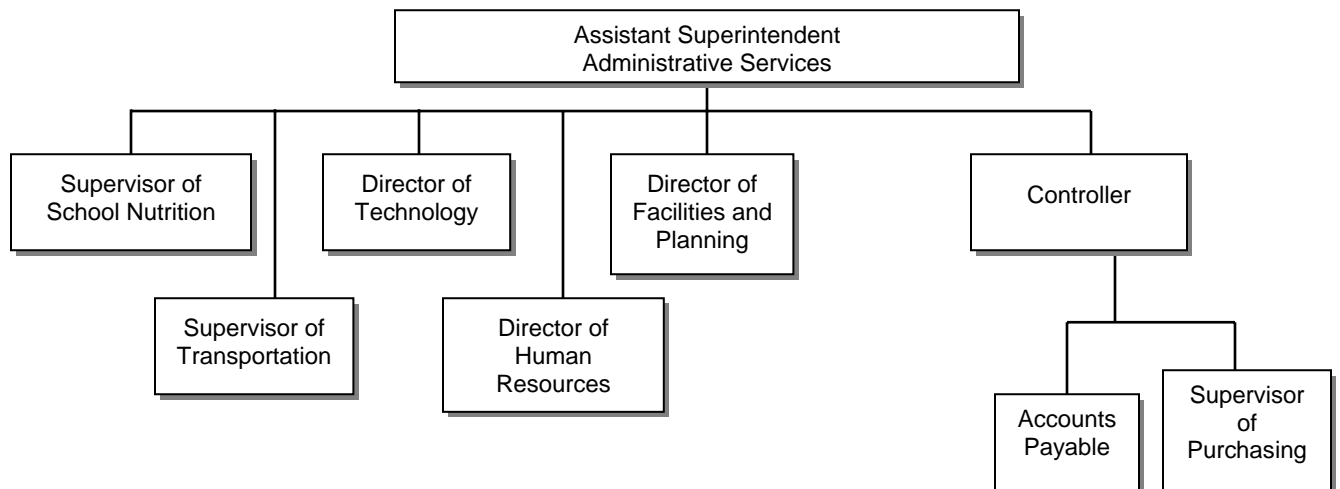
Source: Created by MGT of America, Inc., 2006.

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be completed with existing resources.

FINDING

Upon evaluating the roles and responsibilities of the employees assigned to the facilities and planning department, MGT discovered that job descriptions for some key positions did not exist. For example, job descriptions were not available for the maintenance operations supervisor, custodial safety manager, and director of facilities and planning. Those job descriptions that were provided were incomplete and did not fully identify the tasks performed by the employees.

Recommendation 5-2:

Review job descriptions and make appropriate revisions on an annual basis, as part of the employee evaluation process.

Accurate and up-to-date job descriptions assure employees that they are performing tasks that are important to the organization. Employees also benefit from knowing that their immediate supervisor has a working knowledge of what they are accomplishing and the role they are playing within the organization. Accurate and up-to-date job descriptions are very important to new employees looking for guidance in regard to job expectations.

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be accomplished with existing resources.

5.2   *Facilities Planning and Construction*

Addressing the need for school facilities was expressed by all individuals interviewed as the top priority for MCPS. The division has worked diligently to plan for facilities to accommodate projected growth in Montgomery County which is a significant task for the school division. Studies have been conducted and plans have been developed to expand school facilities to meet the current and future needs of an increased student population. MCPS does have an individual assigned to supervise construction projects, including renovations.

The need for school facilities is emphasized in the survey results of division staff. **Exhibit 5-4** provides the responses to the survey administered by MGT to the staff concerning sufficient space in the facilities to support instructional programming.

EXHIBIT 5-4
COMPARISON OF RESPONSES WITHIN THE DISTRICT
FACILITIES MANAGEMENT

STATEMENT	(% A + SA) / (% D +SD)*		
	CENTRAL OFFICE ADMINISTRATORS	PRINCIPALS/ASSISTANT PRINCIPALS	TEACHERS
Our schools have sufficient space and facilities to support the instructional program.	32/50%	38/59%	26/65%

Source: MGT survey, 2006.
*Percentage *Agree* or *Strongly Agree*/Percentage *Disagree* or *Strongly Disagree*. The *Neutral* and *Don't Know* responses have been omitted.

The mission of the typical planning, design, and construction department is to provide new and modernized facilities that meet the needs of students at the lowest possible cost. The specific goals of a design and construction department usually include:

- Establishing a policy and framework for long-range planning.

- Determining the student capacity and educational adequacy of existing facilities, and evaluating alternatives to new construction.

- Developing educational specifications that describe the educational program and from which the architect can design a functional facility that matches the curriculum needs with the potential to enhance and reinforce the education the school division desires for its students.

- Securing architectural services to assist in planning and constructing facilities.

- Developing a capital planning budget that balances facility needs and expenditures necessary to meet those needs, and shows how expenditures will be financed.

- Translating the approved architectural plans into a quality school building within budget and on deadline.

- Establishing and implementing an orientation program so that users of the facility can better understand the design rationale and become familiar with the way the building is supposed to work.

School facility planning is a major responsibility for a public school division. New school facilities and major renovations or additions require a substantial taxpayer investment. Existing school facilities represent community equity that requires ongoing maintenance investments to maintain its value.

FINDING

In July 2000, MCPS developed a comprehensive facilities master plan that links enrollment projections, school capacities, and capital construction projects. The division does an excellent job of making enrollment projections, analyzing the educational suitability of facilities, evaluating the physical condition of all facilities, and developing educational specifications. Since July 2000, the master planning committee has not revised or updated the facility master plan based on current enrollment projections and educational facility needs. Facility master plans, like any strategic planning document, should be revised and modified on a regular basis to respond to the changing needs of the division.

Recommendation 5-3:

Update the comprehensive five-year facilities master plan based on existing enrollment projections, educational suitability data, evaluations of physical conditions, and educational specifications.

A comprehensive facilities master plan is an effective planning tool that can help ensure that a division is utilizing its schools in a cost-effective manner and that the physical facilities are supporting the educational programs. While MCPS is utilizing many of the planning tools found in a facilities master plan, it has not assembled the various analyses in one document to ensure a comprehensive look at facility needs for the next five years. A facilities master plan should include, at least, the following elements:

- Five-year enrollment projections.

- Five-year capacity and utilization analysis.

- Attendance zone analysis.

- Identification of deferred maintenance needs.

- Identification of capital construction needs to meet educational program requirements.

- Strategies to meet facility issues such as underutilization, overcrowding, and unmet educational program needs.

- Priority ranking of all major maintenance and capital construction projects by school by year of plan.

- Budget estimates by project by year.

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented by division staff given that the division has an architect and civil engineer as its director of facilities and planning and has already assembled much of the needed data.

FINDING

During the facility planning process, it is important that all stakeholders feel that they have a voice in assisting the school division in providing educational facilities for the students. Teachers, parents, taxpayers, staff, students, and administrators should be actively involved in the planning processes.

Exhibit 5-5 presents the survey responses of MCPS employees concerning their involvement in the facility planning process. As shown, overall the employees are pleased with the role they play in this process.

By utilizing numerous community and employee planning committees to identify the facility needs within the various communities, MCPS is allowing people to be heard and to play an important role in helping to set the vision for the division's school facility needs.

EXHIBIT 5-5
COMPARISON OF SURVEY RESPONSES WITHIN THE DIVISION
FACILITIES PLANNING

STATEMENT	(% A + SA) / (% D +SD)*		
	CENTRAL OFFICE ADMINISTRATORS	PRINCIPALS/ASSISTANT PRINCIPALS	TEACHERS
Parents, citizens, students, faculty, and staff have opportunities to provide input into facility planning.	75/7%	76/10%	45/14%

Source: MGT survey, 2006. *Percentage *Agree* or *Strongly Agree*/Percentage *Disagree* or *Strongly Disagree*. The *Neutral* and *Don't Know* responses have been omitted.

COMMENDATION

MCPS has actively involved all stakeholders in the facility planning process.

FINDING

MCPS does have standard sets of educational specifications to assist design professionals in carrying out new construction projects or renovation projects. These educational specifications are a set of concisely written, organized objectives that describe the educational facility needs of students, educators, and the community. They collectively outline what these groups want to achieve.

These educational specifications serve as written communications between the educators and the design professionals.

COMMENDATION

MCPS uses a comprehensive set of educational specifications for school facilities.

FINDING

MCPS has developed and utilized prototypical educational designs for high schools, middle schools, and elementary schools. Having such specifications ensures efficiencies in design and construction for future schools.

The benefits of developing and using prototypical school designs include:

■ Greater functional adequacy of the building with regard to educational programs.

■ A reduction in the number of change orders as a result of standardization.

■ Standardization that contributes to greater overall efficiency and construction.

■ Greater efficiencies in maintenance and custodial services.

Prototypical designs do not have to have identical exterior/interior appearances. A wide variety of interior/exterior finishes, exterior trim options, and covered walkways permit the tailoring of schools to their neighborhoods while capitalizing on the advantages of prototypical designs. These individualized design features should be developed by a users group of staff as a committee function.

COMMENDATION

MCPS has developed and used prototypical school designs for elementary, middle, and high schools.

FINDING

When renovation or new construction projects are completed for MCPS, feedback on the project is not formally gathered or used to improve similar projects in the future. Therefore, at least two important questions are not addressed:

■ How might the building be better designed and constructed to meet the educational specifications?

■ How might the educational specifications be revised to better meet program requirements?

Recommendation 5-4:

Conduct post-occupancy reviews upon completion of major facility renovations or new construction projects.

The information gathered by a post-occupancy review team should be compared to the original educational specification. In addition, the educational specifications should be examined as to their accuracy in describing the facility needs of the educational program. A post-occupancy evaluation team should include three types of individuals:

- An architect with school design experience.

- An engineer with school design experience.

- An educator with experience in the development of educational specifications.

FISCAL IMPACT

The division is in the process of designing new school facilities. The funding for these facilities has not been appropriated nor is there a specific timeline for those appropriations. The implementation of this recommendation would probably exceed the five-year fiscal impact window addressed by this study. The fiscal impact of implementing this recommendation would not be realized until at least one year after the completion of major construction projects and identified recommended changes were incorporated into future facilities.

FINDING

School Board policies or written administrative procedures regulating change orders were not provided to MGT consultants. Policy and written administrative procedures should be in place to help control project cost increases due to change orders.

Recommendation 5-5:

Develop and adopt policies and procedures governing construction change orders.

The implementation of this recommendation should result in more effective School Board and executive administrative control over construction change orders. When a situation arises that reduces or increases the project cost or scope of work, construction management personnel should prepare a change order. Specifically, the owner's representative for the construction project must authorize a change order request. Change order requests are then submitted for approval to the School Board at its next regularly scheduled meeting.

Such policies and procedures make it easier to detect abuses. Implementation of this recommendation would result in provisions that would minimize opportunities for misconduct. **Exhibit 5-6** presents a sample change order policy.

EXHIBIT 5-6
SAMPLE CONSTRUCTION CHANGE ORDER POLICY

The superintendent or administrative designee is authorized to approve construction change orders that will not increase the contract amount more than twenty-five thousand dollars ($25,000) over the original contract amount or the last contract amount (increase or decrease) approved by the School Board and recorded in its minutes.

1. All requests for change orders must be in writing and must be approved in writing before the work is done.

2. Requests to change orders concerning the same subject shall not be split in the event that the sum total of the initial request increases the contract amount by more than twenty five thousand dollars ($25,000).

3. Under no circumstances shall subcontracted construction management firms or personnel approve construction change orders.

4. Copies of all approved change orders shall be provided to the School Board at its first regular or special meeting following the approval date of the change order.

Source: MGT of America, Inc., 2006.

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING

The Montgomery County Public Schools department of facilities and planning has adopted a practice whereby multiple like projects that are being constructed are bid as one major project and as multiple individual projects. An example of this was the recent work associated with building and reconfiguring two middle schools. The division had a total of three stadiums that needed major construction. In the bidding process, the division chose to provide contractors the opportunity to bid the work as one major project or as three separate projects. By utilizing this bidding process, the division was able to evaluate the fiscal benefits of awarding the contract either as an individual contract or as three individual contracts. The most cost-effective option was then identified and selected.

COMMENDATION

The Montgomery County Public Schools department of facilities and planning has implemented cost-effective methods in the construction bid process.

FINDING

MCPS has served as its own general contractor for construction projects by utilizing the expertise of the construction program manager. By assuming this role, the division has been able to save the fees normally associated with a general contractor for new

construction and renovations to existing facilities. The fee for a general contractor differs based on the size the project; however, it is often at least 10 percent of the cost of the project.

COMMENDATION

MCPS reduces construction costs by serving as its own general contractor when appropriate.

FINDING

The critical space needs of the central office administration and the maintenance, transportation, and warehouse departments should be addressed. Currently, the administrative offices are housed in an old school facility. The facilities department is located in yet another vacated school. The office spaces are small and inadequate for the majority of the staff. The transportation department is located in a building on the same lot as the facilities department and the division's warehouse. The transportation building does not allow for the use of hoists due to the height of the ceilings. Transportation mechanics use ramps to elevate the buses so that they can work underneath them on creepers. The warehouse building does not have adequate space for all supplies and materials, some of which are stored in semi-truck trailers.

The Montgomery County Board of Supervisors and the School Board have agreed to share an administrative facility. The Board of Supervisors has already occupied the facility in question. The MCPS administration will move into the space once the courthouse has been renovated. The estimated timeline for occupancy by the school administration is during the 2008-09 fiscal year.

COMMENDATION

MCPS and the Montgomery County Board of Supervisors have cooperated in renovating a joint facility that will accommodate the administrative offices of both governmental entities.

FINDING

Montgomery County and MCPS are discussing the possibility of sharing facilities for maintenance, transportation, and warehousing. The facilities currently used by the school division are old, vacated schools and buildings that cannot accommodate needed equipment such as hoists or the volume of supplies to be warehoused. The use of shared facilities significantly reduces costs associated with the purchase of land, development of infrastructure, construction of parking lots, and design. In the design process for shared facilities, common spaces such as break rooms, conference rooms, restrooms, foyers, workrooms, reception areas, hallways, and administrative areas can be configured to reduce the duplication of space that occurs with freestanding individual buildings.

Recommendation 5-6:

As part of the facilities master plan, the space needs for the maintenance, transportation, and warehouse departments should be addressed by sharing space with the county.

Sharing space with the county should be a priority and implemented wherever possible. Implementation of this recommendation should address space needs for the maintenance, warehouse, and transportation departments.

FISCAL IMPACT

Currently, the school division and the county are in the discussion phase concerning shared facilities, and specific buildings have not been identified. It is not possible to project actual savings associated with a specific facility at this time.

FINDING

MCPS has employed a construction projects manager who represents the school division in all new construction projects and major renovations. Having a representative of the school division working directly with contractors and subcontractors on a daily basis enhances communication between all parties. The construction project manager is able to identify problems before they become major issues and rectify them in a timely manner.

COMMENDATION

Montgomery County Public Schools has had the foresight to hire a construction projects manager.

FINDING

MCPS has had a history of accurate enrollment projections. The division has utilized a consulting firm, DeJong and Associates, Inc., for the past six years to assist in projecting enrollments 10 years into the future for facility planning. The consulting firm utilizes numerous methods to develop annual enrollment projections, including a cohort survival method and a student per housing unit method. Because there are a variety of enrollment projection models, the school division has information necessary to calculate existing school utilization and future needs. In addition, the sizing of school facilities in a master plan is possible with reliable longer range enrollment projection information. Projections are compiled for enrollments districtwide and by each of the four strands. The accuracy of the enrollment projections over the past six years has been excellent. Accurate enrollment projection provides a school division with valuable information concerning the student population and the potential growth of a specific community or region, thus assisting in identifying future facility needs.

COMMENDATION

MCPS has 10-year enrollment projections that use several projection methods, including a cohort survival method.

FINDING

MCPS uses a large number of modular units for additional classroom space. Based upon the current enrollment by school building, the number of modulars used is not always warranted. The department of facilities and planning produces a comprehensive analysis for all school buildings that includes the building capacity, mobile units, and student enrollment. The school division is currently utilizing a total of 48 mobile units as classrooms at various schools throughout the division. Additional mobile units are used for storage, restrooms, resource rooms, etc. In evaluating the building capacity in relation to the location of mobile units, MGT found that some schools with excess capacity are using mobile units. This analysis considers only building capacities compared to enrollments. Programmatic needs on a school-by-school basis should be considered when making final decisions concerning the needs of mobile units.

Exhibit 5-7 identifies the school building capacities, fall 2006 enrollments, the enrollment over or under the building capacity, and the number of mobile units used as classrooms.

EXHIBIT 5-7
SUMMARY OF BUILDING CAPACITIES, STUDENT ENROLLMENTS AND
LOCATION OF MOBILE UNITS
MONTGOMERY COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS
2006-07 SCHOOL YEAR

SCHOOL	BUILDING CAPACITY	9/6/06 ENROLLMENT	NET CAPACITY	MOBILE UNITS
Elementary Schools				
Auburn Elementary	600	560	40	0
Margaret Beeks Elementary	440	407	33	0
Belview Elementary	240	258	(18)	0
Christiansburg Elementary	380	389	(9)	4
Christiansburg Primary	440	441	(1)	4
Elliston-Lafayette Elementary	160	198	(38)	10
Gilbert Linkous Elementary	360	341	19	0
Falling Branch Elementary	480	546	(66)	8
Harding Avenue Elementary	300	240	60	0
Kipps Elementary	500	531	(31)	2
Prices Fork Elementary	180	201	(21)	4
Shawsville Elementary	280	237	43	3
Elementary School Totals	**4360**	**4349**	**11**	**35**

EXHIBIT 5-7 (Continued)
SUMMARY OF BUILDING CAPACITIES, STUDENT ENROLLMENTS AND
LOCATION OF MOBILE UNITS
MONTGOMERY COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS
2006-07 SCHOOL YEAR

SCHOOL	BUILDING CAPACITY	9/6/06 ENROLLMENT	NET CAPACITY	MOBILE UNITS
Middle Schools				
Auburn Middle School	220	288	(68)	8
Blacksburg Middle School	1,200	798	402	0
Christiansburg Middle School	1,200	810	390	0
Shawsville Middle School	240	250	(10)	0
Middle School Totals	**2,860**	**2,146**	**714**	**8**
High Schools				
Auburn High School	524	390	134	3
Blacksburg High School	1,216	1,210	6	0
Christiansburg High School	1,216	1,079	137	2
Eastern Montgomery High School	561	325	236	0
High School Totals	**3,517**	**3,004**	**513**	**5**
Division Totals	**10,737**	**9,499**	**1,238**	**48**

Source: MCPS capacity summary by building, provided by the department of facilities and planning, 2006.

The total capacity of the division is 10,737 students, while enrollment for fall 2006 was 9,499 students, resulting in a total excess capacity of 1,238 students. Theoretically, all 48 units were unnecessary. In reality, however, a school-by-school analysis that evaluates the fall 2006 enrollment using the established division pupil to teacher ratio demonstrates a justifiable need for modular units, as shown in **Exhibit 5-8**.

EXHIBIT 5-8
RECOMMENDED UTILIZATION OF MODULAR UNITS BASED ON BUILDING
ENROLLMENTS COMPARED TO DIVISION PUPIL TO TEACHER RATIOS
MONTGOMERY COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

SCHOOL	NET CAPACITY	PUPIL TO TEACHER RATIO	CURRENT MODULAR UNITS	RECOMMENDED MODULAR UNITS
Belview Elementary	(18)	15:1	0	2
Christiansburg Elementary	(9)	15:1	4	1
Christiansburg Primary	(1)	15:1	4	1
Elliston Lafayette Elementary	(38)	15:1	10	3
Falling Branch Elementary	(66)	15:1	8	5
Kipps Elementary	(31)	15:1	2	3
Prices Fork Elementary	(21)	15:1	4	2
Shawsville Elementary	43	15:1	3	0
Auburn Middle School	(68)	22:1	8	4
Auburn High School	134	22:1	3	0
Christiansburg High School	137	22:1	2	0
Total			**48**	**20**

Source: MGT of America, Inc., 2006.

By evaluating the current net school capacity in relation to MCPS's established pupil to teacher ratio, MGT determined that, a total of 20 modular units were needed to accommodate the September 2006 student enrollment by building. Reducing the number of modular units by 28 units would allow the division to realize savings in operational costs, utilities, and custodial services. The modular units that are not being utilized could be sold and the monies allocated back to capital funding projects.

Recommendation 5-7:

MCPS should sell the 28 modular units that are not needed to accommodate current enrollment.

The revenue from selling the 28 excess modular units should be allocated back to the capital projects budget. This will be a one-time revenue source. There will also be an annual expense reduction in maintenance and operation costs.

FISCAL IMPACT

Exhibit 5-9 summarizes the potential fiscal impact associated with the liquidation of 28 modular units. The current estimated value of the modular as found on the MCPS building inventory is approximately $20,000 per unit. The actual value of each unit varies based upon size, age, and condition. During the last three years, MCPS has sold three modular units for approximately $1,500.00 each. The average sale price of $1,500.00 is used to reflect the expected income from the sale of the 28 modular units. Additional savings would be realized due to the elimination of the maintenance, custodial services, and utilities costs. The M & O cost shown in **Exhibit 5-9** is the national median that was published by the American School & University 35th Annual M & O Costs Study (2006). The cost is on a per square foot basis and equals $5.73 per square foot. A size of 1,000 square feet per modular unit was used to determine the M & O savings.

EXHIBIT 5-9
ESTIMATED REVENUE ASSOCIATED WITH THE LIQUIDATION OF 28 MODULAR UNITS

	REVENUE	28 MODULAR UNITS	TOTAL REVENUE
Selling Price for Each Modular Unit	$1,500	28	$42,000
Reduced Maintenance and Operations Expenses per Unit on an Annual Basis	$5.73**	28,000 square feet	$160,400
Total Savings			**$202,400**

Source: MGT of America, Inc., 2006.
** April 1, 2006 American School & University 35th Annual M & O Cost Study. The cost is the national median as published on a per square foot basis.

The sale of the 28 modular units for $42,000 would be a one-time revenue source. It is recommended that this money be allocated back to the capital projects fund. The savings in maintenance and operational costs would equal approximately $160,400 per year.

Recommendation	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	Total
Sell 28 Modular Units for $1,500 per Unit	$42,000	0	0	0	0	$42,000
Savings from Maintenance and Operational Costs	$160,400	$160,400	$160,400	$160,400	$160,400	$802,000
Total Savings	**$202,400**	**$160,400**	**$160,400**	**$160,400**	**$160,400**	**$844,000**

FINDING

According to the Montgomery County Public Schools capital improvement plan, one of the most critical needs for the division are replacement of Auburn High School and Auburn Middle School. The middle school is a 30,826 square feet facility that was built in 1970. It is located on land that is adjacent to Auburn High School. The school has an enrollment of 280 students in grades 6 through 8. Auburn High School is a 100,219 square feet building that was built in 1938, and renovated with additions and some modifications in 1953, 1972, and 1982. The facility has an enrollment of 390 students. Auburn Middle School and Auburn High School are the only two secondary buildings in this strand.

Exhibit 5-10 estimates the costs of replacing the two schools in 2005. The enrollment projections for these examples allow for facilities that will accommodate growth into the future.

EXHBIT 5-10
ESTIMATED COST COMPARISON FOR REPLACEMENT OF THE AUBURN HIGH SCHOOL AND MIDDLE SCHOOL

GRADE CONFIGURATION	ENROLLMENT	SQUARE FEET PER STUDENT	TOTAL SQUARE FEET	COST PER SQUARE FOOT	TOTAL COST
Grades 6-8	400	141.7	56,680	$163.94	$9,291,192
Grades 9-12	500	190.6	95,300	$158.10	$15,066,930
Total					**$24,358,812**

Source: The 2006 Annual School Construction Report published by The School Planning and Management Magazine for Region 3.

Recommendation 5-8:

Evaluate the benefits of replacing Auburn High School and Auburn Middle School with a sixth grade through 12th grade facility.

By reconfiguring the grade structure of Auburn Middle School and Auburn High School into a sixth through 12th grade facility, significant savings could be realized through the use of common spaces. These spaces would include the cafeteria, auditorium, library, administrative offices, gymnasiums, locker rooms, and athletic facilities. Grade separation could be accomplished by establishing a high school and middle school wing

with the common spaces being the hub of the facility. Based upon the school design, the educational programming, and the number of students served, it is conservative to estimate a 30 percent reduction in the construction cost for the proposed middle school simply by changing the grade configuration and building one school.

FISCAL IMPACT

The fiscal impact of implementing this recommendation would be a one-time savings for the construction of one facility rather than two facilities. Ongoing savings would be realized each year due to the reduction in square footage to be maintained, heated, and cleaned. Since the division has not received an appropriation, it is not possible to show the actual fiscal year in which the savings would occur. Based on today's prices, the potential one-time savings for the construction of a new facility would be $9,291,192 (the cost of the middle school) X 30 percent equals $2,787,357.

5.3   *Operations and Custodial Services*

The buildings of any school division represent a substantial investment by the community, and should be maintained in an orderly and sanitary condition. To this end, the buildings should be staffed by a sufficient number of custodians with adequate supplies and materials to keep the building in a clean and attractive state. The workloads of custodians should be reasonably balanced, and custodial responsibilities should be clearly outlined in both job descriptions and a list of daily, weekly, and monthly tasks.

Custodians have many responsibilities in addition to their traditional role of housekeeping tasks. Maintaining building security, dealing with hazardous materials, and ensuring energy conservation are among the tasks assigned to most custodians in a modern school district.

MCPS custodians are very dedicated to their jobs and the appearance of the buildings exemplifies that dedication.

FINDING

Custodial staffs do not have an established set of policies and guidelines explaining the expectations of the division with regard to cleanliness standards for the facilities. The standards for cleanliness are unwritten, but are currently conveyed by the custodial manager. His expectations are very high, as evidenced by the cleanliness of the facilities. In order to ensure that these cleanliness standards are upheld in the event of a change in management, it is important that the expectations be written and approved as either policies or guidelines.

Recommendation 5-9:

Establish policies or guidelines detailing the division's expectations with regard to cleanliness standards for the facilities.

Exhibit 5-11 provides examples of cleanliness levels. MCPS should establish a common level of cleanliness for all educational facilities based upon available resources and the division's philosophy with regard to custodial services. This would provide supervisors and custodians with a common statement of expectations.

EXHIBIT 5-11
THE ASSOCIATION OF HIGHER EDUCATION FACILITIES OFFICERS
CLEANLINESS SCALE

Level 1: Ordinary Spotlessness - Only small amounts of litter and ashes in containers. Floor coverings are kept bright and clean at all times. No dust accumulation on vertical surfaces, very little on horizontal surfaces. All glass, light fixtures, mirrors, and washbasins are kept clean. Only small amounts of spots visible.
Level 2   Ordinary Tidiness - Only small amounts of litter and ashes in containers. Floor coverings show periods of peak and valleys in appearance. Dusting is maintained at a high level. All glass, light fixtures, mirrors, and washbasins show evidence of spots and dust.
Level 3: Casual Inattention - Only small amounts of litter and ashes in containers. Floor coverings show periods of peak and valleys in appearance. Dust accumulation on vents, vertical, and horizontal surfaces. All glass, light fixtures, mirrors, and washbasins show accumulations of dust, spots, and prints.
Level 4: Moderate dinginess - Waste containers are full and overflowing. Floor coverings are normally dull, marked, and spotted with infrequent peaks. Dusting is infrequent and dust balls accumulate. All glass, light fixtures, mirrors, and washbasins are dirty and spotted.
Level 5: Unkempt Neglect - No trash pickup. Occupants of building are responsible. Regular floor care is eliminated. Dusting is eliminated. All glass, light fixtures, mirrors, and washbasins are very dirty.

Source: APPA, 1998.

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING

MCPS is staffing its custodial services at a level below best practices level and still maintaining clean schools. In previous performance audits, MGT has seen school systems assign an average of between 12,600 square feet and 23,000 square feet per custodian. Based on these averages, MGT has determined that the best practice for custodial cleaning staff is approximately 19,000 gross square feet per custodian plus .5 FTE for elementary schools, .75 FTE for middle schools, and 1.0 FTE for high schools.

Exhibit 5-12 compares the MCPS staffing formula with this best practice.

EXHIBIT 5-12
COMPARISON OF CUSTODIAL STAFFING FORMULAS
MONTGOMERY COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS
2006

SCHOOL	TOTAL GROSS SQUARE FEET	ASSIGNED FTE CUSTODIANS	GSF PER CUSTODIAN	NO. OF CUSTODIANS PER BEST PRACTICE	OVER / (UNDER) BEST PRACTICE
Elementary Schools					
Auburn Elementary	81,104	4.5	18,023	4.76	(.26)
Belview Elementary	37,981	2.75	10,128	2.5	.25
Margaret Beek Elementary	50,209	3	16,736	3.14	(.14)
Christiansburg Elementary	43,819	3	14,606	2.80	.20
Christiansburg Primary	56,831	3	18,943	3.5	(.50)
Elliston Lafayette Elementary	30,189	3	10,063	2.08	.92
Falling Branch Elementary	68,979	4	17,245	4.13	(.13)
Harding Avenue Elementary	43,436	2.5	17,374	2.78	(.23)
Kipps Elementary	66,788	4	16,695	4	0
Gilbert Linkous Elementary	41,077	3	13,692	2.66	.34
Shawsville Elementary	36,146	3	12,048	2.40	.60
Prices Fork Elementary	34,266	3	11,422	2.3	.70
Middle Schools					
Auburn Middle School	38,122	3.5	10,892	2.76	.74
Blacksburg Middle School	190,478	9	21,164	10.78	(1.78)
Christiansburg Middle School	190,478	9	21,164	10.78	(1.78)
Shawsville Middle School	86,450	4.35	19,873	5.3	(.95)
High Schools					
Auburn High School	102,995	4.75	21,683	6.42	(1.67)
Blacksburg High School	240,746	10.5	22,928	13.67	(3.17)
Christiansburg High School	224,726	10.5	21,402	12.82	(2.32)
Eastern Montgomery High School	109,076	6.35	17,177	6.74	(.39)
Totals	**1,765,517**	**96.7**	**18,257**	**105.92**	**(9.67)**

Source: MCPS and MGT of America, 2006.

Based on current data, MCPS has 10 fewer custodians than would be considered best practices. This analysis only included facilities dedicated to instruction. The results could be different if all school-owned facilities were included.

The responses from the various employee groups to the survey administered by MGT indicated overwhelmingly strong agreement that the facilities are clean. These responses are presented in **Exhibit 5-13**.

EXHIBIT 5-13
COMPARISON OF RESPONSES WITHIN THE DISTRICT
FACILITY CLEANLINESS

	(%A + SA) / (%D + SD)*		
STATEMENT	**CENTRAL OFFICE ADMINISTRATORS**	**PRINCIPALS/ASSISTANT PRINCIPALS**	**TEACHERS**
Our facilities are clean.	74/14%	90/3%	61/23%

Source: MGT survey, 2006.
*Percentage *Agree* or *Strongly Agree*/Percentage *Disagree* or *Strongly Disagree*. The *Neutral* and *Don't Know* responses have been omitted.

COMMENDATION

The MCPS custodial staffs keep schools clean with staffing levels below the best practice level.

FINDING

Interviews indicate that there is a problem in finding adequate substitute custodians. There is also a current turnover rate of approximately 30 percent each year in custodial staff. The reasons given for the inability to find substitute custodians and the significant annual turnover of custodians were varied. Two issues that continued to surface were a lack of fringe benefits for part-time employees until they have been employed in the division for a minimum of three years, and the competition for custodians from Virginia Tech University, which is also located in the county.

Recommendation 5-10:

Review the staffing level and initiate an exit interview process and staff satisfaction survey for custodial staff that can be used to identify reasons that custodians are choosing to leave the division.

The division should review the number of substitute custodians that it maintains to ensure it has enough substitutes to minimize overtime and maintain the performance of the regular staff. A turnover rate of 30 percent makes it difficult to provide consistency in custodial services for the entire division.

FISCAL IMPACT

The review of the number of substitute custodians and the implementation of the exit interviewing process and satisfaction survey can be accomplished with existing resources.

FINDING

Each school is using chemical dispensers as a money-saving technique. Chemical dispensers are devices that meter out the amount of cleaning chemicals according to manufacturer's recommendations. Custodians are trained in their use, thus reducing waste. Divisions that do not use dispensers often use significantly more chemicals than are necessary, adding undue expense to the custodial supply budget.

COMMENDATION

The division provides chemical dispensers in each facility, and the custodians are properly trained in their use.

FINDING

The custodial department recently implemented a team approach to cleaning selected facilities within the division. The team approach assigns individuals to specialized areas such as floor maintenance, restrooms, operating a buffer, etc. The goal is to allow people the opportunity to perfect their skills in limited areas, thereby increasing their efficiency.

COMMENDATION

The custodial department of MCPS has piloted a team approach to custodial services.

FINDING

The MCPS custodial department does an excellent job of keeping the facilities clean, as indicated by the survey responses of administrators, principals, and teachers. They accomplish this task at below best practice levels of staffing and at a cost per square foot equal to or lower than that of peer divisions, as shown in **Exhibit 5-14**.

EXHIBIT 5-14
PEER COMPARISON OF CUSTODIAL BUDGETS
FISCAL YEAR 2005

SCHOOL DIVISION	FISCAL YEAR 2006 CUSTODIAL BUDGET	GROSS SQUARE FEET	COST PER SQUARE FOOT
Montgomery County Public Schools	**$2,418,385**	**2,000,000**	**$1.21**
Fauquier County Public Schools	$3,228,394	1,747,000	$1,84
York County Public Schools	$2,289,034	1,691,435	$1.35

Source: MGT of America, Inc. Data provided by peer divisions, 2006.

COMMENDATION

MCPS maintains cleanliness of its schools while keeping costs per square foot comparable to or lower than those of peer divisions.

5.4 Maintenance

The Montgomery County school buildings are well kept and maintained by a dedicated maintenance staff.

The maintenance of facilities is critical to ensuring an effective instructional program. Appropriate heating and cooling levels, building and room appearances, condition of restrooms and other facilities, as well as safety concerns, all impact how students and faculty/staff are able to carry out their respective responsibilities. Ineffective or inadequate maintenance shortens the useful lifespan of equipment and buildings, leading to increased costs for facility operations.

School maintenance is a joint endeavor between the director of facilities and planning, the maintenance staff, and the principals of each building. The principal and custodial staff of each school identify and communicate maintenance needs on an as needed basis. These maintenance requests are entered into the computerized work order software package by building principals and custodial staff utilizing the division intranet.

The director of facilities and planning serves as a member of the superintendent's cabinet and is responsible for developing budget requests, not only for the maintenance department but also for capital improvement.

FINDING

The MCPS maintenance administrative staff totals four individuals, compared to the peer division average of 1.2 people. The trades and labor services personnel totals include custodians. The MCPS labor and trades staff equals 136.5 positions, 39 of which are assigned to the maintenance and operations department. The peer institutions show an average of 97.74 trades and labor services personnel, which also include custodians.

Exhibit 5-15 compares the operations and maintenance personnel comparison of MCPS and its peer school divisions for the 2004-05 school year.

EXHIBIT 5-15
OPERATIONS AND MAINTENANCE PERSONNEL
MONTGOMERY PUBLIC SCHOOLS AND PEER SCHOOL DIVISIONS
2004-05 SCHOOL YEAR

SCHOOL DIVISION	OPERATIONS AND MAINTENANCE			
	ADMIN.	TECHNICAL AND CLERICAL	OTHER PROFESSIONAL	TRADES, LABOR AND SERVICE
Montgomery County Public Schools	**4.00**	**3.00**	**0.70**	**136.50**
Augusta County Public Schools	0.00	1.00	2.00	78.35
Fauquier County Public Schools	2.00	3.00	3.00	95.00
Rockingham County Public Schools	2.00	2.50	0.50	93.78
York County Public Schools	1.00	10.00	0.00	108.80
Frederick County Public Schools	1.00	2.21	2.00	112.76
PEER DIVISION AVERAGE	**1.20**	**3.74**	**1.50**	**97.74**

Source: Virginia Department of Education Web site, 2006.

The MCPS exceeds its peers in the number of administrators associated with the facilities department by 3.8 positions.

Recommendation 5-11:

Eliminate the maintenance and utilities operations supervisor position and assign the foreman for buildings and grounds and the foreman for HVAC/electrical to report directly to the director of facilities and planning.

Eliminating this administrative position would increase the number of direct reports to the director of facilities and planning by one individual. Having the two current foremen assume the duties of the eliminated position would remove one layer in the reporting structure, and would allow the director to work closely with the foremen who are supervising people in the field.

FISCAL IMPACT

The maintenance and utilities operations supervisor position is at level VI on the support services staff salary scale. The annual salary for an individual in this position with five years of experience is $51,054. Fringe benefits calculated at a rate of 35 percent represent an additional $17,869. The salary and benefits combined equal $68,923, or $344,615 over five years.

Recommendation	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12
Eliminate the Maintenance and Utilities Operations Supervisor	$68,923	$68,923	$68,923	$68,923	$68,923

FINDING

Warehouse space for the maintenance department is extremely limited and unorganized. The spaces that are assigned to various trades are small and inadequate for an appropriate inventory of consumable supplies. During interviews with MGT, staff indicated that it is not uncommon for people to simply purchase what they need instead of trying to find it in the assigned storage and shop areas. Currently, no one in the maintenance department is assigned to provide the warehouse supervisory, inventory, and management functions. A person assigned to the warehouse supervisory and inventory function could be responsible for ensuring that duplicated materials and supplies are not purchased, and could assist the technicians in the field in securing supplies and materials in an effective manner.

Recommendation 5-12:

Evaluate the current administrative functions of the energy educator manager, construction program manager, maintenance planning manager, and three administrative assistants and consolidate tasks where possible to staff a maintenance warehouse supervisory and purchasing/inventory management function.

This reorganization would increase efficiency in ordering and maintaining the appropriate supplies needed for the maintenance department. A reduction of time for personnel to locate supplies and materials and a decrease in duplication of supplies and materials should occur.

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be accomplished with existing resources.

FINDING

Exhibit 5-16 shows the number of square feet maintained by each maintenance worker and indicates that a grand total of 2,039,760 square feet are being maintained. The April 2006 edition of *American School and University Magazine* reported that the average square feet per maintenance employee in school divisions in the size range of MCPS was 80,240 square feet. With a total square footage of 2,039,760 square feet and 22 tradesmen, the total square feet per maintenance employee in MCPS is 92,716 square feet, which is higher than recommended.

EXHIBIT 5-16
BUILDING SQUARE FEET
MONTGOMERY COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS
2005-06 SCHOOL YEAR

TOTAL SQUARE FEET MAINTAINED	MAINTENANCE PERSONNEL	GROSS SQUARE FEET PER PERSONNEL
2,039,760	22	92,716

Source: MCPS department of facilities and planning, 2006.

COMMENDATION

The MCPS maintenance staffs keep schools well maintained with each tradesman maintaining more square feet per person than is recommended for a school division of this size.

FINDING

MCPS does not have written maintenance standards as part of its School Board policy manual or guidelines for expenditures of maintenance funds. This has a negative impact on the overall maintenance of the school division because economies of scale are lost in the process and principals have no gauge to determine quality. Instead, principals and other staff in the buildings make requests to the maintenance department for items that may not adhere to, or are beyond, the established standards.

The school division should have maintenance standards which apply to all facilities and help guide the maintenance program. Without standards to guide the maintenance department and its budget, the levels of repair at the different schools will vary according to the wishes and desires of the building principal.

Recommendation 5-13:

Create maintenance standards that define the expectations for the maintenance of school buildings.

Maintenance standards will create the same level of expectations, and thus internal consistencies, across the school division. This will improve the quality of repairs and preventive maintenance activities. **Exhibit 5-17** presents a sample set of maintenance standards. It is important to note that preventive maintenance is recommended to be the major maintenance activity.

EXHIBIT 5-17
SAMPLE MAINTENANCE STANDARDS

<u>*Maintenance Service – STANDARD*</u>

■   Recommended level based on professional engineering, architectural, and journeyman trade practices. RS MEANS standards used as a baseline reference for schedules and costs.

■   Minimum life cycle cost resulting in maximum return on investment of maintenance expenditures.

■   All major systems are inspected on a regularly scheduled basis.

■   Preventive maintenance constitutes more than 80 percent of all maintenance activities.

■   Comfort control breakdowns responded to within one working day.

■   Level of maintenance for institutional and educational buildings satisfies all code and regulatory requirements.

Source: MGT of America, Inc., 2006.

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING

MCPS encourages maintenance staff to access appropriate training programs that ensure that they are aware of current best practices and provide access to information that will improve their services. With this periodic training, employees become more aware of new methods and products to gain efficiencies. In addition, the risk of injury decreases when employees are trained in the latest methods and the hazards of certain products currently in use.

MCPS provides ongoing training that focuses on Board policy and state and federal laws (e.g., sexual harassment and discrimination). These training programs occur once a year for all maintenance department staff.

COMMENDATION

The MCPS facilities and planning department encourages staff to receive training that increases their skill levels and provides annual training concerning sexual harassment and discrimination.

FINDING

As shown in **Exhibit 5-18**, MCPS has significantly lower maintenance costs per square foot than its peer divisions. The average costs for the two peer institutions that provided information was $1.32 per square foot compared to $.88 per square foot for MCPS.

EXHIBIT 5-18
COMPARISON OF MAINTENANCE COSTS PER SQUARE FOOT
MONTGOMERY COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS AND PEER SCHOOL DIVISIONS
FISCAL YEAR 2006

SCHOOL DIVISION	MAINTENANCE COST FISCAL YEAR 2006	TOTAL SQUARE FEET	COST PER SQUARE FOOT
Montgomery County Public Schools	**$1,756,366**	**2,000,000**	**$.88**
Fauquier County Public Schools	$2,471,788	1,747,000	$1.41
York County Public Schools	$2,081,080	1,691,435	$1.23

Source: MGT of America, Inc. Data furnished by peer divisions, 2006.

COMMENDATION

MCPS buildings are well maintained at a significantly lower cost per square foot than those of peer institutions.

FINDING

The facilities and planning department uses a maintenance management software system called MAXIMO that includes significant maintenance management capabilities. Staffs are using MAXIMO only as a work order management system and not using the software package to its full potential. The system as it is currently being used does the following:

- Allows remote generation of a work order request.

- Allows the generation of work orders at the facilities office.

- Allows for the work order to be accepted or rejected and allows for the insertion of rejection codes.

- Generates a limited number of reports from the data.

The maintenance management software package has the capability to allow the school division to perform the following:

- Preventative maintenance on assets.
- Planning and scheduling.
- Work order management.
- Resource management.
- Purchasing.
- Information management and integration.

More specifically, the software can be utilized to provide records, planning schedules, and/or information related to the following:

- Work order requests, processing and tracking.

- Tracking labor and materials to work orders and jobs.

- Preventive maintenance for vehicles.

- Preventive maintenance for boilers and HVAC systems.

- Equipment repair histories.

- Equipment replacement schedules.

- Equipment controls including location, failures, use metering, routing, and other matters.

- Inventory controls including asset catalogue, issuance, transfer, and other data.

- Key and lock control systems.

- Development of job plans, safety/hazard plans, and lock out/tag out.

- Extensive and varied breakdowns of data and activity.

Recommendation 5-14:

Utilize the maintenance management software (MAXIMO) more effectively by training personnel on its use and interfacing it with compatible accounting software.

The use of current state-of-the art maintenance management software can reduce unscheduled downtime and improved equipment performance. It allows for better use of maintenance time, resources, and budget. Lowered inventory costs with more timely parts availability can also be expected. Most important, maintenance management becomes an aggressive cost management tool and not a passive function.

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be accomplished with current resources.

FINDING

During interviews with MGT, various staff expressed that there are no established policies or guidelines about who within the division can submit or approve work orders at the building level. The maintenance personnel are under the impression that principals are ultimately responsible for the work order requests submitted for a specific building. Practice indicates that in some buildings anyone can access the intranet and submit work orders with or without the building administrator's permission.

Recommendation 5-15:

Utilize the maintenance standards to develop policies or guidelines on the development, approval, and submission of work orders.

Without a clear set of standards to guide building principals on the types of requests that are appropriate for work orders and a formalized process for approval of work orders, the efficiency of the maintenance department can significantly decline due to inappropriate or incomplete requests. By approving all work orders, each principal or principal's representative will become aware of all requests associated with building maintenance.

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be accomplished with existing resources.

FINDING

MCPS building blueprints are stored in cabinets that are located in the facilities building in a separate room. The drawings are used by the maintenance department and by subcontractors. The division's blueprints have not been digitized, and copies are not stored off site in case of a catastrophe.

It is extremely important to digitize the blueprints and store copies in a secure location since these blueprints are irreplaceable.

Recommendation 5-16:

Digitize the blueprints and store copies off site or in a secure, fireproof cabinet to prevent a catastrophic loss.

By digitizing the blueprints, off-site storage will be simplified. Digital blueprints can be easily accessed by contractors, architects, and maintenance personnel. Providing local and county emergency personnel with a copy of the blueprints may allow a quicker and more effective response in the event of a fire or other catastrophe.

FISCAL IMPACT

The fiscal impact of digitizing the blueprints and storing them off-site is estimated to be $2,000 per site plus $1,000 for a fireproof cabinet, for a total one-time cost of $45,000.

Budgeted Item	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12
Digitize Blueprints	($44,000)	$0	$0	$0	$0
Purchase a Fire-proof Storage Cabinet	($1,000)	$0	$0	$0	$0
Total	**($45,000)**	**$0**	**$0**	**$0**	**$0**

5.5 *Energy Management*

Energy conservation and management strategies are commonly found in school systems to make efficient use of limited resources. The approaches often include efficient lighting systems that provide better lighting levels, electronic ballasts to prevent flickering, and fixtures that allow adjustment of light. Light switches that are motion activated shut off when the space is no longer occupied. Motion sensors also typically control vending machines, and exit lighting fixtures have LED displays. Energy rates are determined, in part, by the peak load of a system. Electronic devices called load shedding controls help lower the peak load by phasing or smoothing the energy demands. Rebuild America, a free U.S. Department of Energy program, helps school divisions with energy conservation.

Heating, ventilation, and air conditioning (HVAC) units often have electronic controls that are operated remotely by computer networks. Domestic hot water systems are separated from the main hot water heating boilers, thereby allowing the main boilers to be run only when outside temperatures require their use. Older hot water systems that do not have this separation require the main boiler system to be fired in order for employees to simply wash their hands.

Motion detectors also lower water consumption in restroom toilet and sink fixtures. Gallon-can crushers and smaller trash compactors are used to lower the solid waste disposal fees, which are based on volume rather than weight.

Resource conservation managers (RCMs) are trained in energy and utility conservation and management. They are often employed by school systems to implement conservation strategies and to encourage behavioral change in staff and students. Schools that have participated in energy and utility conservation programs report no decrease in comfort levels as a result of the programs.

FINDING

MCPS has had a comprehensive energy management program since 2001. The program, which operates in conjunction with "Energy CAP," is multifaceted, using energy software to assist in determining the effectiveness of the energy management program. MCPS has a full-time energy educator/management. The energy manager has developed an energy audit walk-through report that he uses to assist school administrators in identifying ways to increase energy efficiencies in their buildings. Since May 2006, the energy educator/manager has conducted over 700 building audits in MCPS. These audits may be performed anytime during a day or week. The following are among the items that are audited:

- Thermostat settings.

- Building temperatures.

- Boiler/heat pumps are operating properly.

- Doors and windows are closed.

- Equipment such as copiers, computers, and audio-visual equipment is turned off.

- Lights are off when not in use.

These efforts, in conjunction with clock systems on the boilers/heat pumps, have improved the division's energy efficiency significantly.

COMMENDATION

MCPS has an energy management educator who consistently monitors the energy reduction practices of the facilities.

FINDING

The Energy CAP data indicate that MCPS avoided $1,883,088 in energy costs from May 2001 to August 2006. These data are provided on a per building basis. **Exhibit 5-19** summarizes the information prepared by Energy CAP.

EXHIBIT 5-19
COST AVOIDANCE SUMMARY
MONTGOMERY COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS
MAY 2001 TO AUGUST 2006

SCHOOL DIVISION	COST WITHOUT CAP	ACTUAL COSTS	COST AVOIDANCE	% COST AVOIDANCE
Montgomery County Public Schools	$9,382,527	$7,499,439	$1,883,088	20.07

Source: Energy CAP Summary, November 2006.

The "Cost Without CAP" indicates the estimated consumption and cost in the absence of a cost avoidance program. This term is the same as an "adjusted baseline."

COMMENDATION

MCPS has an energy management system to help reduce its energy costs.

FINDING

In touring numerous MCPS facilities, MGT noted that many of the schools have had their original windows replaced to increase energy efficiency. Some of the other schools have not been retrofitted to become more energy efficient and still have high ceilings and older windows. The MCPS maintenance department has conducted energy evaluations of facilities and has allocated resources over an extended period of time to improve the schools' energy efficiency. Additional energy efficiency measures to be implemented include auto flush, auto faucets, and motion sensors on lights. Evaluation of the costs associated with the return on the investment from energy savings has been a factor in the implementation of additional energy conservation factors for the schools that are anticipated to be replaced in the near future.

COMMENDATION

MCPS has performed energy efficiency reviews of all facilities and has allocated its limited resources to improving the energy conservation of schools based on the greatest return on investment.

6.0 TRANSPORTATION

6.0 TRANSPORTATION

This chapter presents findings, commendations, and recommendations relating to the transportation function in Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS). The four major sections of this chapter are:

6.1 Organization and Staffing
6.2 Planning, Policies, and Procedures
6.3 Routing and Scheduling
6.4 Vehicle Maintenance

CHAPTER SUMMARY

Overall, the MCPS transportation department provides effective and efficient student transportation services. The department is in compliance with most Virginia Department of Education (VDOE) policies and procedures. It does an effective job of training drivers, maintaining buses, maintaining its commercial fleet, and transporting students; however, MGT found some areas that could be improved. Making the recommended improvements outlined in this chapter should increase the operational efficiency and effectiveness of the transportation department.

Notable accomplishments of the MCPS transportation department include the following:

■ MCPS staff overwhelmingly approve of the services provided by the transportation department.

■ The transportation department operates a financially efficient operation.

■ The transportation department provides high-quality service while maintaining efficient staffing levels.

MGT found that the division needs to improve in the areas of bus routing, school scheduling, and the payment of overtime for bus drivers. Specifically:

■ MCPS schools often place students with behavioral problems on special needs buses, resulting in potential safety issues and the overuse of expensive exclusive student buses.

■ Currently, MCPS is not enforcing the half-mile walk policy for students, walking to schools and bus stops. In interviews, transportation staff detailed a practice that results in door-to-door service for kindergarten students, one-tenth of a mile for elementary students, and two-tenths of a mile for secondary students. Bus stops and student pickups are calculated using this formula in the division's computer routing program, resulting in more stops and more students transported than are mandated in the Board policy.

■ The MCPS policy on activity trips, including sports trips and field trips, is currently penalizing the transportation department by not charging for all of the associated costs incurred in providing this service.

The Code of Virginia, Section 22.1-176 states, "County School Boards may provide transportation of pupils, but nothing herein contained shall be construed as requiring such transportation." In compliance with this policy, MCPS provides bus transportation to and from school within the student's attendance area. The MCPS transportation department serves a student population within a large geographic area, much of it rural. The lack of population density necessitates that MCPS buses travel a high proportion of miles to students in order to complete daily routes.

In the 2004-05 school year, the school division was responsible for providing transportation to approximately 9,500 students nested in 20 MCPS schools. The transportation department also provides transportation for school-related field trips, sporting events, and other activities. In addition to regular bus routes, the department runs special education routes for students with disabilities, transporting these students both between home and school and to special program sites located throughout the area.

FINDING

MGT conducted a survey of MCPS administrators, principals/assistant principals, and teachers as part of this efficiency review. These staff members were asked to assess the quality of the transportation function within MCPS. As is shown in **Exhibit 6-1**, only 11 percent of administrators, 27 percent of principals, and 31 percent of teachers stated that the transportation function *needs some improvement* or *needs major improvement*. Conversely, 83 percent of MCPS administrators, 72 percent of principals, and 54 percent of teachers stated that MCPS transportation services are *adequate* or *outstanding*. In comparison with their counterparts in over 100 other school divisions reviewed by MGT, MCPS staff have a more favorable view of transportation quality overall.

EXHIBIT 6-1
COMPARISON OF SURVEY RESPONSES
MONTGOMERY COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS AND OTHER DIVISIONS
TRANSPORTATION

| RESPONDENT GROUP | PERCENT INDICATING *NEEDS SOME* OR *MAJOR IMPROVEMENT* | | PERCENT INDICATING *ADEQUATE* OR *OUTSTANDING* | |
	MCPS	OTHER SCHOOL DIVISIONS	MCPS	OTHER SCHOOL DIVISIONS
Administrators	11%	21%	83%	65%
Principals	27%	43%	72%	54%
Teachers	31%	32%	54%	46%

Source: MGT survey, November 2006.

Exhibit 6-2 provides some additional survey responses regarding MCPS transportation services. These questions reflected five critical areas of transportation operations: (1) timeliness, (2) special bus use requests, (3) bus discipline levels, (4) bus cleanliness,

and (5) bus safety. As can be seen, MCPS staff overwhelmingly approve of the services provided in these areas.

EXHIBIT 6-2
COMPARISON OF SURVEY RESPONSES WITHIN THE DISTRICT
TRANSPORTATION

STATEMENT	(%A + SA) / (%D + SD)*		
	CENTRAL OFFICE ADMINISTRATORS	PRINCIPAL/ ASSISTANT PRINCIPALS	TEACHERS
Students are often late arriving at or departing from school because the buses do not arrive at school on time.	4/54	0/90	14/69
The district has a simple method of requesting buses for special events and trips.	79/4	89/3	65/9
Bus drivers maintain adequate discipline on the buses.	40/7	48/35	31/17
Buses are clean.	61/4	73/7	54/1
Buses arrive early enough for students to eat breakfast at school.	50/0	87/10	67/10
Buses are safe.	78/0	86/10	46/13

Source: MGT survey, November 2006.
*Percentage responding *Agree Strongly Agree*/Percentage responding *Disagree* or *Strongly Disagree.* The *Neutral* and *Don't Know* responses have been omitted.

In addition to conducting the survey, MGT consultants interviewed many MCPS staff and transportation stakeholders on overall transportation quality issues. Across the board, comments regarding the quality of MCPS transportation services were positive. It is rare in MGT's experience to find such high levels of overall satisfaction with school transportation services.

COMMENDATION

Staff in Montgomery County Public Schools overwhelmingly approve of the quality of service provided by the transportation department.

FINDING

The major goal of transportation departments should be to deliver their services efficiently, effectively, and safely. Greater efficiencies will potentially return dollars to the classroom, and greater effectiveness will lead to better transportation services. An efficient and effective MCPS transportation department will directly support the achievement of division goals.

The most recent data available from VDOE were for the 2004-05 school year. These data were used to compare the performance of the MCPS transportation department to that of five selected peer school divisions. **Exhibit 6-3** compares the total number of

students transported in each division. As can be seen, MCPS transported 6,684 students in 2002-03; 6,559 students in 2003-04; and 6,459 students in 2004-05. The peer group averages for the three-year span were 8,744 students in 2002-03; 9,008 students in 2003-04; and 8,964 students in 2004-05.

EXHIBIT 6-3
STUDENTS TRANSPORTED ANNUALLY
MONTGOMERY COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS AND PEER SCHOOL DIVISIONS
2002-03 THROUGH 2004-05 SCHOOL YEARS

SCHOOL DIVISION	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05
Montgomery County Public Schools	**6,684**	**6,559**	**6,459**
Augusta County Public Schools	9,187	10,825	10,225
Fauquier County Public Schools	8,408	8,292	8,663
Rockingham County Public Schools	7,571	7,640	7,413
York County Public Schools	12,305	12,423	12,442
Frederick County Public Schools	8,308	8,308	8,580
PEER DIVISION AVERAGE	**8,744**	**9,008**	**8,964**

Source: Virginia Department of Education, 2006.

MGT reviewed annual transportation expenditures to compare the cost associated with student transportation in each of the school divisions. Yearly transportation costs for MCPS and the peer divisions are shown in **Exhibit 6-4**. MCPS spent $3,248,538 for transportation in 2002-03; $3,465,498 in 2003-04; and $3,260,199 in 2004-05. In comparison, the peer school division average cost was $4,487,769 for 2002-03; $4,992,418 for 2003-04; and $5,441,025 for 2004-05.

Exhibits 6-5 and **6-6** provide comparisons of regular students and exclusive (special education) students transported in MCPS and the peer school divisions. In 2002-03, MCPS transported a total of 6,684 students, of whom 6,513 were regular students and 171 (approximately 3 percent) were exclusive (special education) students. In 2003-04, MCPS transported 6,376 regular students and 183 exclusive students (3 percent). In 2004-05, MCPS transported 6,311 regular students and 148 exclusive students (2 percent). In comparison, the peer division average total in 2002-03 was 8,744, of whom 8,573, or 98 percent, were regular students and 171, or 2 percent, were exclusive students. In 2003-04, the peer division average of total students transported was 9,008, of whom 8,832 (98 percent) were regular students and 176 (approximately 2 percent) were exclusive students. In 2004-05, the peer division average of total students transported was 8,964, of whom 8,787 (98 percent) were regular students and 177 (approximately 2 percent) were exclusive students. Over the three-year span, MCPS decreased the total number of students transported by 3 percent, compared to a peer average increase of 3 percent. Additionally, exclusive student transportation decreased by 13 percent in MCPS, whereas the peer average increased by almost 4 percent over the three-year period.

EXHIBIT 6-4
ANNUAL TRANSPORTATION COSTS
MONTGOMERY COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS AND PEER SCHOOL DIVISIONS
2002-03 THROUGH 2004-05 SCHOOL YEARS

SCHOOL DIVISION	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05
Montgomery County Public Schools	**$3,248,538**	**$3,465,498**	**$3,260,199**
Augusta County Public Schools	$4,434,589	$4,934,063	$5,295,373
Fauquier County Public Schools	$4,257,260	$4,898,055	$5,549,244
Rockingham County Public Schools	$5,057,057	$5,567,565	$6,200,784
York County Public Schools	$4,871,508	$5,101,841	$5,618,939
Frederick County Public Schools	$5,057,662	$5,987,487	$6,721,613
PEER DIVISION AVERAGE	**$4,487,769**	**$4,992,418**	**$5,441,025**

Source: Virginia Department of Education, 2006.

EXHIBIT 6-5
REGULAR STUDENTS TRANSPORTED
MONTGOMERY COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS AND PEER SCHOOL DIVISIONS
2002-03 THROUGH 2004-05 SCHOOL YEARS

SCHOOL DIVISION	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05
Montgomery County Public Schools	**6,513**	**6,376**	**6,311**
Augusta County Public Schools	9,026	10,660	10,059
Fauquier County Public Schools	8,129	8,023	8,376
Rockingham County Public Schools	7,465	7,516	7,300
York County Public Schools	12,125	12,235	12,254
Frederick County Public Schools	8,179	8,179	8,421
PEER DIVISION AVERAGE	**8,573**	**8,832**	**8,787**

Source: Virginia Department of Education, 2006.

EXHIBIT 6-6
EXCLUSIVE STUDENTS TRANSPORTED
MONTGOMERY COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS AND PEER SCHOOL DIVISIONS
2002-03 THROUGH 2004-05 SCHOOL YEARS

SCHOOL DIVISION	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05
Montgomery County Public Schools	**171**	**183**	**148**
Augusta County Public Schools	161	165	166
Fauquier County Public Schools	279	269	287
Rockingham County Public Schools	106	124	113
York County Public Schools	180	188	188
Frederick County Public Schools	129	129	159
PEER DIVISION AVERAGE	**171**	**176**	**177**

Source: Virginia Department of Education, 2006.

Exhibit 6-7 details the cost per mile for regular and exclusive student transportation in MCPS. As was shown, MCPS was below the group average for regular student costs ($1.88 compared to $2.07) and spent exactly the peer average for exclusive student transportation ($2.54 per mile). This comparison is the most telling of the peer group costs because it controls for student population and the geographic proximity issues of the school divisions. Thus, school divisions that have highly rural populations (usually associated with longer routes and more miles driven per student) are not penalized in these calculations. MCPS costs compare very favorably to these peer group averages.

EXHIBIT 6-7
COST PER MILE FOR REGULAR AND EXCLUSIVE STUDENTS
MONTGOMERY COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS AND PEER SCHOOL DIVISIONS
2004-05 SCHOOL YEAR

SCHOOL DIVISION	REGULAR STUDENTS COST PER MILE	EXCLUSIVE STUDENT COST PER MILE
Montgomery County Public Schools	**$1.88**	**$2.54**
Augusta County Public Schools	$1.81	$1.87
Fauquier County Public Schools	$1.85	$2.21
Rockingham County Public Schools	$2.33	$2.33
York County Public Schools	$2.32	$3.41
Frederick County Public Schools	$2.24	$2.89
PEER DIVISION AVERAGE	**$2.07**	**$2.54**

Source: Virginia Department of Education, 2006.

Exhibit 6-8 compares bus usage among the peer school divisions using VDOE data from 2004-05. As is shown, MCPS is the lowest in the peer group in student population (6,559 compared to the average of 9,115) and has the lowest number of buses (89 compared to the average of 149). MCPS also reports the second-highest average number of pupils per bus (74 compared to the peer group average of 63).

EXHIBIT 6-8
PUPILS AND BUSES
MONTGOMERY COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS AND PEER SCHOOL DIVISIONS
2004-05 SCHOOL YEAR

SCHOOL DIVISION	PUPILS	BUSES	AVERAGE PUPILS PER BUS
Montgomery County Public Schools	**6,559**	**89**	**74**
Augusta County Public Schools	10,825	166	65
Fauquier County Public Schools	8,663	148	59
Rockingham County Public Schools	7,640	181	42
York County Public Schools	12,423	151	82
Frederick County Public Schools	8,580	157	55
PEER DIVISION AVERAGE	**9,115**	**149**	**63**

Source: Virginia Department of Education, 2006.

An MGT analysis of transportation operations in MCPS revealed an overall adherence to best practices, resulting in a financially efficient operation. The use of computerized routing software and the staggering of school bell schedules to allow for multi-tiered bus routes aid in this effort.

COMMENDATION

The favorable comparisons between MCPS and the peer division group reflect the overall efficiency of the transportation department.

6.1   *Organization and Staffing*

The organizational structure and staffing of a transportation department is a critical issue in maintaining effective and efficient operations in this essential area. Departments that are able to balance efficiency and quality are succeeding in one of the most challenging areas of school division operations.

FINDING

Exhibit 6-9 shows the organizational structure of the MCPS transportation department. The supervisor of transportation reports to the director of management services. The department is further comprised of a transportation coordinator, a garage foreman, three administrative assistants, seven mechanics, 96 bus drivers, and 16 bus aides.

EXHIBIT 6-9
ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE – TRANSPORTATION OPERATIONS
MONTGOMERY COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS
2005-06 SCHOOL YEAR
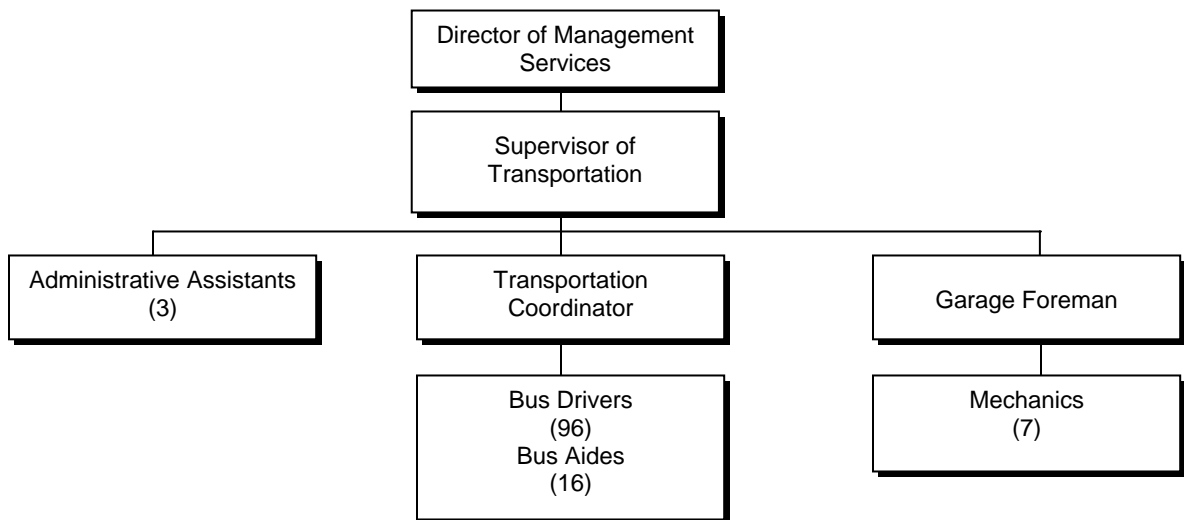
Source: MCPS transportation department, November 2006.

Exhibits 6-10 and **6-11** compare MCPS staffing levels with those of the five selected peer school divisions. The first comparison details total numbers of positions in each of four departmental areas. These classifications are determined by VDOE and are based on annual reports from the individual school divisions across Virginia. As can be seen in **Exhibit 6-10**, MCPS compares very favorably with the peer divisions in all staffing areas except for administration. This is most likely due to reporting errors in those divisions indicating no positions in this area, since it is unlikely that a transportation department would not have a senior administrator.

Exhibit 6-11 provides a more precise comparison of the staffing levels within the school divisions by comparing the number of positions per 1,000 students. Again, MCPS compares favorably with the peer divisions by being approximately at, or below, the

average in each of the categories. The one exception is, again, administration, where it is assumed that each division should have at least one position.

A review of MCPS personnel-related documents and interviews on site confirmed that the MCPS transportation department is staffed efficiently. The department has been successful in keeping staff to a minimum while providing high-quality services to the students and schools of MCPS.

EXHIBIT 6-10
TRANSPORTATION PERSONNEL
MONTGOMERY COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS AND PEER SCHOOL DIVISIONS
2004-05 SCHOOL YEAR

SCHOOL DIVISION	TRANSPORTATION			
	ADMINISTRATIVE	TECHNICAL AND CLERICAL	OTHER PROFESSIONAL	TRADES, OPERATIVES AND SERVICE
Montgomery County Public Schools	**1.00**	**3.00**	**1.00**	**122.25**
Augusta County Public Schools	0.00	5.25	4.00	208.21
Fauquier County Public Schools	1.00	5.00	0.00	173.00
Rockingham County Public Schools	1.50	4.00	0.00	201.71
York County Public Schools	0.00	8.00	0.00	119.63
Frederick County Public Schools	1.00	21.07	1.97	176.27
PEER DIVISION AVERAGE	**0.75**	**7.72**	**1.16**	**166.85**

Source: Virginia Department of Education Web site, 2006.

EXHIBIT 6-11
TRANSPORTATION PERSONNEL PER 1,000 STUDENTS TRANSPORTED
MONTGOMERY COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS AND PEER SCHOOL DIVISIONS
2004-05 SCHOOL YEAR

SCHOOL DIVISION	TRANSPORTATION			
	ADMINISTRATIVE	TECHNICAL AND CLERICAL	OTHER PROFESSIONAL	TRADES, OPERATIVES AND SERVICE
Montgomery County Public Schools	**0.15**	**0.46**	**0.15**	**18.64**
Augusta County Public Schools	0.00	0.48	0.37	19.23
Fauquier County Public Schools	0.12	0.58	0.00	19.97
Rockingham County Public Schools	0.20	0.52	0.00	26.40
York County Public Schools	0.00	0.64	0.00	9.63
Frederick County Public Schools	0.12	2.46	0.23	20.54
PEER DIVISION AVERAGE	**0.10**	**0.86**	**0.13**	**19.07**

Source: Virginia Department of Education Web site, 2006.

COMMENDATION

MCPS transportation provides high-quality services while maintaining an efficient level of departmental staff.

FINDING

MCPS has an experienced crew of bus drivers and low driver turnover. Many drivers have been employed by the school division for more than 10 years; some in excess of 20 years. In addition, employees of the transportation department display a high level of morale and job satisfaction. Interviews and a driver focus group conducted by MGT revealed that there are few issues of concern among department employees and that a level of cooperation exists that is rarely observed in many other school divisions. In fact, the bus drivers interviewed by MGT could not identify a single substantial problem regarding transportation operations.

The family-like atmosphere within the department manifests itself in many ways. One notable activity that MCPS supports is sending bus drivers to national driver competitions. MCPS promotes this type of skill-building competition and has produced national championship drivers as a result.

COMMENDATION

Montgomery County Public Schools is commended for cultivating a high level of department employee morale and retaining a stable crew of bus drivers.

6.2   *Planning, Policies, and Procedures*

Effective policies guide a school division's transportation department in the execution of its duties. Transportation policies should include procedures to ensure that public funds are spent in the most effective manner possible. By adopting such policies, MCPS would directly support the achievement of academic and other professional goals.

FINDING

In its present state, Board policy regarding student transportation functions falls short of ensuring that cost efficiency is a priority in the transportation department. The current policies are little more than general statements regarding overall transportation operations and do not include information on the specific contextual issues affecting student transportation in Montgomery County. Further, there is no policy language that could be construed to address comprehensive departmental performance expectations or fiscal management. One example of this deficiency is the Board policy on the transportation of disabled students, provided in **Exhibit 6-12**. Transportation issues regarding disabled students are numerous and complex. Many school systems rely on simple, general statements, such as those in this MCPS policy, to serve as a "catch-all" policy. This is ill advised in the modern educational climate.

Clear school division policies are essential for providing direction to the components of the division. In addition to describing overarching philosophies and duties of division functions, School Board policies should also provide some detail regarding areas that are critical to the ongoing success of the function. An absence of this type of detail leaves departmental practice subject to misinterpretations and omissions.

EXHIBIT 6-12
MCPS POLICY ON DISABLED STUDENT TRANSPORTATION
2006-07 SCHOOL YEAR

Policy 4-4.3 TRANSPORTATION OF DISABLED STUDENTS

The Montgomery County School Board operates and maintains transportation appropriate to meet the needs of disabled children.

Adopted: April 2004

Source: MCPS Policy Manual, December, 2006.

A goal of the Montgomery County School Board should be to provide quality student transportation services for the school division in the most efficient manner possible. Cost inefficiencies in these support areas are a direct drain on resources that could be used to further the academic goals of the school division. The expectation of cost efficiency should be reinforced at every opportunity, and official School Board policy should serve as the foundation of these efforts.

Recommendation 6-1:

Expand the MCPS policy regarding student transportation to include more detailed reporting requirements and comprehensive requirements for special needs students.

In addition to lacking a detailed policy regarding special needs students, MCPS student transportation is a costly service with many opportunities for fiscal shortfalls. Codifying the requirement for detailed cost and performance reporting will help to ensure that cost efficiency remains a part of the organizational culture of the MCPS transportation department and create a formal layer of accountability for planning and monitoring activities. As transportation is a high-cost function, there is a particular interest in controlling costs now and in the future. A priority of this magnitude should not be left to the discretion of individual division employees, regardless of their level of competency.

The School Board, the school division, and the transportation department will need to work together to determine which of many possible reports will enable MCPS to monitor critical areas of efficiency and effectiveness, as these are highly contextual issues. Special analyses that could improve the performance of the transportation department might track quarterly total cost per transported student, maintenance costs per transported student, fuel costs per mile driven, bus capacity, and cost per exclusive student transported, among other measures.

FISCAL IMPACT

There is no cost associated with this recommendation.

FINDING

MCPS uses internal resources to provide a vast majority of transportation services. It does, however, contract with private vendors for some outside vehicle maintenance and some activity trip services. In general, there are numerous opportunities for outsourcing in school transportation. MGT has developed screening criteria for determining whether a function should be considered for outsourcing or should remain in house. These are shown in **Exhibit 6-13**.

The practice of contracting for services is often a cost-effective alternative for school divisions. It allows a school division to leverage the forces of market competition to provide a potentially less expensive service, while freeing itself of many management responsibilities that are not central to the systemic goals of teaching and learning. Valuable fiscal and personnel resources are often recouped in the transition from internal services to contracted services.

In interviews, transportation staff indicated that these options are not a significant part of the central planning discussions pertaining to the department.

Recommendation 6-2:

Develop standards for evaluating the potential for outsourcing transportation operations.

While MCPS is performing needed transportation services adequately within the current situation, changes in Montgomery County may necessitate a rethinking of the current use of private vendors. While it is clear that MCPS has used this option before, the practice of outsourcing should always be considered when striving to provide optimal transportation services within a limited budget. Further, there should be a formal process for considering this option. Many functions of the transportation department could lend themselves to effective and efficient privatization under appropriate circumstances. It is critical that division administrators routinely evaluate the potential success of outsourcing departmental responsibilities

Standards should include cost factors as well as quality factors developed by MCPS to ensure that non-monetary factors have been appropriately considered. Consistent standards would include a method for fairly comparing in-house costs with those of an outside contractor.

EXHIBIT 6-13
SCREENING CRITERIA FOR IDENTIFYING OUTSOURCING OPPORTUNITIES

1. **Competitive Market**
   A relatively large competitive base will provide the best opportunity for savings. A function with few competitors may enjoy a competitive advantage that may not produce the desired savings. A large pool of competitors also ensures that initial bids will not be substantially increased in future years after the public sector no longer has the immediate ability to provide the good or service. If a competitive market cannot be identified, it is probably not worth the cost of developing specifications and pursuing bids.

2. **Determinable Service Delivery Measurement**
   If the nature of the good or service is uncertain or likely to require revision as the program proceeds, it may be difficult to convey the terms of service delivery in a contract or performance agreement. Similarly, it may be difficult to hold the provider accountable for errors or inefficiencies. Also, if the service cannot be adequately defined, it will be impossible to identify the associated costs and determine if competition would yield increased savings or a better product.

3. **Legal Authorization**
   Programs considered for increased competition must be those free from existing constitutional or case law requirements to the contrary. Statutory changes may be necessary to implement others, and the costs of developing and pursuing legislation should be considered.

4. **Contract Management/Monitoring Division Defined**
   The ability to properly supervise the work of a provider must exist.

5. **Existing Costs Determinable**
   If it is impossible to determine the existing costs of providing the service, it will also be impossible to determine if savings can be realized through increased competition. Obtaining accurate, verifiable cost information is critical to the decision for competition. This screening criterion is strongly linked to the service description since costs must be obtained for the service described.

6. **Local Area Economic Impact**
   Conversion to competitive delivery should not result in a significant increase in the unemployment rate of a municipality, county, or region or loss of an essential local market. Economic changes of special interest, such as the elimination of a traditional minority business industry, are not recommended for competition.

7. **Financial and Liability Risks**
   Competition is best pursued when the financial and liability risks are equal to or lower than those experienced in public sector delivery. State laws or constitutional provisions sometimes limit state liability unless provided through a claims bill. Additional risks, insurance costs, and differences in financial conditions and legal liabilities must be considered.

8. **Size of Programs**
   High dollar amount programs or staff-intensive programs may reap the greatest benefit from savings generated through competition. Larger programs may have a greater chance for inefficiencies to develop due to larger spans of control and less frequent oversight by upper level managers.

9. **New Program or New Service Requirements**
   These programs would offer the organization an immediate opportunity to avoid growth. New demands placed on services will ultimately lead to increased resource allocations which are seldom, if ever, reversed.

10. **Level of Policy Discretion**
    Activities which require low levels of policy setting, judgment, or discretion are better suited for administration by outside providers. Routine application processing, data entry, maintenance, and fee collection are examples of activities which are not influenced by political processes and do not require sensitive treatment by an agency employee.

EXHIBIT 6-13 (Continued)
SCREENING CRITERIA FOR IDENTIFYING OUTSOURCING OPPORTUNITIES

11. **Security Requirements**
Activities for which special security is unnecessary are most conducive to increased competition. These activities do not provide the possibility of manipulating sensitive information such as student records or lab results. If the information is sensitive, adequate controls must exist to protect data.

12. **Not Currently Subject to Competition**
Large portions of programs may already be privatized or subject to market pressures and are less likely to benefit from further competition. Programs which are entirely in-house operations, perhaps in a monopoly-like environment, are strong candidates for competition.

13. **Alternative Delivery Methods**
If alternative methods of production exist to provide the desired final product, increased competition can lead to innovative methods to save costs or improve services. Programs which require product or service delivery in a specific fashion to accomplish specific goals may be better handled by the public.

14. **Satisfaction with Current Service**
Services where significant concerns exists about quality, timelines, or costs are candidates for outsourcing privatization. Evidence of concern includes complaints by customers, customers trying to provide service with their own resources, or customers reducing their use of the service.

15. **Comparative Cost of Services**
If current costs per unit (e.g., cleaning cost per sq. ft.) are above the per unit costs of similar services being provided by private vendors, then the service is an attractive candidate for privatization.

16. **Costs and Ease of Conversion to Private Vendor**
Some services are relatively easy and cost little to convert to a private vendor. Other services may be very difficult to convert or may cost a large amount to convert. Those that are easy and cost little to convert are good candidates for outsourcing/privatization.

17. **Ease and Cost of Conversion Back to In-house**
The possibility always exists that the outsourcing/privatization of a service will not work out for an agency or organization. When this happens, it may become necessary that a service be moved back in house. When major difficulties exists or costs are high for conversion back to in-house operations, the organization may find that it is forced to put up with poor performance because of the difficulties and/or high costs of conversion. In these cases, outsourcing/privatization is less attractive.

18. **Impact on Employee Morale**
If outsourcing will cause major employee morale problems throughout the organization, careful consideration must be given to outsourcing or perhaps finding a way to minimize impact on employee morale.

19. **Mission Service Function**
A function determined to be highly critical to the overall mission of the agency may be determined to be a function that should remain in-house because of the higher degree of control inherent to in-house performance.

20. **Stability of Market Place**
A high level of stable vendors in the marketplace indicates that the outsourcing of a service has been successful and that the vendors can generally be relied upon to produce quality services at competitive rates.

Source: Developed by MGT of America, 1996 (updated 2004).

FISCAL IMPACT

There is no specific fiscal impact associated with this recommendation; however, privatizing departmental responsibilities could possibly free up resources while allowing for a high level of service. The transportation department might realize significant cost savings over time. The use of contracted services for the many long distance activity trips and sporting trips might be particularly beneficial.

FINDING

Throughout the on-site review, MGT consultants searched for evidence of effective cost analysis and evaluation, but were provided only a few isolated documents related to overall operational costs. There was no evidence found in departmental records or staff interviews to suggest that comprehensive cost analyses are conducted to evaluate program efficiency. Although transportation department staff discussed cost issues with appropriate specificity to suggest that they consider them in the execution of their jobs, there is little documentation of a unified effort on this issue.

Recommendation 6-3:

Develop a formal process for evaluating cost efficiency in departmental operations and document all activities and findings.

Budgetary restraints, coupled with the increasing demands on transportation resources in MCPS, necessitate precise fiscal monitoring and evaluation within the transportation department. The current level of fiscal monitoring, evaluation, and planning within the department is insufficient to ensure a high level of efficiency. The transportation department must develop and implement a systematic approach to addressing these important issues.

FISCAL IMPACT

There is no specific fiscal impact associated with this recommendation; however, fiscal efficiency can only be promoted by increased precision in planning, monitoring, and evaluation activities.

FINDING

While transportation staff are interested in maximizing the effectiveness of the transportation function in MCPS, the department does not regularly track, compile, or publish its findings on performance indicators. The department does collect a portion of these statistics, as required by the state for funding reasons, but does not report them in an open forum, such as a Board meeting. Although it has access to a portion of these statistics for various purposes, the department does not organize them in a useful manner. Overall, the level of data collection and reporting is insufficient to promote quality transportation management.

Many high-performing school divisions use indicators to assess ongoing performance in key management areas. Performance indicators allow departments of transportation to

track service quality and make adjustments where required. Improvements in performance can be documented to demonstrate progress. Accurate and timely performance indicators help management allocate funds to the most critical needs. They also provide assurances to the central office, the School Board, and the public that the department is using its resources in the best possible manner.

Transportation department staff complete the *Annual Transportation Worksheet* for VDOE. This document contains some data that would be useful in analyzing performance locally. However, these data are not sufficient to produce a comprehensive understanding of departmental effectiveness and efficiency.

Some of the transportation performance indicators typically used by school divisions are shown in **Exhibit 6-14**. Such indicators can assist the transportation department in consistently tracking and monitoring performance. The department can then compare these statistics to those of peer school divisions and its own history. Ideally, the department would annually select a target goal for each indicator and track progress towards that goal.

EXHIBIT 6-14
SAMPLE STANDARD
TRANSPORTATION PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

PERFORMANCE AREA	PERFORMANCE INDICATOR
Safety	■ Accidents per 100,000 miles
	■ Incidents per 100,000 miles
	■ Number of first, second, and third student discipline referrals
Cost Efficiency	■ Operational costs per route mile
	■ Annual operational costs per route
	■ Operational costs per student for regular education, special education, magnet, and diversity busing
Cost Effectiveness	■ On-time performance
	■ Average rider trip time in minutes
	■ Average bus occupancy
Customer Service	■ Number of complaints by category
	■ Statistics on contractor response to complaints

Source: Created by MGT of America, 1999 (updated 2005).

It is clear from conversations with MCPS employees that many of these issues are frequently discussed and informally tracked internally; however, there is no formal, centralized source of performance information that could be used for strategic planning and monitoring purposes. This same information could be used to build a stronger understanding of MCPS student transportation successes and challenging issues among parents, schools, and the school division.

Recommendation 6-4:

Implement an annual report card on the Montgomery County Public Schools transportation department.

It is always important for departments to communicate "good" news to policymakers who control budget and resource decisions, as well as to the public customer. MGT survey results show that a majority of school division staff consider the transportation function in MCPS to be effective. Currently, few data are available to support this perception. More important, few data exist to combat perceptions of ineffectiveness. The department must collect, analyze, and report vital performance statistics to illustrate the current status of operations. Such an annual review of its operations should provide assurances that the department is performing up to standards, both in comparison to its past and in comparison to its peers. The report card should serve to highlight solid performance and areas in need of improvement.

The transportation department should also use the production of this report as a key planning milestone, when the previous year's performance can be evaluated and strategic planning for the upcoming year begins, based on performance data.

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources. However, there are many instances where precise data collection, analysis, and reporting result in unexpected findings which lead to cost savings. It is also possible that the transportation department will receive additional budgetary considerations based on its efficient and effective performance.

FINDING

Interviews with transportation department administration confirmed that school division plans for new academic programs do not include additional funding for student transportation. Also, changes in student disability designations are not matched with additional transportation funds. Interviews and data analysis revealed that this situation has resulted in substantial changes in service delivery, especially in regard to exclusive student transportation. In the case of MCPS, one of the specific results of this practice is the placement on special needs buses of students who do not have the type of disabilities typically associated with a designation for exclusive transportation. While this is not an official documented policy or practice, the anecdotal evidence supporting the existence of this common school-level practice is substantial.

Interviews with MCPS transportation staff and bus drivers revealed that the current school-level practice is to routinely place students on special needs buses because of disciplinary problems. This practice allows students with conditions such as learning disabilities, who have had disciplinary problems on regular student buses, to ride with students requiring special care. Special Individualized Education Plan (IEP) sessions are used to place students with behavior problems on special needs buses. The rationale is that these buses are staffed with a driver and an aide, so there is more support to control inappropriate behavior. This type of practice can lead to a disproportionate number of students with disciplinary problems on buses with special needs students that already require additional attention. Further, special needs buses are smaller and require more staff, making them more expensive to operate than regular student buses.

Recommendation 6-5:

Require all new programs to include funding for student transportation.

The costs associated with moving students to and from academic programs is high, and overlooking these costs in divisionwide planning can create financial problems for the transportation department that will eventually have to be addressed by the school division as a whole.

FISCAL IMPACT

There is no additional cost associated with this recommendation, as all shortfalls in departmental budgets must eventually be dealt with on a divisonwide level. The implementation of this recommendation will avoid long-term consequences associated with underfunding student transportation, such as aging, overused buses and increased maintenance costs.

Recommendation 6-6:

End the practice of moving students with disciplinary problems into exclusive student buses.

This is a practice that MGT has observed in other school systems and, while it may solve short-term disciplinary issues at the school level, it creates significant new problems for the division. One important problem is the potential for disruption on special needs buses. The federal and state laws associated with special needs students are constructed to protect these children while they are at school. The possibility that MCPS school-level practices could be called into question is reason enough to identify students who are currently being placed in these buses unnecessarily.

The other important issue is a financial one. It currently costs MCPS $0.66 per mile more to operate exclusive buses over regular buses. This means that misidentifying students for exclusive transportation services results in wasted transportation funding.

FISCAL IMPACT

It is impossible to determine the number of students who have been misidentified for exclusive transportation services in MCPS based on this review. However, MCPS transportation staff estimated that between 20 and 40 percent of all students riding these buses are doing so purely based on previous inappropriate behavior on regular buses. While these estimates may be accurate, MGT used a conservative 10 percent estimate in calculating the potential fiscal impact of ending this practice.

The 2004-05 MCPS expenditures for exclusive student transportation totaled $1,373,662. If MCPS realized a 10 percent decrease in needed exclusive services from ending this practice, the division could expect to recoup approximately $137,366 annually. This would result in a five-year savings of approximately $549,464.

Recommendation	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12
Remove Misidentified Students from Exclusive Buses	$0	$137,366	$137,366	$137,366	$137,366

FINDING

MCPS does not have a funded comprehensive school bus replacement plan. The replacement of MCPS buses is currently determined by how much funding can be squeezed from other budget lines. Neither the school division nor the School Board allocates funds for bus replacement based on actual need. This results in the use of aging equipment, which is much more expensive to repair and may pose safety concerns.

The current bus inventory provided to MGT shows 115 total buses used for school routes, activity trips, and spares. Twenty-seven MCPS buses are at least 10 years old, and many of these are 14 years old. In school transportation, it is typical for school systems to replace buses on a 10- or 12-year cycle. Currently, MCPS has 25 buses in its inventory that are at least 12 years old. It is apparent from this analysis that MCPS is not following the typical industry guidelines for bus replacement.

Recommendation 6-7:

Implement a formal bus replacement policy based on industry standards.

School bus replacement cannot depend on fiscal convenience. Often, the costs associated with maintaining older buses exceed the utility of those buses. There are also significant safety concerns associated with maintaining an aging fleet. While MCPS has many newer buses, a substantial portion of the fleet is at or beyond the age of potential replacement. From both a fiscal and a safety standpoint it is essential that a formal Board policy be implemented and followed. Therefore, MCPS should work with the School Board to facilitate the development and implementation of a formal bus replacement policy. This will help to ensure adequate transportation resources for the future needs of MCPS.

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

6.3   *Routing and Scheduling*

Some of the largest potential cost savings, or losses, in student transportation are realized due to the quality of routing functions within the division. Efficient and effective bus routing is critical to the success of a school transportation division. Optimized routes minimize student ride time and decrease the total number of buses needed to transport student populations.

Effective routing and scheduling divisions can impact:

- Efficiencies pertaining to student start and end times in coordination with bell times.

- Bus routes' average ridership and miles driven.

- Ride times for regular students and special education (exclusive) students.

- Efficiency and effectiveness of regular routes.

- Efficiency and effectiveness of special education routes.

FINDING

MCPS uses computer routing software that helps the transportation department keep route miles under control and allows staff to evaluate route appropriateness and efficiency with precision. While MCPS uses this software effectively, there is a policy issue that is negatively impacting transportation cost in MCPS, namely the distance that MCPS students are required to walk to assigned bus stops. The MCPS Board policy on this issue is provided in **Exhibit 6-15**.

EXHIBIT 6-15
MCPS BOARD POLICY
SCHOOL BUS SCHEDULING AND ROUTING

School Bus Scheduling and Routing

   The division superintendent shall establish a system of bus routes and bus stops and publish bus routes before the start of each school year. Routes shall be adjusted as needed based in numbers of students riding buses and to insure equal treatment and the safety of all students. A system of bus stops shall be designed based on safety, accessibility, and terrain. In general, no student shall be required to walk in excess of one-half mile to school or the bus stop. Distance to the bus stop may be adjusted based on safety and the age of the student. School bus scheduling and routing will comply with the Regulations of the Virginia Board of Education.

Adopted: April 2004

Source: MCPS Policy Manual, December 2006.

Currently, MCPS is not enforcing the half-mile walk policy for students walking to schools and bus stops. Interviews with transportation staff detailed a practice that results in door-to-door service for kindergarten students, one-tenth of a mile for elementary students, and two-tenths of a mile for secondary students. Bus stops and student pickups are calculated using this formula in the division's computer routing program, resulting in more stops and more students transported than are mandated in the Board policy.

The policy does include language for exceptions based on age and safety; however, these are not a factor in the current routing practice. In fact, the routing software used by

MCPS already adjusts for "unsafe" walking conditions when it calculates bus routes. MCPS transportation staff estimated that at least 10 percent of all routes could be eliminated if the policy on walking distance was enforced. This estimate included all related safety and age issues facing MCPS.

Recommendation 6-8:

Enforce the Board policy on student walking distance.

It has been MGT's experience in hundreds of school districts that a half-mile walk policy (and farther in many cases) is routinely enforced safely across the country. The current Board policy is based on best practices and reflects an understanding of general transportation issues as well as an appreciation of specific MCPS issues. The division should enforce this policy while remaining cognizant of the safety issues that must be balanced in the process.

FISCAL IMPACT

The total cost of MCPS transportation services in 2004-05 was $3,260,199. In transportation, the reduction of bus routes can be directly related to overall cost savings on a percentage basis. This is because with each route that is eliminated, all of the associated costs of operating that route are also eliminated, including salaries and equipment, fuel, insurance, and maintenance costs.

The reduction estimate provided by MCPS staff was 10 percent; however, MGT used a more conservative estimate of five percent in the cost savings calculation. By eliminating five percent of its bus routes, MCPS could expect to realize an annual savings of approximately $163,010. This would result in a five-year savings of approximately $652,040.

Recommendation	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12
Enforce Student Walk Policy	$0	$163,010	$163,010	$163,010	$163,010

FINDING

The current MCPS policy on activity trips, including sports trips and field trips, is penalizing the transportation department. MCPS practice currently allocates a field trip budget to each school, presumably based on need. When a school takes a trip, it pays $15.75 per driving hour and $8.75 per waiting hour directly to the driver. Once the school's field trip budget has been expended, it has to pay the previously described hourly wage to the bus driver, plus $0.60 per mile for each bus used to MCPS. Transportation staff could not provide sufficient rationale for charging schools at a higher rate once a school's allocation has been expended.

Recommendation 6-9:

Charge per mile for all activity trips and apply proceeds to the transportation budget.

The practice of charging an additional $.60 per mile for trips that exceed the original allocation currently appears to be somewhat punitive, but is, in fact, appropriate to recover the actual transportation costs of providing activity trips. The current issue is that this additional charge is not part of every activity trip and, therefore, the transportation department does not recoup the full amount of transportation expenses for activity trips. This per mile charge should be added to the cost of all MCPS activity trips in order to accurately reflect the costs associated with these trips.

Paying only for driver hours is insufficient to cover the substantial costs associated with providing this service. MCPS currently maintains 19 buses slated, at least partially, for these types of trips, which accounted for 102,738 miles driven in 2005-06. MCPS schools should pay for the costs associated with this service, as is typical in most school systems. The $0.60 per mile charge that is currently applied once allocated funds run out should be applied to every field trip mile driven in MCPS. Further, these funds should be recouped by the transportation department.

FISCAL IMPACT

By applying the $0.60 per mile charge to each field trip mile, the MCPS Transportation Department could expect to realize annual revenues of approximately $61,643, based on 2005-06 figures.

Recommendation	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12
Charge Schools for Field Trip Mileage	$0	($61,643)	($61,643)	($61,643)	($61,643)
Cost Savings for the Transportation Department	$0	$61,643	$61,643	$61,643	$61,643
Net Cost Savings	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0

6.4   *Vehicle Maintenance*

FINDING

MCPS vehicle maintenance responsibilities are performed by seven full-time mechanics. The garage foreman is a qualified senior mechanic and performs repairs and maintenance activities in addition to his supervisory role, providing a total of eight total mechanics. MGT has rarely encountered a school system where there was more appreciation for a maintenance staff. MCPS has many older buses and limited maintenance facilities; however, there is a high quality of service that has been maintained for many years.

COMMENDATION

The mechanics of the MCPS transportation department are commended for the outstanding service they provide in maintaining the fleet.

7.0 ADMINISTRATIVE AND INSTRUCTIONAL TECHNOLOGY

7.0 ADMINISTRATIVE AND INSTRUCTIONAL TECHNOLOGY

This chapter presents findings, commendations, and recommendations relating to the use of administrative and instructional technology in Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS). It is divided into the following six sections:

    7.1   Technology Planning
    7.2   Organization and Staffing
    7.3   Infrastructure and Web Development
    7.4   Hardware and Software
    7.5   Professional Development
    7.6   Technical Support

MGT analyzes the administrative and instructional technology resources, the computing environments in which administrative and instructional departments operate, the overall applications, the degree to which user needs are satisfied, the manner in which the infrastructure supports the overall operations of the school division, and how the organizational structure within the technology department operates.

CHAPTER SUMMARY

The director of the MCPS technology department manages both administrative and instructional technology. This comprehensive top management structure with the coordinators and technician foremen reporting to the director has helped in the effort to produce results and implement technology initiatives. Examples include the division's recent success in being awarded grants that were used for laptops and its development of a user-friendly, virtual Individualized Education Program (IEP) testing site. It is important that a clear methodology be defined for the coordination of technology service delivery throughout the division. Staff responsibilities are defined and documented with the reporting and information sharing processes described, and certain controls have been established to maximize equality and ubiquity in the delivery of these technologies. However, many of the technology department's initiatives and staff members are relatively new; therefore, some results within the divisional technology plan have not fully matured.

The technology department is recognized for utilizing a comprehensive management approach that helps with the effort to launch new technology initiatives.

In terms of the administrative and instructional technology staff reporting to one director, the technology department needs to work on policies and procedures that help drive consistency. The consulting team reviewed technology planning and process documentation, the organizational structure, the current infrastructure, software and hardware, as well as staff development and stakeholder involvement. As a result of our findings, we have provided several commendations and recommendations. Notable accomplishments of the technology department includes the following:

- MCPS recently received funds for student hardware, and routinely submits its formal "intent to participate" in the Commonwealth of

Virginia's Standards of Learning (SOL) initiatives, specifically for on-line testing.

■ MCPS has been consistently successful in receiving annual E-Rate funding to substantially subsidize the costs of telecommunications and Internet services.

Key recommendations in this report include the following:

■ Network performance should be more closely monitored and analyzed for high latency (delays) in order to assign guaranteed, tailored through-put of bandwidth for respective schools based on usage data.

■ Renegotiate the existing contracts or "shop around" (issue an RFP) for Internet or managed WAN services to ensure guaranteed and/or increased bandwidth for the same cost.

■ The division's copier rental term should be renegotiated.

7.1   *Technology Planning*

Technology planning is a foundational aspect of almost every organization. No Child Left Behind (NCLB) requires that the U.S. Department of Education submit to Congress its vision and recommendations in a national educational technology plan. In Virginia, the Commonwealth's Department of Education, in conjunction with state legislators, created the *2003-09 Educational Technology Plan for Virginia*. This plan is to "serve as a blueprint for school divisions".

FINDING

The MCPS technology department consistently and actively pursues funding avenues other than local sources. The technology department has demonstrated expertise in accurately completing grant and other funding applications in order to maximize awards. These funds are critical to the continual growth of technology throughout the division.

Exhibit 7-1 demonstrates the success in obtaining non-local funding. MCPS is one of 21 Virginia School divisions in the Blue Ridge East Technology Consortium and has shared in the grants awarded through this program in the amount of $495,472 for the 2006-07 funding year, $633,728 for 2005-06, and $608,138 for 2004-05. State and federal No Child Left Behind funding has been a consistent resource for technology. MCPS participates in the Commonwealth of Virginia's SOL funding for student-use computers and printers in accordance with the on-line testing initiative. The division has received $622,000 annually to update local area networks (LANs) and purchase computers and remediation software for its regular participation in this initiative. Further, MCPS has successfully applied for E-Rate funds managed through the Universal Service Administrative Company (USAC) of the Federal Communications Commission each year since the inception of this federal program. According to the USAC Web page, for the

2006-07 funding year, MCPS received a funding commitment of $280,780. This amount represents an average of a 66 percent discount subsidy for the division's telecommunications services.

EXHIBIT 7-1
MCPS NON-LOCAL FUNDING TOWARD TECHNOLOGY
2006-07; 2005-06; 2004-05 SCHOOL YEARS

FUNDING TYPE	2006 - 07	2005 - 06	2004 - 05
E-Rate (Universal Service Fund/Schools & Libraries Division - FCC)	$280,780	$303,996	$344,931
Title II, Part D Grant (No Child Left Behind – *Enhancing Education Through Technology*)	$15,852	$41,324	$41,324
On-linee SOL Technology Initiative (Virginia Department of Education)	$622,000	$622,000	$622,000
* Educational Technology Competitive Grant (Blue Ridge East Technology Consortium – *Enhancing Education Through Technology*)	* $495,472	* 633,728	* $608,138

Sources: Montgomery County Public Schools, Administrative and Instructional Technology Department, 2006 and the Universal Service Administrative Company funding commitments webpage (http://www.sl.universalservice.org/funding/).
 * Funds shared among 21 school division consortium members.

COMMENDATION

MCPS has been highly successful in effectively identifying and receiving funding via grants and other government subsidies and for establishing a representative group of qualified hands-on educators and stakeholders to help develop individual school technology plans to be merged into the MCPS global technology document.

FINDING

The value of planning cannot be overstated, and a regular forum in which to discuss and record the progress of this planning (i.e., technology and professional development and implementation) is essential. Meeting agendas and minutes are not posted on the MCPS technology Web page for global reference. The technology Web page, as a centralized information center, should enable stakeholders to fully understand and participate in the progress of technology development, management, and integration in the division. This communication channel should be used to create a much-needed alignment and encourage involvement throughout the school division.

The Virginia Society for Technology in Education, a member of the International Society for Technology in Education, reports planning as one of the key actions for successful implementation of technology. *The 2003-09 Educational Technology Plan for Virginia* listed the following planning components:

- Integration
- Professional development
- Connectivity
- Educational application
- Accountability

Similarly, the MCPS Focus 2006 technology committee defined five major goals at the outset of the technology planning process:

1. Is focused on learning.

2. Strives to integrate technology into the curriculum.

3. Has technology in a supportive position for administration, instruction, and operations.

4. Establishes standardized processes and procedures for addressing technology needs.

5. Is a dynamic and flexible document for steering technology in Montgomery County Public Schools.

The MCPS technology plan is dated 2003 and was developed by using the following three-year life cycle:

- Year one is the time when major revision and writing are done.
- Year two is used for amendments and preliminary assessment.
- Year three is for full evaluation.

The MCPS technology plan contains five major sections:

- Infrastructure
- Technology-based instruction
- Training and technical services
- Administrative services
- Action plan, evaluation, and assessment

As stated in the Commonwealth's 2003-09 technology plan, "technology planning should be a collaborative venture by those who share a vested interest in education."

Recommendation 7-1:

Formalize schedule and announce meeting times, agendas, and goals to create a "living" reference that will allow for the effective monitoring of progress in achieving the division's outlined goals.

Meeting minutes and schedules should be posted and archived on the MCPS technology Web page. This will provide stakeholders with a practical way to stay informed about the technology plan, future planning, and current progress. Publicizing

this information will promote involvement and help provide a forum for constructive feedback.

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

7.2   *Organization and Staffing*

Ideally, technology is one area of a school system that supports all administrative and instructional personnel in a constructive manner. Organizing resources to achieve desired results, can be challenging for some school divisions. **Exhibit 7-2** depicts the organizational structure of the technology department.

EXHIBIT 7-2
TECHNOLOGY DEPARTMENT ORGANIZATIONAL CHART
2006-07 SCHOOL YEAR
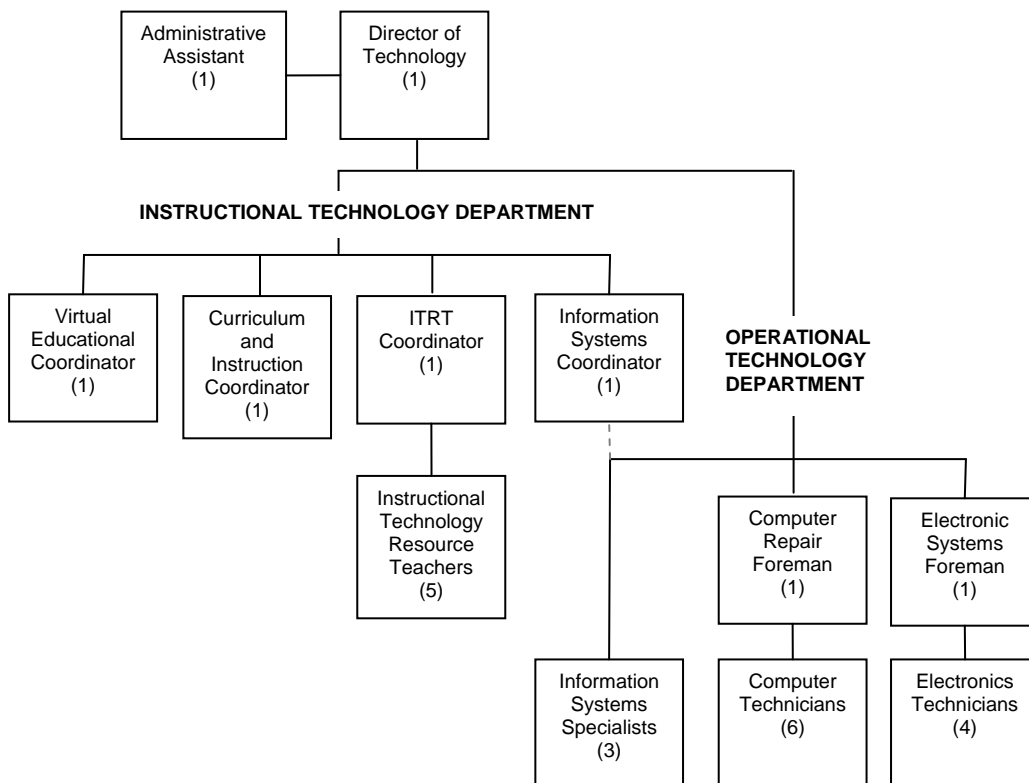
Source: Montgomery County Public Schools, Administrative and Instructional Technology Department, 2006.

FINDING

MCPS has successfully structured the technology department to meet the Commonwealth's minimum requirements for instructional and support staffing to accommodate technology integration initiatives for the division's student population. During the community open house meeting, positive comments were made about the role of instructional technology resource teachers (ITRTs) and staff members' desire to have more time with them. This demonstrates that the technology department has been effective at defining these positions for MCPS and continues to have a positive impact on how technology is integrated in the classroom.

The technology department has created technology resource positions for nine instructional staff, which accommodates the Commonwealth's technology initiative of having approximately one instructional technology resource position for every 1,000 students. (Note: Exhibit 2-16 in Chapter 2, shows that there are no technology instructors in MCPS. It is important to note that these data are for the 2004-05 school year and does not reflect current staffing).The salaries for these positions, including the three information systems specialists, the seven computer technicians, and a portion of the director's salary, are subsidized by the Commonwealth, per SOQ requirements. The subsidized amount represents 61 percent of the indexed salaries for the aforementioned personnel. Since these positions have been allocated to satisfy the minimum requirements defined by the Commonwealth, the division has made itself eligible for this state-available support.

COMMENDATION

The MCPS technology department has been successful in developing its instructional resources in its effort to align itself with the Commonwealth of Virginia's technology initiatives, thus making itself eligible for annual salary subsidies. MCPS has been used as a model for other peer school divisions in this area of instructional support staffing.

FINDING

According to interviewees, the busiest work period for the electronics technicians is over the summer months when school is not in session and during the first and second months of the new school year. Most large summer projects involve upgrading the LAN cabling of one or two schools from either antiquated copper cabling or CAT 5 to CAT 6 cabling to handle 1,000 megabit-per-second data transmission, enabling schools to integrate technology applications that require higher bandwidth.

These upgrade projects are critical in the effort to satisfy the growing expectations outlined by the Virginia Department of Education's technology initiatives. They allow LANs in the schools to perform at a level sufficient to support on-line testing and other bandwidth-intensive applications. In addition, the technicians perform maintenance on the physical wiring infrastructure and respective "edge" routers.

COMMENDATION

The division utilizes in-house resources to perform quality LAN infrastructure upgrades and maintenance projects over the summer months. This includes the design and installation of these LAN upgrades.

The division can continue to use in-house experts to perform specialized network maintenance and installation functions. MCPS technicians have an intimate knowledge of the division's existing physical network infrastructure and are thus effective at performing required repairs and/or upgrades.

7.3   *Infrastructure and Web Development*

Infrastructure is the underlying connection of wires, computer devices, devices that help the computer "talk" and share the wires, devices that let the computers "talk" without wires (wireless or WiFi technologies), and many other hardware parts that connect the various parts of a Wide Area Network (WAN). A WAN may be thought of much like a solid frame of welded pieces or like our nation's road network; each road can be connected to another, rerouted, or repaired, enabling the entire network to be maintained in the provision of services. The WAN transports data, voice, and video.

Infrastructure is probably the most important part of technology. A sound infrastructure gives staff a means of accessing people and information throughout their organization and beyond. In 2006, news reports in Virginia and across the nation reported the milestone of the one-hundred millionth Web site.

The Internet has become one of the primary vehicles used by private, public, government, and educational organizations to promote products and services. It also serves specific uses such as employing data systems for on-linee assessment. Virginia was cited as follows in the U.S. DOE report *Toward a New Golden Age in American Education*:

> *Virginia is one of the leading states in developing a model and implementing a statewide initiative for integrating data systems with statewide on-linee assessments. The state created Virginia's Web-based Standards of Learning initiative with the goal that all Virginia school divisions would use Web-based systems to improve the Standards of Learning instruction, remedial and testing capabilities of high, middle, and elementary schools by 2009.*

Web sites and services are becoming exceedingly important resources for use at all levels of education. To play on a popular expression: *"Got Web?"*

FINDING

MCPS has created a private network behind two Cisco Pix 515E firewalls in a redundant configuration to minimize the risk of failure in the case of network interruptions. MCPS uses Symantic Web Security for its Internet filtering. All school-based network traffic

must be authenticated through a Web security proxy filter prior to being granted access to the Internet.

The MCPS network uses asynchronous transfer mode (ATM) circuits under the Network Virginia contract for WAN backbone services at competitive rates. For each school or administrative building, the LANs have been upgraded to category (CAT) 5E cabling.

The WAN is configured in a hub and spoke architecture with point-to-point T-1s (1.54 megabits per second) from the division hub located in the technology department building to each school or administrative location. Some locations are connected via fiber optic cable from a host location, thus sharing transport bandwidth back to the division hub. The division hub has a DS3 (45 megabits per second) port from Network Virginia which provides 20 megabits of Internet access transit. This is shown in **Exhibit 7-3**.

EXHIBIT 7-3
NETWORK INFRASTRUCTURE
2006-07 SCHOOL YEAR

SCHOOL	WAN CIRCUIT	ROUTER	LAN
Auburn Elementary	Fiber Connection Through AHS		10/100 Switched CAT 5E
Auburn High	(2) ATM DS1 IMA	Cisco 2811	10/100 Switched CAT 5E
Auburn Middle	Fiber Connection Through AHS		10/100 Switched CAT 5E
Belview Elementary	(1) ATM DS1	Cisco 2621 xm	10/100 Switched CAT 6
Blacksburg High	(1) ATM DS1	Cisco 2811	10/100 Switched CAT 5E
Blacksburg Middle	(1) ATM DS1	Cisco 2811	10/100 Switched CAT 5E
Christiansburg Primary	Fiber Connection Through OCMS		10/100 Switched CAT 5E
Christiansburg Elementary	Fiber Connection Through OCMS		10/100 Switched CAT 6
Christiansburg High	(2) ATM DS1 IMA	Cisco 2811	10/100 Switched CAT 5E
Christiansburg Middle	(1) ATM DS1	Cisco 2621 xm	10/100 Switched CAT 5E
Eastern Montgomery High	(2) ATM DS1 IMA	Cisco 2811	10/100 Switched CAT 5E
Elliston-Lafayette Elementary	(1) ATM DS1	Cisco 3810	10/100 Switched CAT 5E
Falling Branch Elementary	(1) ATM DS1	Cisco 2811	10/100 Switched CAT 5E
Gilbert Linkous Elementary	(1) ATM DS1	Cisco 2811	10/100 Switched CAT 5E
Harding Avenue Elementary	(1) ATM DS1	Cisco 2811	10/100 Switched CAT 5E
Kipps Elementary	Fiber Connection Through BMS		10/100 Switched CAT 5E
Margaret Beeks Elementary	(1) ATM DS1	Cisco 2811	10/100 Switched CAT 6
Prices Fork Elementary	(1) ATM DS1	Cisco 2811	10/100 Switched CAT 5E
School Board Office	(1) ATM DS1	Cisco 2811	10/100 Switched CAT 5E
Service Department	(1) DS3 Serving as District Hub	Cisco 3620; 3640; is 1010	10/100 Switched CAT 5E
Shawsville Elementary	(1) ATM DS1	Cisco 2811	10/100 Switched CAT 5E
Shawsville Middle	(1) ATM DS1	Cisco 2811	10/100 Switched CAT 5E
Transportation	Fiber Connection Through SD		10/100 Switched CAT 5E
Warehouse	Fiber Connection Through SD		10/100 Switched CAT 5E
Old CMS Building	(1) ATM DS1	Cisco 2621 xm	10/100 Switched CAT 5E
Independence Secondary	Fiber Connection Through OCMS		10/100 Switched CAT 6

Source: Montgomery County Public Schools, Administrative and Instructional Technology Department, 2006.

MCPS stores and manages its own Internet service applications (DNS, WWW, FTP, and e-mail). A division Web server has been in existence since 1997. Each school and administrative department has a dedicated directory on the Web server that is enabled for File Transfer Protocol (FTP) services. Schools and departments have the opportunity to create and manage their own Web sites on the division Web server.

MCPS uses Ipswitch I-Mail, which operates on a Windows 2003 system for its e-mail server. All division employees are provided with an e-mail account, and training is offered regularly. A separate student e-mail server was established, and accounts are managed by students' supervising teachers. A formal policy regarding student and employee e-mail use is posted on the MCPS Web page.

For instructional applications, file storage, and back-up services, MCPS subscribes to Novell Netware for the schools. Other servers are distributed at administration locations for instructional applications and other services. **Exhibit 7-4** describes the inventory of servers throughout the division.

MCPS's "local" infrastructure is either consistent with or more progressive than those in peer divisions in providing adequate support to all division applications.

EXHIBIT 7-4
MCPS SERVER INVENTORY AND SPECIFICATIONS
2006-07 SCHOOL YEAR

SCHOOL	CPU	NOS	HARD DRIVE	RAM
Auburn Elementary	2.5 G	Netware 6.5	60 Gig	1 Gig
Auburn High/Auburn Middle	2.5 G	Netware 6.5	200 Gig	1 Gig
Blacksburg High	2.5 G	Netware 6.5	160 Gig	1 Gig
Blacksburg Middle/Kipps	2.5 G	Netware 6.5	200 Gig	1 Gig
Gilbert Linkous Elementary	2.5 G	Netware 6.5	60 Gig	512 Meg
Harding Avenue Elementary	2.5 G	Netware 6.5	60 Gig	1 Gig
Margaret Beeks Elementary	2.5 G	Netware 6.5	60 Gig	512 Meg
Prices Fork Elementary	2.5 G	Netware 6.5	205 Gig	1 Gig
Belview Elementary	2.5 G	Netware 6.5	60 Gig	512 Meg
Christiansburg Elem & Primary	2.5 G	Netware 6.5	130 Gig	512 Meg
Christiansburg High	2.5 G	Netware 6.5	65 Gig	1 Gig
Christiansburg Middle	2.5 G	Netware 6.5	65 Gig	1 Gig
Falling Branch Elementary	2.5 G	Netware 6.5	65 Gig	1 Gig
SBO	3.0 G	Netware 6.0	250 Gig	1 Gig
OCMS, Phoenix, ISS & Rivendell	2.5 G	Netware 6.5	250 Gig	1 Gig
Eastern Montgomery High	2.5 G	Netware 6.5	65 Gig	512 Meg
Elliston-Lafayette Elementary	2.5 G	Netware 6.5	65 Gig	512 Meg
Shawsville Elementary	2.5 G	Netware 6.5	65 Gig	512 Meg
Shawsville Middle	2.5 G	Netware 6.5	65 Gig	512 Meg
School Nutrition	3.4 G	Windows 2003	150 gig	2 Gig
Transportation	3.4 G	Windows 2003	150 Gig	2 Gig
WWW	3.0 G	Windows 2003	250 Gig	1 Gig
Staff/Teacher Email	2.4 G	Windows 2003	475 Gig	1 Gig
Student Email	200 M	Windows NT 4.0	6 Gig	128 Meg
Work Order System	1.6 G	Windows 2003	9 Gig	256 Meg
Web Security	3.4 G	Windows 2003	74 Gig	2 Gig

EXHIBIT 7-4 (Continued)
MCPS SERVER INVENTORY AND SPECIFICATIONS
2006-07 SCHOOL YEAR

SCHOOL	CPU	NOS	HARD DRIVE	RAM
Inside DNS/Wins	2.8 G	Windows 2003	75 Gig	256 Meg
Primary Outside DNS	1.1 G	Windows 2000	9 Gig	256 Meg
Secondary Outside DNS	550 M	Windows 2000	28 Gig	128 Meg
Backup Box	2.8 G	Windows 2003	100 Gig	1 Gig
District SASIxp	2.6 G	Windows 2003	130 Gig	512 Meg
ASP	1.8 G	Windows 2000	36 Gig	256 Meg
Storage	550 M	Windows 2000	68 Gig	256 Meg
AR	2.8 G	Windows 2003	250 Gig	2 Gig
Tech Dept Novell	2.8 G	Novell 6.0	140 Gig	1 Gig
Tech Ghost	3.0 G	Windows 2003	770 Gig	1 Gig
Moodle	3.0 G	Windows 2003	150 Gig	1 Gig
Zif	3.0 G	Windows 2003	232 Gig	1 Gig
Call Proc	2.0 G	Windows 2000 Pro	35 Gig	256 Meg
Call Primary	2.0 G	Windows 2000 Pro	35 Gig	256 Meg
Call Server	1.6 G	Windows 2000	35 Gig	512 Meg
Plato Web	2.4 G	Windows 2000	266 Gig	1 Gig
Plato SQL	2.8 G	Windows 2000	72 Gig	2 Gig
Terminal Server	2.66 G	Windows 2003	74 Gig	256 Meg
United Streaming	550 M	Windows 2003	300 Gig	512 Meg
Backup Web Security	3.2 G	Windows 2003	36 Gig	512 Meg
Novell Backup Box	3.0 G	Windows 2003	1121 Gig	1 Gig
District Novell	2.7 G	Novell 6.5	140 Gig	2 Gig
Munis	2.8 GHz	SCO	584 Gig	4 Gig
Munis Backup	2.8 GHz	Red Hat	296 Gig	4 Gig
School Board Office	3.0 GHz	Novell 6.0	237 Gig	1 Gig

Source: Montgomery County Public Schools, Administrative and Instructional Technology Department, 2006.

COMMENDATION

MCPS has been successful in designing an effective local network backbone infrastructure, and continues to strive and plan for performance improvements as bandwidth demands increase.

FINDING

The technology department has utilized its own staff to create and maintain a technology Web page (www.mcps.org/admin/Technology/index.htm) to help increase the availability of technology-related information throughout the division. This Web page is easily accessible from the division's home Web site (www.mcps.org) and includes:

- The MCPS technology plan.
- Staff listings, contact information, and assignments.
- Policies and forms.
- Archived technology newsletters.
- "How to" advice for commonly used applications.
- A listing and descriptions of applications.
- Integration ideas.
- Staff resources (e.g., on-line links, Internet safety, SOL).

Using this communications vehicle as a practical reference guide for all stakeholders has resulted in an increased awareness of the goals and direction of MCPS with regard to the effective implementation of technology divisionwide.

COMMENDATION

The recently developed MCPS technology Web page has become a practical reference resource for the entire division. The technology department recognizes the importance of Web development and communication.

FINDING

According to the superintendent's internal audit and several interviewees, there have been reports that the network is increasingly sluggish during certain times of the day. There is no evidence of any guaranteed Internet bandwidth provisions in the Network Virginia contract. Due to a lack of formal procedures for using the department's existing tools to closely monitor, report, and analyze network performance data, identifying the problem is a challenge, as it relates to data transport and potential bandwidth issues.

Interviews with the technology staff indicate that the physical transport layer of the network infrastructure needs to be updated as applications become more bandwidth intensive. As discussed earlier in this chapter, the local area network is continually being upgraded to support higher bandwidth applications, one or two schools at a time during the summer months. Additionally, to generally help reduce potential network congestion, the technology department stated as a best practice in its December 2006 newsletter, "when possible, download Internet audio and video files as opposed to streaming live." The division should obtain a better understanding of its network (Internet) bandwidth as Web resources become more widely integrated into instruction in the classroom. During various interviews in the schools, it was expressed that the time spent to download Web resources opposed to streaming "live" causes inefficiencies during instruction.

Recommendation 7-2:

Develop a formal process for regularly monitoring and reporting on technology activities such as Internet (Web) performance, usage, and transport limitations.

By implementing this recommendation, the technology department would be able to quickly determine the cause of network "bottlenecks." It would also help identify latency, or delay, issues so they could be addressed and resolved in a timely manner and would assist in ongoing networkplanning. Using historical data, user feedback, and a comprehensive networkplanning report would help justify appropriate increases/upgrades in network bandwidth.

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING

Similar to the above finding, the interviews and surveys conducted by MGT produced several comments about difficulties accessing the network and periodic delays. Without regularly monitoring a network, it becomes difficult to clearly identify where on that network performance problems exist. The division's WAN is largely comprised of a dedicated T-1 (1.544 Mbps) connecting each school to the centralized hub location.

Cable companies, when engineering their transport network to provide high-speed Internet service to a particular market, estimate that each customer should have at least 10Kbps Internet and supporting transport bandwidth to allow for higher speed applications. For MCPS, each computer with access to the Internet could be considered a "customer," requiring approximately 10Kbps of supporting network and Internet bandwidth. This has been used as a benchmark by networkplanning and capacity engineers within the telecommunications and cable industry.

Exhibit 7-5 illustrates that the division is effective in providing an adequate computer-to-student ratio that is better than other divisions in the Commonwealth. However, if 10Kbps is suggested to support high-speed Internet applications per computer, or "customer," then a T-1 (1.544 Mbps) should support approximately 150 computers. **Exhibit 7-5** also shows that several schools exceed 150 computers. The existing wide area T-1 network as the backbone connecting the schools, and the current Internet bandwidth level provided through the Network Virginia contract, may be a source of network congestion and subsequent frustration for MCPS.

EXHIBIT 7-5
NUMBER OF STUDENTS PER COMPUTER
2006-07 SCHOOL YEAR

SCHOOL	NUMBER OF COMPUTERS	NUMBER OF STUDENTS	STUDENTS PER COMPUTER
Auburn Elementary	242	578	2.39
Auburn High	254	388	1.53
Auburn Middle	144	285	1.98
Belview Elementary	174	259	1.49
Blacksburg High	456	1216	2.67
Blacksburg Middle	305	801	2.63
Christiansburg Primary	116	485	4.18
Christiansburg Elementary	116	391	3.37
Christiansburg High	410	1084	2.64
Christiansburg Middle	282	818	2.90
Eastern Montgomery High	220	328	1.49
Elliston-Lafayette Elementary	110	211	1.92
Falling Branch Elementary	187	573	3.06
Gilbert Linkous Elementary	124	356	2.87
Harding Avenue Elementary	101	242	2.40
Kipps Elementary	142	544	3.83
Margaret Beeks Elementary	151	411	2.72
Prices Fork Elementary	109	226	2.07
Shawsville Elementary	95	249	2.62
Shawsville Middle	144	251	1.74
TOTAL	**3882**	**9696**	**2.50**

Source: Montgomery County Public Schools, Administrative and Instructional Technology Department, 2006.

Recommendation 7-3:

Renegotiate the existing contracts or "shop around" (issue an RFP) for Internet or managed WAN services to ensure guaranteed and/or increased bandwidth for the same cost.

Internet pricing per megabit and transport has become more and more competitively priced. It may be an appropriate time to renegotiate an increase and a guarantee in Internet bandwidth either under the Network Virginia contract or with another provider— perhaps the cable company. A school division's Internet service usage is considered counter-cyclical to that of the majority of the cable company's Internet subscribers. For example, most of the division's Internet traffic occurs between 8:00 a.m. and 3:00 p.m., while residential subscribers' peak usage is between 6:00 p.m. and 10:00 p.m. Cable companies typically pay for their wholesale Internet service based on the peak usage of their customers. MCPS will not likely ever contribute to the peak traffic data the wholesale providers use for pricing; this can be used as a negotiating point in the effort to obtain an aggressive rate.

Over the past several years since the inception of E-Rate, cable companies have increasingly become interested in providing wide area networks to the vertical K-12 educational market and in many cases have worked cooperatively with other companies to provide complete solutions (see http://www.cable360.net/cableworld/data/16650.html). Cable companies have built extensive high-speed fiber optic networks throughout our communities, in many places where the traditional providers have not. Many of these companies have become registered as eligible providers with the Universal Service Administrative Company, thus making their offered services E-Rate eligible. Furthermore, during the negotiation (or renewal) of municipal franchise agreements, cable companies have provided high-speed educational networks either as part of the agreement or at an aggressively discounted rate. This may be a feasible avenue for the division to explore.

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

7.4 *Hardware and Software*

MGT's review of equipment involves analysis of the type of technology resources available to staff and students. While computers are the predominate resource in the classroom, other relevant technologies include digital cameras, network hardware such as routers, and wireless communication devices. MCPS recognizes the importance of providing students leading-edge technologies, as in the multimedia academic program. It is important that computers used for instruction have sufficient power processing speed to support the use of multimedia courseware and ready access to the Internet. Equally important is that these types of software, as well as all the technologies in MCPS, be compatible across the division.

FINDING

MCPS has not enforced the policy that requires that the purchase of all technology be approved by technology management. When schools do not have to adhere to acquisition standards, great variance may result in the type of software or hardware technology that is being used. The resulting demand on resources and the cost of scrambling to find staff, knowledge, or replacement licenses for rogue, unapproved technologies, can be excessively high. However, the MCPS implementation of a software program named "Deep Freeze" helps prevent the unauthorized loading of software applications on network-connected computers.

Still, some school staff members have acquired their own computers and software applications through funding sources other than the MCPS budget. There have been instances when teacher-originated grants, the Parent-Teacher Association (PTA), or "boosters" have funded technology tools without following the MCPS-outlined acquisition policy. This has created some challenges for the technology department as a result of having to address issues that arise from these unauthorized situations.

On the VDOE site, under Technology Division, the VDOE Web site includes a handbook for the evaluation and selection of software for instruction and remediation. This handbook details seven steps to responsible software selection:

1. Analyze Needs
2. Specify Requirements
3. Identify Promising Software
4. Read Relevant Reviews
5. Preview Software
6. Make Recommendations
7. Get Post Feedback

The MCPS 2003 technology plan describes a management information systems (MIS) department and details the internal operating procedures for accountability and review of all MIS projects and tasks. Page 156 of the technology plan shows an initial evaluation process flow diagram that should be referenced.

Exhibit 7-6 shows the existing flow diagram for evaluating technology projects and **Exhibit 7-7** presents an adapted workflow diagram for software evaluation.

EXHIBIT 7-6
MIS PROJECT EVALUATION PROCESS
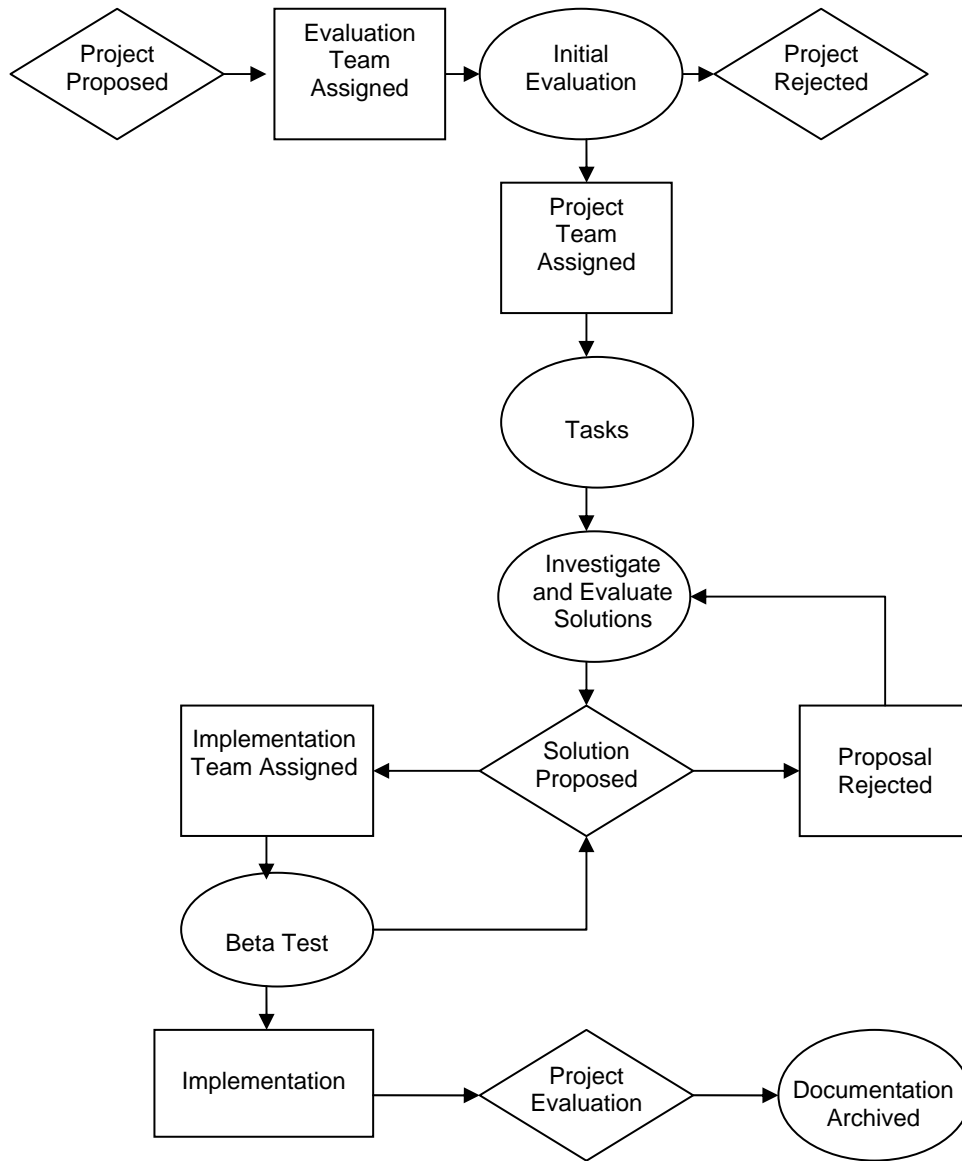
Source: Montgomery County Public Schools Technology Plan, 2003.

EXHIBIT 7-7
ADAPTED WORKFLOW DIAGRAM FOR SOFTWARE EVALUATION
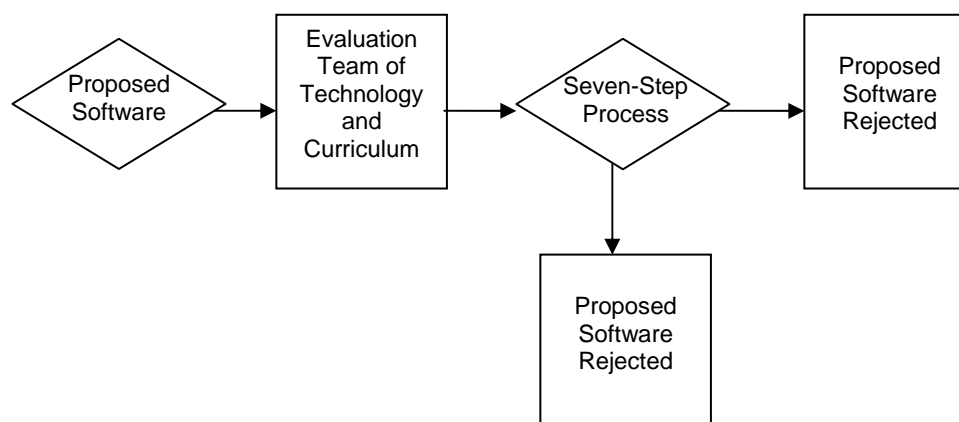
Source: Montgomery County Public Schools Technology Plan, 2003.

Recommendation 7-4:

Enforce the acquisition policy divisionwide.

By enforcing this policy, the technology department would no longer need to unnecessarily refocus its attention on problems that arise from staff straying, perhaps with good intentions, from the guidelines outlined in the technology plan.

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING

The MCPS technology department has researched and selected a hardware provider that best meets its hardware needs in a cost-effective approach, specifically for computers. In using the services as provided by Gateway, MCPS receives a direct purchase plan and direct service with no middleman. There is a two- to three-day turnaround on replacement parts and an unconditional five-year warranty.

The VDOE Web site lists the minimum hardware configurations for personal computers and Macintosh client computers. The sample personal computer configuration in **Exhibit 7-8**, provided by Gateway and used by MCPS when purchasing computers, is equal to or exceeds VDOE's recommendations.

Although older, somewhat outdated equipment may still be found in the schools and administration offices, the technology department is continually replacing such items with robust and easily scalable equipment. There are wireless labs in some schools and new computer labs are being added regularly with Commonwealth-funded computers and printers.

EXHIBIT 7-8
SUMMARY GATEWAY STANDARD CONFIGURATION FOR NEW MCPS COMPUTERS
2006-07 SCHOOL YEAR

Stereo Headset Labtec Elite 825 Headphones (6620250)……….$10
Network adapter Integrated Broadcom 10/100/1000 Twisted Pair Ethernet Modem
Modem not included
Sound System Integrated Sound Blaster compatible audio
Standard Training Not Selected……….$0
Operating System Genuine Microsoft® Windows® XP Professional Edition (SP2)
Chipset Intel® 945G Chipset with DDR 2 Support
Memory 1GB DDR2 Dual Channel 533MHz SDRAM (2-DIMMs)……….$32
Extended Service Plan Included Limited Warranty Desktop Value Plus Service Plan --5 year part/labor/NBD on-site/5 year technical support
Extended Ports (6) USB 2.0 (2 in front and 4 in back), (1) Serial, (1) Parallel, (2) PS/2, (1) RJ-45 Integrated LAN, (1) VGA, (1) Microphone, front audio ports
Controller Card Integrated Ultra ATA100 and Serial II/300 controllers
Floppy Drive 3.5" 1.44MB diskette drive
Certification Energy Star® compliant
Trusted Platform Module TPM – Embedded security chip for user authentication and data protection (version 1.2 ready)
Hard Drive 80GB Serial ATA II/300 7200rpm hard drive w/ 8MB cache……….$7
Video Integrated Intel® Graphics Media Accelerator 950 with up to 224MB shared memory
Mouse Gateway 2-Button USB Optical Wheel Mouse and mouse pad
Drivers Backup Media E-4500 Drivers and Application Backup Media
Manageability Software Gateway System Manager
Optical Drive 16x Double-Layer Multi-Format DVD+-/R+-RW/CD-R/RW recorder……….$21
Operating System Software Backup Media Genuine Microsoft® Windows® XP Professional (SP2) Backup CD
Monitor FPD1765 17" Black LCD Analog/Digital Flat panel Display……….$139
Security Software Norton AntiVirus 90 day introductory offer
Processor Intel® Pentium® D Processor 915 featuring two processing cores (2.80 GHz 800MHz FSB, 2x2MB cache, non-HT EM64T)
Case 3-bay Micro-BTX Case w/ front audio ports and 275-watt power supply
Expansion Slots 1 PCI-E x 16 (available for graphics card option), 1 PCI-E x 1, and 2 low-profile PCI slots
KeyBoard Gateway 104+ KeyBoard (PS/2)
Additional Software Adobe® Acrobat Reader® 7.0 and Google Toolbar
Academic Microsoft Opening Licensing Software Microsoft® Office 2003 Professional Open Academic MSOL without DNLD (Qty 5+)/per copy……….$67

Source: Gateway eSource Quote Detail provided by MCPS Administrative and Instructional Technology Department, 2006.

COMMENDATION

Through research and from lessons learned, the technology department has developed an equitable direct relationship with Gateway for the purchase and warranty of new computers.

FINDING

MCPS has no formal budgetary funding line item designated for replacing computers and printers for administrative use. This has created some challenges in prioritizing equipment replacements when funding becomes available. During various interviews and on the survey MGT conducted with school staff, frustration was expressed that faculty did not have updated equipment consistent with newer equipment provided for student use. In some instances, this issue has inhibited staff's ability to access and efficiently utilize applications.

In response to the growing need for updated equipment, central administration annually evaluates the remaining year-end funds to outline the available finances for the replacement of teacher and faculty equipment. This practice has hindered effective planning for needed replacements.

Recommendation 7-5:

Create a formal budgetary line item or guarantee a minimum percentage of year-end funds for technology equipment replacement.

By calculating an average amount of "leftover" year-end funds historically used for equipment replacements, MCPS should be able to formalize this line item in the annual budget. This will help enable the technology department to proactively plan for and prioritize needed replacements based on dedicated funds in the budget, rather than on the amount of budgetary funds left unused each year. By identifying the consistent surpluses and/or savings per department, calculated adjustments can be made without jeopardizing the viability of current programs across the division. For the immediate term, MCPS can guarantee a minimum percentage of the total left over funds instead of competing ("up for grabs") with departments across the division.

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING

The operational expense section of the 2003 technology plan describes the difficulty of meeting copier needs, which resulted in $273,200 being earmarked for a copier lease purchase plan in the 2001-02 budget. In the 2002-03 budget, $46,800 was needed to complete the replacement program. In 2006, the documented yearly blanket purchase order (PO) cost for copier services increased to $315,000. Data provided by the technology department indicate that the actual cost was closer to $349,200, based on the number of copiers (97) and the monthly lease cost/copier ($300).

The division leases its copiers from the Commonwealth of Virginia's contract # 60046-07, 12 Month Rental Copier Order Form.[1] The contract is for Kyocera Mita KM5035 copiers, said to complete 50 copies a minute, and includes 30,000 copies a month at a

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[1] http://dps.dgs.virginia.gov/DPS/DownLoad/cobb-mita%20award-07.xls.

monthly rental rate of $336.60 per copier. The technology department stated that it pays a discounted monthly rate of $300 per copier. This contract is listed with Cobb Technologies, which is the named vendor for these copiers. There is no evidence that a discounted term of longer than 12 months has been offered by Cobb Technologies.

The Commonwealth of Virginia's Web page that lists contract awards for copiers includes a contract for comparable copiers with a rental option of 36 months. This is listed as contract # 60046-07, 36 Month Rental Copier Order Form.[2] This specific contract utilizes Imagistics im4511 copiers, said to complete 45 copies a minute, and includes 30,000 copies a month at a monthly rental rate of $240 per copier.

Recommendation 7-6:

Negotiate a longer discounted copier rental term under the Commonwealth of Virginia's contract.

By implementing this recommendation, MCPS should experience savings once the original agreement's term expires. Since the division has opted to rent rather than purchase, the longer discounted rental term makes economic sense. On the other hand, an outright purchase of comparable copiers including a monthly maintenance plan would represent less than a 32-month payback.

FISCAL IMPACT

Recommendation	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12
Renegotiate for a 36-Month Rental Term for the Division's 97 Copiers	$69,840	$69,840	$69,840	$69,840	$69,840

7.5   *Professional Development*

Goals and targets for professional development are detailed in the *2003-09 Educational Technology Plan for Virginia*. The major goals are as follows:

- Establish partnerships for identifying and delivering effective technology training to assist educators as they help students achieve high academic standards.

- Administer grant programs and financial assistance initiatives that support the implementation of educational technology integration.

- Establish and maintain instructional technologist (including site-based technology resource teachers) in school divisions.

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[2] http://dps.dgs.virginia.gov/DPS/DownLoad/Imagistics%20Award-07.xls.

The reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (No Child Left Behind) requires that 25 percent of federal technology funds be spent on professional development.

In Virginia, teachers are required to have technology training as part of their recertification process.

These are examples of the numerous mandated or best practice initiatives concerning professional development. It is important that professional development be offered and scheduled in an efficient and cost-effective manner. The cost of educators out of the classroom must be balanced with the benefits returned to the classroom or school office through the new knowledge and professional skills that have been gained.

FINDING

MCPS does not have a formal policy that requires milestones to be met with regard to professional development in the area of technology. The MCPS technology department offers voluntary after-school and full-day staff development (divisionwide professional development day) on a variety of subjects including the following:

- E-mail and Web site
- Intermediate Moodle
- Introduction to Moodle
- United Streaming
- Instructional media setup and usage
- Microsoft Publisher K-12
- FrontPage
- Movie Maker and Photo Story
- Teacher organizational tools
- Advanced Word
- Enhancing instruction in the middle school math classroom
- Enhancing elementary lesson plans with technology tools
- Using technology in the high school writing classroom
- Using technology to enhance lessons in grades 9-12
- Exploring the MCPS Web site and e-mail system

The office of instructional services and professional development implements a choice-based, Web calendar process that staff use when selecting professional development trainings. A review of the most recent schedule of training sessions on the Web showed that professional development pertaining to content areas occurred more frequently than training classes about technology or its use. This is in line with the findings reported in the National Center for Educational Statistics (NCES) report *Characteristics of Public School Teacher's Professional Development Activities 1999-2000* report. Some 59 percent of public school teachers participated in professional development focused on content in the subject matter they taught and 73 percent participated in professional development focused on methods of teaching.

Formal documentation of a coordinated technology and instructional plan does not exist. Although collaboration occurs between the technology department and the Office of

Instructional Services and Professional Development, a formal plan should be created and regularly amended to maintain the practice and its integrity. Staff evaluations about the trainings and attendance statistics need to be used when planning or eliminating future professional development offerings.

The Commonwealth's technology plan documents both the goals and targets of professional development. The targets are:

- Direct benefit to teaching and learning.
- Reality.
- Gap.
- Progress measures.

Direct benefit to teaching and learning concerns how the professional development benefits the classroom. Reality covers what happened versus what was planned. Gap deals with consistency or lack of consistency in the training. Progress measures concern the statistics that help quantify the professional development offerings and measure the quality.

Even though the Commonwealth has implemented minimum competency requirements to satisfy new teacher certification and recertification, MCPS should tailor and add to these minimum requirements to help with retention and to address new advances in technology.

Recommendation 7-7:

Formalize professional development planning and define milestones.

Web-based professional development should include evaluation surveys, reviews, and feedback forms. Attendance should be recorded as well as the content/subject area addressed. Incentives or mandates should be implemented to ensure divisionwide alignment of technology initiatives and maximize achievement of professional development goals.

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING

MCPS should consider opening enrollment of certain professional development trainings to community stakeholders. The technology plan documents the history of local funding that has been earmarked for training. These funding sources have limited life-spans and are often not extended. The Technology Literacy Challenge (TLC) Grant and Technology in Teaching (T'nT) are two examples.

Having stakeholder attendees may lead to conversations and discoveries of other local funding opportunities. This will create a sense of ownership and involvement within the community.

Recommendation 7-8:

Include local community stakeholders in professional development planning and training.

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING

During interviews, it was mentioned that scheduled professional development training sessions had occasionally been cancelled due to low enrollment. The technology department certainly recognizes the importance of continued training in the effort to meet the Commonwealth's technology initiatives while adhering to the MCPS technology plan. Physical space was specifically designated in the new technology center building to address this issue.

During an on-site facility tour and in accordance with the floor plan of the anticipated new technology center, plans for a training lab were unveiled. The technology department conceived this lab as an area for intensive professional development training. The facility will provide a hands-on environment equipped with all of the relevant tools for efficient and effective training. The hope is that this "learning" lab will help generate enthusiasm among division staff and encourage increased enrollment in all training sessions.

COMMENDATION

In keeping with the creative design of the technology department, the new technology center building includes a technology training lab. This lab will serve as an innovative and intensive venue for professional development.

7.6   *Technical Support*

New technology hardware and new computer software are exciting to receive, install, and use. Both hardware and software serve as concrete evidence that a school system is investing in and cares about providing new technology for its staff and students. Through planning and discovery, the new technology presents the many logistical challenges of deployment, installation, and support. Support and maintenance of technology are important not only for keeping the operations up and running but also because views about technology may sour if the tools are not helping to achieve the mission and goals of the division. The stated mission of MCPS is: "to prepare all students so that they develop the knowledge and skills to achieve success and become active citizens who contribute to their communities."

The following are some common reasons why technical support may be needed:

- Lack of training on software translating into human error.
- Outdated or inoperative machines.

■ Network sluggishness, router failure.
■ Cable or wiring failures.

Real-time monitoring of the technology infrastructure and an action plan to strategically dispatch technical support services are critical for addressing common problems.

FINDING

The MCPS technology staff is committed to providing service in a timely and satisfactory manner; however, time management throughout the workday needs to become more efficient. Generally, as shown in **Exhibit 7-9**, the survey results revealed an appreciation for the work of the department, though there were variances among the three respondent groups (central office administrators, principals/assistant principals, and teachers).

EXHIBIT 7-9
MCPS SURVEY OF TECHNOLOGY
2006-07 SCHOOL YEAR

STATEMENT	(%A + SA) / (%D + SD)[1]		
	CENTRAL OFFICE ADMINISTRATORS	PRINCIPALS/ ASSISTANT PRINCIPALS	TEACHERS
Our school district provides adequate technology-related staff development.	71/4	59/31	62/26
Our school district requests input on the long-range technology plan.	50/21	76/6	34/28
Our school district provides adequate technical support.	85/4	69/17	57/29
I have adequate equipment and computer support to conduct my work.	75/15	80/17	52/40
Administrative computer systems are easy to use.	82/4	76/7	57/9
Technology is effectively integrated into the curriculum in our district.	50/8	44/31	51/27

Source: MGT of America's survey of Montgomery County Public School faculty, 2006.
[1]Percentage responding *Agree* or *Strongly Agree*/Percentage responding *Disagree* or *Strongly Disagree.* The *Neutral* and *Don't Know* responses have been omitted.

The underlying practice used by the technology department needs to be optimized to enhance the provision of support services. Each day, technology staff report to the central facility to receive their work orders, exchange vehicles, and sign in for the day. They are either dispatched to the sites where the service is to be delivered or travel to their assigned schools. The service time that is lost due to technicians not reporting directly to the service site could be recovered by simply changing practice. The technology department should utilize its own technology such as e-mail, voice mail, or intranet to enable technicians to access and receive their assigned work orders and provide the required confirmation of reporting to work on time. Also, technicians could exchange vehicles, stocked with appropriate tools, at their respective schools. It was observed that technology staff typically reconvened at the end of the day to again exchange vehicles and to sign out. Staff time would be more efficiently spent on service

calls and technology integration support in the classrooms than on hands-on informal meetings and back-and-forth reporting to the central facility.

Exhibit 7-9 shows that of the three respondent groups, teachers had the highest percentage disagreement with the statement "Our school district provides adequate technical support." Teachers represent the "front line" in delivering and using technology as an integral part of their instruction. Several comments on the survey also reflected the desire for a higher level of support in technology.

Recommendation 7-9:

Change the practice of gathering at the central technology office for informal meetings, physical hand-off of assigned work orders, vehicle exchange, and reporting in and out for the work day.

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING

As indicated in the superintendent's internal audit (and confirmed during on-site tour of the facility), the existing data center/hub/server room in the existing technology building located at 1175 Cambria Street is absolutely substandard. The building is crowded, being shared with another department, and cluttered with boxes and random pieces of equipment in varying stages of disassembly. The building entrances are not consistently secured as the doors are left ajar due to frequent truck deliveries.

It became evident with the growth of the department staff from five to 26 and the obvious threat to the network that a new facility needed to be created or a total renovation and redesign of the existing building needed to be planned. The following steps were put in motion once the division's building at 1180 Franklin Street became available:

- Facilities space study.

- Site usability evaluation.

- School Board approval.

- Building network wiring to be CAT 6 standard.

- Fiber installation for future DS3 circuit.

- Asbestos abatement.

- Emergency electrical service installation.

- Server room environmental controls installation.

- Telecommunications (WAN) circuits to be re-terminated (December 2007).

- Servers to be relocated (December 2007).

- Staff development lab provisioned (January 2007).

- Digital video production studio installation (January 2007).

The server room has been designed to ensure higher security including improved environmental protection, thus maximizing network reliability for the future. Work space and labs have been effectively designed, and the local area network has been installed with higher performance cabling (i.e., CAT 6, fiber optics) for anticipated network bandwidth growth.

COMMENDATION

The division deserves commendation for developing a new technology center at 1180 Franklin Street.

8.0 FOOD SERVICE

8.0 FOOD SERVICE

This chapter presents findings, commendations, and recommendations regarding operations of the school nutrition department of Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS). The three major sections of this chapter are:

    8.1 Organization and Management
    8.2 Policies, Procedures, and Compliance with Regulations
    8.3 Financial Performance

CHAPTER SUMMARY

Overall, the MCPS school nutrition department provides effective and efficient food services. The department is in compliance with most Virginia Department of Education (VDOE) policies and procedures; however, MGT found some areas that could be improved. Making the recommended improvements outlined in this chapter should increase the operational efficiency and effectiveness of the school nutrition department.

Notable accomplishments of MCPS school nutrition include the following:

- MCPS school nutrition provides exceptional customer service.

- MCPS school nutrition maintains the highest levels of quality control associated with food preparation and safety.

- MCPS has created a food purchasing co-op to aid area school divisions in maximizing purchasing efficiencies.

MGT found that the division needs to improve in the areas of customer satisfaction, programmatic planning and monitoring, labor costs, and financial reporting. Specifically:

- MCPS food costs for school nutrition are well above industry benchmarks in relation to overall revenue.

- MCPS labor costs for school nutrition are above industry benchmarks in relation to overall revenue.

- The school nutrition department does not currently pay appropriate indirect costs.

The school nutrition department of Montgomery County Public Schools offers breakfast, lunch, and snacks to over 9,400 students and staff at 21 campuses. The school division participates in the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) and School Breakfast Program (SBP), which are regulated by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) and administered by VDOE.

As a participant in the NSLP and the SBP, the school division receives federal and state reimbursement income for free, reduced, and paid breakfast and lunch meals served. In addition to federal meal reimbursements, the school division receives USDA food commodities.

As illustrated in the organizational chart in **Exhibit 8-1**, the school nutrition supervisor is responsible for the activities of the department. Reporting directly to the supervisor are 21 cafeteria managers, who oversee daily operations at the school sites and supervise the 97 cafeteria staff employees at the 20 Montgomery County schools. In addition, one administrative assistant and one field manager provide administrative support within the department.

EXHIBIT 8-1
ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE
SCHOOL NUTRITION DEPARTMENT
MONTGOMERY COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS
2005-06 SCHOOL YEAR
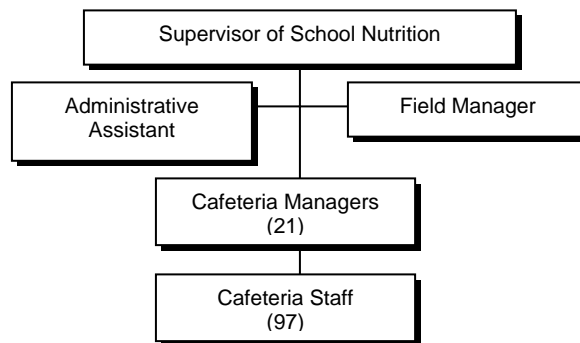
Source: Montgomery County Public Schools, school nutrition department, 2006.

8.1   *Organization and Management*

FINDING

MGT conducted a survey of MCPS administrators, principals/assistant principals, and teachers as part of this efficiency review. These staff members were asked to assess the quality of the food service function within MCPS. As is shown **Exhibit 8-2**, only 18 percent of administrators, 17 percent of principals, and 37 percent of teachers stated that the food service function *needs some improvement* or *needs major improvement*. Conversely, 71 percent of administrators, 80 percent of principals, and 58 percent of teachers stated that MCPS food services are *adequate* or *outstanding*. In comparison with their counterparts in over 100 other school divisions reviewed by MGT, MCPS staff generally have a far more favorable view of food service quality overall.

EXHIBIT 8-2
COMPARISON OF SURVEY RESPONSES
FOOD SERVICE
MONTGOMERY COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS AND OTHER DIVISIONS

RESPONDENT GROUP	PERCENT INDICATING *NEEDS SOME* OR *MAJOR IMPROVEMENT*		PERCENT INDICATING *ADEQUATE* OR *OUTSTANDING*	
	MCPS	OTHER SCHOOL DIVISIONS	MCPS	OTHER SCHOOL DIVISIONS
Administrators	18%	38%	71%	67%
Principals	17%	25%	80%	65%
Teachers	37%	29%	58%	47%

Source: MGT surveys, 1996–2006.

Another portion of the MGT survey asked MCPS staff to respond to the statement *The School Nutrition Department provides nutritious and appealing meals and snacks.* In response, 50 percent of MCPS division administrators *agreed* or *strongly agreed* that this statement was true, while only 18 percent *disagreed* or *strongly disagreed*. Seventy-three (73) percent of MCPS principals *agreed* or *strongly agreed* that this statement was true, while only 13 percent *disagreed* or *strongly disagreed*. Similarly, 50 percent of MCPS teachers *agreed* or *strongly agreed* that this statement was true, while 28 percent *disagreed* or *strongly disagreed*. These responses are detailed in **Exhibit 8-3**, while **Exhibit 8-4** compares MCPS responses to this question to the average responses given by other school divisions MGT has audited. Again, the responses of MCPS staff are more favorable than those of their counterparts in other school divisions.

EXHIBIT 8-3
COMPARISON OF SURVEY RESPONSES WITHIN THE DIVISION
FOOD QUALITY

STATEMENT	(%A + SA) / (%D + SD)*		
	CENTRAL OFFICE ADMINISTRATORS	PRINCIPALS/ ASSISTANT PRINCIPALS	TEACHERS
The School Nutrition Department provides nutritious and appealing meals and snacks.	50/18	73/13	50/28

Source: MGT survey, November 2006.
*Percentage responding *Agree* or *Strongly Agree*/Percentage responding *Disagree* or *Strongly Disagree.* The *Neutral* and *Don't Know* responses have been omitted.

EXHIBIT 8-4
COMPARISON SURVEY OF RESPONSES
FOOD QUALITY
MONTGOMERY COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS AND OTHER DIVISIONS

RESPONDENT GROUP	PERCENT INDICATING *AGREE* OR *STRONGLY AGREE*		PERCENT INDICATING *DISAGREE* OR *STRONGLY DISAGREE*	
	MCPS	OTHER SCHOOL DIVISIONS	MCPS	OTHER SCHOOL DIVISIONS
Administrators	50%	62%	18%	14%
Principals	73%	58%	13%	26%
Teachers	50%	43%	28%	34%

Source: MGT surveys, 1996–2006.

Exhibits 8-5 and **8-6** present additional survey responses regarding MCPS school nutrition services. These questions reflected three critical areas of food service operations: (1) levels of customer service in school cafeterias, (2) cleanliness of facilities, and (3) quality of school/parent communication. As can be seen, MCPS staff overwhelmingly approve of the services provided in these areas.

In addition, MCPS cafeterias were observed providing some of the highest quality customer service ever witnessed by MGT. MCPS staff engaged the students and created a homelike atmosphere that was clearly appreciated by the customers.

EXHIBIT 8-5
COMPARISON OF SURVEY RESPONSES WITHIN THE DIVISION
SCHOOL NUTRITION QUALITY

STATEMENT	(%A + SA) / (%D + SD)*		
	CENTRAL OFFICE ADMINISTRATORS	PRINCIPALS/ ASSISTANT PRINCIPALS	TEACHERS
Cafeteria staff are helpful and friendly.	75/0	93/0	88/5
Cafeteria facilities are clean and neat.	82/0	93/0	94/0
Parents/guardians are informed about the menus.	75/8	89/0	82/2

Source: MGT survey, November 2006.
*Percentage responding *Agree* or *Strongly Agree*/Percentage responding *Disagree* or *Strongly Disagree.* The *Neutral* and *Don't Know* responses have been omitted.

COMMENDATION

Staff in Montgomery County Public Schools overwhelmingly approve of the quality of the services and products provided by the school nutrition department.

FINDING

One notable exception to the positive survey responses regarding MCPS school nutrition relates to the use of customer satisfaction surveys (**Exhibit 8-6**). These responses reflect the fact that MCPS does not have a policy that requires the use of this type of survey. While MGT surveys showed that satisfaction with the school nutrition department is high, this does not guarantee ongoing satisfaction. Best practices in school nutrition services place critical importance on continual customer feedback to ensure the ability to make appropriate programmatic changes.

EXHIBIT 8-6
COMPARISON OF SURVEY RESPONSES WITHIN THE DIVISION
CUSTOMER SATISFACTION SURVEY

	(%A + SA) / (%D + SD)*		
STATEMENT	**CENTRAL OFFICE ADMINISTRATORS**	**PRINCIPALS/ ASSISTANT PRINCIPALS**	**TEACHERS**
The School Nutrition Department encourages student participation through customer satisfaction surveys.	7/18	24/28	11/27

Source: MGT survey, November 2006.
*Percentage responding *Agree* or *Strongly Agree*/Percentage responding *Disagree* or *Strongly Disagree.* The *Neutral* and *Don't Know* responses have been omitted.

Recommendation 8-1:

Design a customer satisfaction survey to ensure an ongoing feedback loop regarding school nutrition services.

As school nutrition is one of the most publicly visible functions within any school district, the need for routine monitoring of customer satisfaction is imperative. A well-designed customer satisfaction survey can provide essential information to guide school district decisions focused on departmental improvement. School food service programs serve many customers, including students, teachers, administrators, parents, and school staff. Each group assesses food and service quality based on its unique experiences. While groups may evaluate the quality of a food service program differently, perception of quality is typically the most important factor when participation choices are made. An ongoing cycle of customer satisfaction surveys can serve as the basis for a continuous improvement model that is grounded in customer feedback. This concept is important in any operation, but is essential in food service.

The school nutrition supervisor should work with other staff to identify and implement a survey focused on determining the perceptions of MCPS staff regarding school nutrition. Potential areas of concern can then be identified and investigated in the interest of overall departmental improvement. It is clear from interviews with school nutrition staff that perceptual data are regularly monitored by the department, but this type of survey data, focused on predetermined central questions, can provide a formalized format for addressing negative opinions among school staff and other stakeholders. These data can also be used to benchmark performance in the overall improvement effort from year to year.

In general, customer satisfaction data should be used to:

- Develop targeted marketing plans to increase student participation in school breakfast and lunch programs.

- Identify needed enhancements to goods and services.

- Establish appropriate quality and process standards.

- Plan for new initiatives, services, or events.

- Justify needed changes, such as the purchase of new equipment or the renovation of facilities.

One particularly effective school food service survey was developed by the National Food Service Management Institute (NFSMI) at the University of Mississippi. In addition to providing statistically valid and reliable survey instruments, the NFSMI protocol offers an excellent example of how to effectively implement food service surveys. In particular, NFSMI suggests that, in order to effectively conduct a comprehensive survey, a school system should:

- Determine the intended objectives.

- Gain approval from the school community, including administrators, teachers, and parents.

- Determine when the survey should be conducted to gain the most participation and responses based on experience.

- Determine how many surveys to distribute based on population size to ensure statistical validity.

- Determine how the analysis will be conducted.

- Determine how the survey will be conducted.

- Prepare customers for the survey by making them aware of timelines and expectations.

- Develop a support network for the survey process.

NFSMI publishes the *School Foodservice Survey Guide*, which contains detailed methodology for conducting food service surveys, as well as the actual survey instruments by school level (elementary, middle, and high). The group also can provide national level data from which to make comparisons. **Exhibit 8-7** details the factors and survey items comprising the high school version of the NFSMI survey. **Exhibit 8-8** provides examples of graphs that can be produced using NFSMI survey data. While MCPS may decide to develop a new survey, these instruments are an effective example of existing materials that can be used to guide the process.

EXHIBIT 8-7
NFSMI HIGH SCHOOL FOOD SERVICE SURVEY
FACTORS AND QUESTIONS

Food Quality
The flavor of the food is?
The quality of the brands offered is?
The quality of the food choices is?
The quality of the ingredients used is?
The variety of food offered is?
Foods on the serving line are attractively presented?

Staff
Foodservice staff are courteous.
Foodservice staff treat me with respect.
Foodservice staff are friendly.
Foodservice staff smile and greet me when I am served.
Foodservice staff listen to the students.
Foodservice staff answer my questions.
The appearance of the foodservice staff is?

Nutrition
Information on calories contained in food is available.
Information on fat contained in food is available.
Nutrition information on food products is posted.

Diversity
The choices of food available allow me to meet religious needs.
The choices of food allow me to meet my ethnic and cultural preferences.

Time/Cost
The time available to eat once seated is?
Overall, time given for meals is adequate.
The number of serving lines is adequate.
The school foodservice prices are reasonable for what I get.

Dining Ambiance
The noise level in the dining area is OK.
The dining area temperature is comfortable.
Special events/promotions are offered.
Theme days/special events are offered.
Tables in the dining area are clean.

Source: National Food Service Management Institute Web site, 2006.

**EXHIBIT 8-8
NFSMI HIGH SCHOOL FOOD SERVICE SURVEY
SAMPLE GRAPHS**
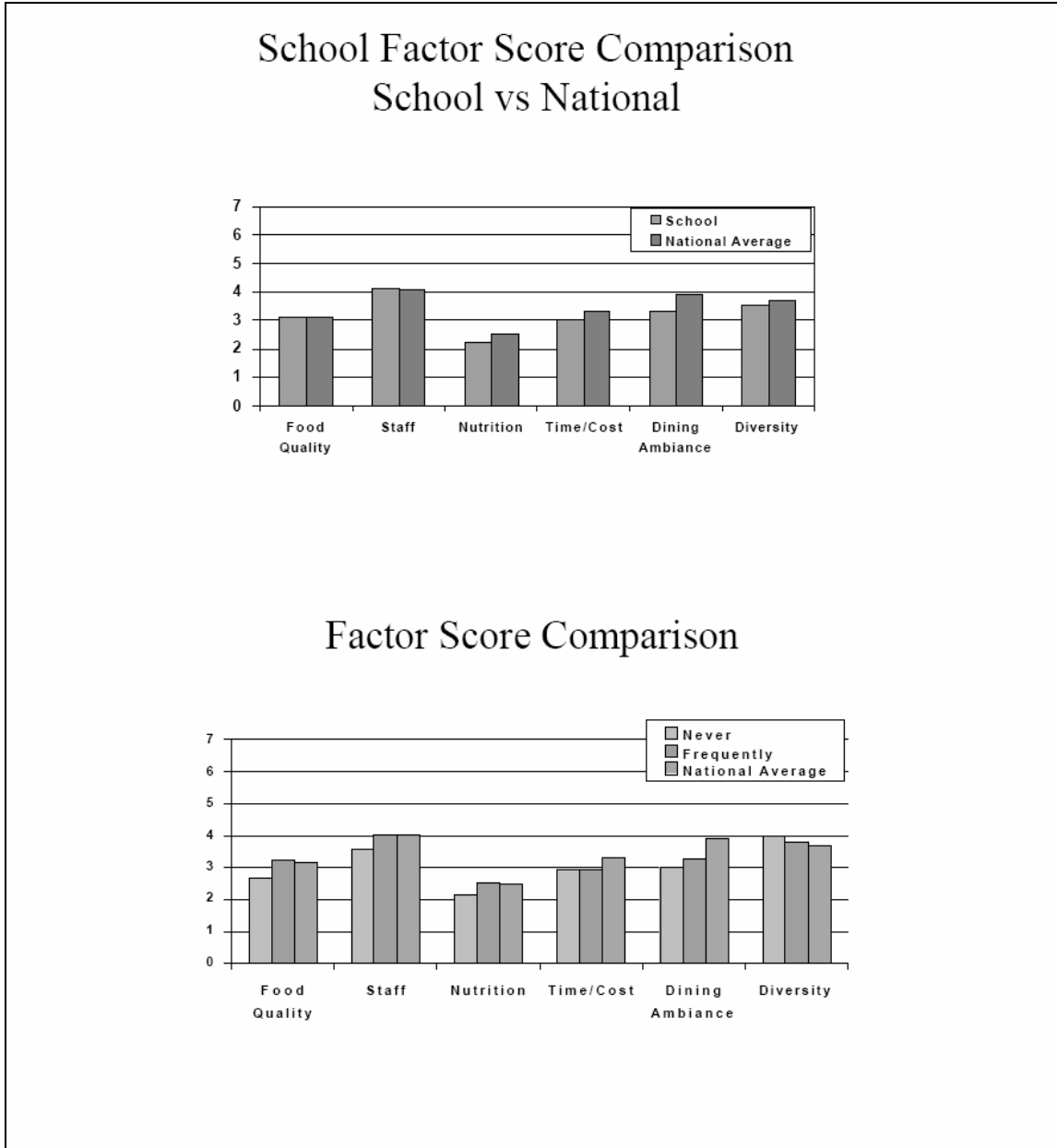
Source: National Food Service Management Institute Web site, 2006.

FISCAL IMPACT

There is no quantifiable cost associated with this recommendation. Using computer technology, these surveys can be implemented within the classrooms and schools, district facilities, and public meetings such as parent-teacher gatherings, without incurring printing costs. Ongoing data analysis can be easily completed using existing resources.

Recommendation 8-2:

Implement departmental changes based on needs identified in the customer satisfaction survey.

Often, satisfaction surveys are designed, disseminated, and forgotten. It is essential that MCPS use the results of this survey to pinpoint needed changes and act on the resulting findings. MCPS should be given the opportunity to provide feedback on all relevant aspects of school nutrition activities.

FISCAL IMPACT

There is no quantifiable cost associated with these recommendations and, similarly, no quantifiable savings for the school division. This is because the results of the customer satisfaction survey remain to be seen. However, it is likely that MCPS will realize increases in student and staff participation, and thus revenue, resulting from improvements in food quality and service.

FINDING

Currently, the school nutrition department does not regularly compile and report its findings on performance indicators to external stakeholders in a comprehensive manner. The department maintains records on many of the indicators that would comprise a comprehensive report card. In addition, certain reporting requirements for the Virginia Department of Education are met on an annual basis, but these are insufficient to promote continual improvement in both the quality and efficiency of departmental operations. MGT did identify several current reports that, separately, capture quality and performance information. However, individually, these documents and data files do not paint a complete picture of departmental status.

It is considered a best practice for school nutrition operations to compile and report at least annual performance on selected quality indicators to stakeholders such as School Boards and the community. These indicators vary depending on the contextual differences among school nutrition programs, but often include basic indices such as meals served per labor hour, program costs per meal, and percentage of labor cost to total revenue. Considering the size of the MCPS operation and the scope of stakeholders that it serves, ongoing performance monitoring and assessment are critical. It is clear from interviews and document reviews conducted by MGT that these activities are taking place. What is missing is a central document that compiles the data from all of these separate efforts.

Recommendation 8-3:

Implement an annual report card on the school nutrition department of Montgomery County Public Schools.

School nutrition received very high quality ratings from MCPS staff on the MGT survey. If only for this reason, the department should routinely collect and disseminate its performance on quality indicators. This annual review of its operations should provide assurances that the department is performing up to standards, in comparison both to its

past and to its peers. The report card should be used to communicate departmental improvement, and to highlight areas of critical need.

Exhibit 8-9 details some potential food service effectiveness indicators that could be incorporated in an MCPS annual report card.

EXHIBIT 8-9
POTENTIAL FOOD SERVICE EFFECTIVENESS INDICATORS

Sample Food Service Indicators
Operational Performance
Number of Daily Meals Served (breakfast, lunch, and after-school snack)
Number of à la Carte Items Sold
Percentage of Students Served by Individual School Cafeteria
Operational Efficiency
Operational Costs per Meal Served
Operational Costs per Student
Salaries and Benefits as Percentage of Total Operating Costs
Meals Served per Labor Hour
Profit/Loss per Individual School Cafeteria
Indirect Costs Paid to the School District
Operational Quality
Growth/Decline of Student Participation
Results of Food Service Satisfaction Surveys

Source: MGT of America, 2006.

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources. Furthermore, it is likely that the school nutrition department will experience some cost savings as it works to achieve the goals identified by the report card.

8.2   *Policies, Procedures, and Compliance with Regulations*

Food service policies and procedures provide important information to drive internal operations, as well as to maintain clear communication with stakeholders. An absence of formal policies and procedures creates the potential for misinterpretations and omissions within any food service department.

Policies and procedures also provide the basis for staff to understand the necessity of compliance with federal, state, and local regulations and are essential to efficient food service operations.

FINDING

The school nutrition department mandates that all school cafeterias keep a full tray of each meal that they serve daily for five days under refrigeration. This "insurance tray" is a physical artifact of the food preparation techniques and the food quality associated with that daily menu item. This practice allows MCPS to track any potential food-borne illness within the school system.

Interviews with MCPS staff revealed that no illness due to cafeteria food has been reported and that this practice is deemed to ensure daily vigilance in this area of quality control. MGT has rarely observed this type of best practice policy and supports this level of attention to food quality and student safety.

COMMENDATION

The saving of daily insurance trays in every MCPS cafeteria is a policy that reflects the highest level of quality control.

FINDING

MCPS provides an infrastructure for other school systems in the area to take advantage of collective bidding for food purchases. The school nutrition department extended the use of its more favorable purchasing contracts to smaller divisions in an effort to reduce the food costs of these programs. Interviews with MCPS staff detailed some of the advantages realized by other schools systems, especially in the purchasing of higher cost items.

COMMENDATION

MCPS is commended for aiding local school divisions in the area of collective food purchases.

FINDING

The school nutrition department should be directed by clear Board policy that provides information not only on duties to be carried out within the school division, but also on the departmental mission. This information is important to drive internal operations, as well as to ensure clear communication of school nutrition information to the public. An absence of formal Board policies creates the potential for misinterpretations and omissions within the school nutrition department.

Food service is a school division operation that is highly visible, both to students and the community. It is also one of the division-level operations that generate and spend a substantial amount of funds. For these primary reasons, a school board must ensure

that rigorous standards are in place to guide the quality of service delivery and the efficiency of fiscal operations. One method of strengthening the oversight of food service operations is through comprehensive Board policies.

The activities of the MCPS school nutrition department are not comprehensively addressed in the Board policy manual. In addition, although the school nutrition fund is accounted for as a separate proprietary fund, there is little Board policy regarding financial or programmatic activities of this fund. The guidelines for the federal student lunch program are very specific, and since it is this program that ultimately provides the basis for allocations of other federal resources to the school division, there should be a Board policy that requires compliance with these guidelines, beyond a simple statement to that fact.

The current Board policy provides only general statements about the administration of the school nutrition program in Montgomery County. This type of policy language is insufficient to ensure the effective and efficient operation of the MCPS school nutrition department.

Recommendation 8-4:

Develop a comprehensive Board policy for school nutrition.

MCPS should include comprehensive policy language on school nutrition in its policy manual to clearly communicate departmental services and expectations. Formal school nutrition policies should define important practices and should also serve as a vehicle for addressing instances of public concern over operational issues.

Exhibit 8-10 provides an example of a comprehensive school nutrition policy. Each policy included in the MCPS policy manual must be carefully evaluated for appropriateness and alignment with Virginia law.

FISCAL IMPACT

There is no fiscal impact associated with the implementation of this recommendation.

FINDING

Currently, the school nutrition department does not have a comprehensive preventive maintenance or replacement policy for kitchen equipment. This situation leaves the school division vulnerable to negative consequences stemming from aging equipment and the lack of routine comprehensive maintenance. Interviews with division and school-based staff revealed this issue to one of the largest concerns facing MCPS School Nutrition.

EXHIBIT 8-10
SAMPLE SCHOOL NUTRITION POLICY

GENERAL SCHOOL NUTRITION REQUIREMENTS

The school nutrition program shall operate according to requirements set forth in state statutes and state Board of education rules. The school nutrition program shall include the federally reimbursed lunch program, à la carte selections, beverage offerings, and sale of food and beverage items offered through vending machines or other methods to students at all school facilities during the school day and may include the federally reimbursed breakfast program.

(1)   The school nutrition program shall be an integral part of the division's educational program, offering nutritional and educational opportunities to students.

(2)   Foods and beverages available in schools shall be only those which meet the nutritional needs of students and contribute to the development of desirable health habits unless permitted otherwise by state Board of education rules and approved by the superintendent.

(3)   The school nutrition program shall meet the standards for school nutrition and sanitation and safety as provided by the state Board of health and state department of education.

(4)   School nutrition funds shall not be considered or treated as internal funds of the local school, but shall be a part of the division school funds. School nutrition funds shall be subject to all the requirements applicable to the division fund such as budgeting, accounting, reporting, and purchasing and such additional requirements as set forth in the written procedures manual authorized in this policy.

(5)   USDA commodities shall be acquired, stored, and utilized in accordance with USDA and related state Board of education rules.

(6)   The superintendent or designee shall develop a written procedures manual to govern the school nutrition program.

SCHOOL NUTRITION FUNDS

(7)   School nutrition funds shall be considered special revenue funds, but shall be subject to all requirements applicable to the division school funds such as budgeting, accounting, reporting, and purchasing unless specific requirements are established by federal or state laws, rules, or regulations.

(8)   Daily deposits of school nutrition funds shall be made by authorized personnel in a bank(s) designated by the School Board.

(9)   Revenue from the sale of all items handled by the school nutrition department shall be considered school nutrition income. This includes income from sale of cans, bottles, jars, rice bags, swill, and similar items. Such funds shall not be expended as cash.

(10)   All payments from school nutrition funds shall be made by check or wire transfer.

EXHIBIT 8-10 (Continued)
SAMPLE SCHOOL NUTRITION POLICY

SCHOOL NUTRITION FUNDS

(11)   School nutrition funds shall be used only to pay school nutrition operating costs.

(12)   Profit and loss statements shall be developed monthly for each school nutrition program, by school site.

(13)   Any loss of records, cash, or supplies through theft or otherwise shall be reported immediately to the superintendent's office. Such losses shall be itemized and a copy of the report submitted with the regular reports.

(14)   Funds shall be collected and expended in compliance with USDA and state Board of education rules.

(15)   The Board shall annually adopt prices charged to students and adults who participate in the school nutrition program.

(16)   The superintendent or designee shall develop written procedures for conducting the division's school nutrition program.

MEAL PATTERNS

All schools with grades Pre-K-12 shall participate in the National School Lunch and Breakfast Programs and serve student meals according to meal patterns established by the United States Department of Agriculture. Schools may participate in other child nutrition programs.

FREE AND REDUCED PRICE MEALS

Free or reduced price meals shall be served to all students who qualify based on eligibility criteria approved by the School Board.

The income eligibility guidelines for free or reduced price meals shall be in accordance with the scales provided by the state department of education as adopted by the state Board of education based upon income guidelines prescribed by the United States Secretary of Agriculture.

Eligibility criteria shall be applicable to all division schools and shall provide that all students from a family meeting the eligibility criteria and attending any division school are offered the same benefits.

Procedures for implementing the free and reduced price meal services shall be reviewed annually and shall be in accordance with procedures and guidelines published by the state department of education and the United States Department of Agriculture.

Source: Created by MGT of America, 2005.

While equipment maintenance and replacement is a concern in all organizations, the older age of many of the current MCPS school buildings makes this more of an issue in Montgomery County than in other school divisions. Equipment failure decreases productivity and becomes a cost issue. For example, when a dishwasher fails at a large kitchen, extra employee hours are required in order to hand-wash dishes. Parts for older equipment are difficult to locate and are more expensive, due to a lack of demand. Circumstances such as this are common in food service operations and should be planned for effectively.

MGT observed a great deal of outdated equipment in MCPS kitchens. The high cost of maintaining and replacing equipment in the older MCPS kitchens was the reason cited for not adopting and following a comprehensive replacement plan. While this can seem like a legitimate barrier to implementing a plan, it should not preclude the development of an appropriate schedule for equipment maintenance and replacement.

Recommendation 8-5:

Develop a comprehensive preventive maintenance and replacement policy for kitchen equipment.

A comprehensive preventive maintenance plan should help to reduce or eliminate downtime caused by malfunction of older equipment. This policy should also make the school nutrition department aware of equipment that will need to be scheduled for replacement. Following a replacement plan could be costly for the school division in the short term, but will pay off in reduced maintenance and operating expenditures over time. The implementation of this recommendation should also allow for less reliance on the MCPS maintenance staff for emergency repairs.

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

8.3   *Financial Performance*

According to annual financial reports, MCPS school nutrition had operational expenses of $3,676,157 in the 2005-06 school year, and revenues equaling that figure. Revenues have increased over $581,938 since 2003-04, while operational costs have increased by the same reported amount. **Exhibit 8-11** summarizes the department's revenues and expenditures over the past three school years. The exhibit shows that the department increased revenues and expenditures by a reported 18.8 percent from 2003-04 to 2005-06.

EXHIBIT 8-11
MONTGOMERY COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS
EXPENDITURE AND REVENUE ANALYSIS
2003-04 THROUGH 2005-06 SCHOOL YEARS

SCHOOL YEAR	TOTAL REVENUE			TOTAL EXPENDITURES		
	TOTAL	DIFFERENCE FROM PRIOR YEAR	PERCENTAGE DIFFERENCE FROM PRIOR YEAR	TOTAL	DIFFERENCE FROM PRIOR YEAR	PERCENTAGE DIFFERENCE FROM PRIOR YEAR
2003-04	$3.094.219	-	-	$3.094.219	-	-
2004-05	$3,502,390	$408,171	13.19%	$3,502,390	$408,171	13.19%
2005-06	$3,676,157	$173,767	4.96%	$3,676,157	$173,767	4.96%
Difference between 2003-04 and 2005-06 school years	-	$581,938	18.80%	-	$581,938	18.80%

Source: Montgomery County Public Schools, school nutrition department, 2006.

Exhibit 8-12 compares the amount of food service disbursements of the selected peer school divisions and the corresponding cost per pupil. As can be seen, Montgomery County Public Schools had the highest cost per pupil in 2004-05 ($362.73) and was well above the peer group average ($311.83).

EXHIBIT 8-12
FOOD SERVICE DISBURSEMENTS
PEER SCHOOL DIVISIONS
2004-05 SCHOOL YEAR

SCHOOL DIVISION	FOOD SERVICE	PER PUPIL COST
Montgomery County Public Schools	**$3,424,820**	**$362.73**
Augusta County Public Schools	$3,176,834	$291.98
Fauquier County Public Schools	$3,647,424	$338.91
Rockingham County Public Schools	$3,748,275	$333.41
York County Public Schools	$3,823,923	$303.04
Frederick County Public Schools	$3,419,309	$291.80
PEER DIVISION AVERAGE	**$3,563,153**	**$311.83**

Source: Virginia Department of Education Web site, 2006.

FINDING

Exhibit 8-13 shows the food costs for school nutrition for the 2003-04 through 2005-06 school years. These costs rose by $197,352 during that period, a 12.9 percent increase. Further, the food cost percentage to total revenue decreased by 2.5 percent (from 49.5 percent to 47 percent). MGT has found that a best practice in school divisions across the country, and indicated in *School Business Insider*, is to limit food costs to 36 percent of revenue. This standard is based on efficient performance for school divisions of varying sizes and demographic makeup. The three-year average of the MCPS food costs to total revenue was 46 percent.

EXHIBIT 8-13
MONTGOMERY COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS
FOOD COSTS
2003-04 THROUGH 2005-06 SCHOOL YEARS

SCHOOL YEAR	FOOD COSTS	TOTAL FOOD COSTS DIFFERENCE FROM PRIOR YEAR	TOTAL FOOD COSTS PERCENTAGE DIFFERENCE FROM PRIOR YEAR	TOTAL REVENUE	FOOD COSTS PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL REVENUE
2003-04	$1,530,178	-	-	$3.094.219	49.45%
2004-05	$1,457,161	($73,017)	(4.77%)	$3,502,390	41.60%
2005-06	$1,727,530	$270,369	18.55%	$3,676,157	46.99%
Difference between 2003-04 and 2005-06 school years	-	$197,352	12.89%	$581,938	(2.46%)

Source: Montgomery County Public Schools, school nutrition department, 2006.

Recommendation 8-6:

Reduce MCPS food costs to an industry standard of 36 percent of total revenue.

Containing food costs is an ongoing concern in all food service programs. It is clear from staff interviews and document reviews that MCPS has taken steps to control overall food costs; however, considering the overall high cost of MCPS school nutrition (**Exhibit 8-12**) and the unfavorable ratio of food costs to total revenue (**Exhibit 8-13**), MCPS should explore additional ways to reduce these costs.

There are a number of ways that school divisions can reduce food costs. A thorough internal analysis of food usage by program and the individual costs associated with the food items that MCPS uses may reveal additional efficiencies. Often this results in a tradeoff between food brands or items that are perceived to be of higher quality being replaced by other, less expensive alternatives. The Internet has also become a popular resource for school systems to find special buying opportunities beyond their region. The use of collective buying groups is another strategy for reducing food costs. Currently, MCPS is part of a purchasing co-op designed to maximize food purchasing power through volume buying. While this is an appropriate practice, and commendable, the present arrangement may benefit the other school divisions more than MCPS. There is the potential to expand this group to include larger school divisions that could bring added benefit to MCPS in the purchasing of food items. MCPS should also conduct an item-level commodity analysis to determine if this food source is being utilized to its full potential. Often, commodity items can be substituted for purchased items to reduce costs.

FISCAL IMPACT

School nutrition in MCPS brought in $3,767,157 in total revenue in 2005-06. If MCPS was successful in reducing its food cost to the 36 percent industry standard in relation to this figure, MCPS could expect to realize a cost savings approximating $371,353 per year. This equates to a five-year savings of $1,485,412. It is important to note that this cost savings is based on an ideal reduction to the 36 percent food cost standard. While

this is an appropriate goal for school nutrition programs in general, a full reduction may not be achievable in MCPS due to its unique business environment. Any cost savings realized by a refocused effort to reduce food costs should be used by MCPS, in conjunction with savings resulting from implementing other recommendations detailed in this chapter, to move MCPS school nutrition closer to the ultimate goal of fiscal independence.

Recommendation	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12
Reduce Food Costs to Industry Benchmark Levels	$0	$371,353	$371,353	$371,353	$371,353

FINDING

The percentage of labor costs to total revenues for the school division is higher than best practices among school divisions throughout the country. According to *School Business Insider*, labor (including salary, overtime wages, health insurance, workers' compensation, and other benefits) should not exceed 40 percent of revenue. As shown in **Exhibit 8-14**, the percentage of labor to total revenue in MCPS is higher than best practice levels.

EXHIBIT 8-14
MONTGOMERY COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS
SCHOOL NUTRITION LABOR COSTS
2003-04 THROUGH 2005-06 SCHOOL YEARS

SCHOOL YEAR	LABOR COSTS	TOTAL LABOR COSTS DIFFERENCE FROM PRIOR YEAR	TOTAL LABOR COSTS PERCENTAGE DIFFERENCE FROM PRIOR YEAR	TOTAL REVENUE	LABOR COSTS PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL REVENUE
2003-04	$1,648,673	-	-	$3.094.219	53.28%
2004-05	$1,673,166	$24,493	1.49%	$3,502,390	47.77%
2005-06	$1,699,669	($233,266)	(12.07%)	$3,676,157	46.23%
Difference between 2003-04 and 2005-06 school years	$50,996	($50,996)	(5.17%)	$581,938	(7.05%)

Source: Montgomery County Public Schools, school nutrition department, 2006.

The exhibit details the labor costs for school nutrition during the 2003-04 through 2005-06 school years. These costs rose by only $50,996, a 3.1 percent increase over the three year period. Further, the cost of labor percentage to total revenue was 53.3 percent in 2003-04, but decreased by 7.1 percent by 2005-06. Although this reduction represents a favorable change, MCPS labor costs remain 6 percent over industry standards.

Recommendation 8-7:

Reduce staff at schools where staff hours are above best practice levels.

There are many contextual factors that determine the need for staff at specific school cafeterias. MCPS should identify which of its school sites are above the 40 percent standard. By reducing staff hours across school cafeterias, the school division would be in line with the industry standards indicated in *Cost Control for School Food Services, Third Edition, 2000.* Implementation of this recommendation would provide MCPS with a more efficient organization. Further, since this benchmark was developed with data from the full spectrum of food service operations, a reduction to this level should still allow for adequate staffing of MCPS cafeterias.

FISCAL IMPACT

The 2005-06 percentage of labor costs to total revenue was 46 percent, 6 percent above industry best practice standards. The total cost of labor, including purchased services, was $1,699,669. By reducing the labor cost by 10 percent across the Board, MCPS should expect to recoup $169,967 per year. This would result in an estimated five-year savings of approximately $679,868.

Recommendation	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12
Reduce Labor Hours to Industry Benchmark Levels	$0	$169,967	$169,967	$169,967	$169,967

FINDING

In many school districts, observers in and outside the school district want to know whether the food service operation is paying its own way. Because there is a separate school nutrition special revenue fund, it is typically assumed that all costs are charged to the fund and, if revenues exceed expenditures, the program is financially successful.

The MCPS school nutrition department draws on a number of services provided by the school division. Under the present system, some of these direct costs are not charged to the school nutrition fund, but are being absorbed by the general fund. An indirect overhead rate is developed annually by the state for use with federal grants, and the current restricted rate for MCPS is 1.45 percent. This rate is typically used to allocate the value of the general overhead of a school division to school nutrition programs. Services included in indirect overhead are administrative duties such as overseeing personnel, purchasing, facilities, and all other general school division work that benefits school nutrition. The total expenditures for the school nutrition fund in 2005-06 were $3,676,157. If the 1.45 percentage rate had been applied to this amount, the school nutrition fund would have been responsible for paying $53,304 per year to the general fund for indirect costs. There are also direct charges that should be paid by the department. These include maintenance costs, fuel, vehicle costs, and utilities. These are typically paid in addition to the general indirect rate because school nutrition departments use a disproportionate amount of these services.

Recommendation 8-8:

Charge all appropriate direct and indirect costs to the school nutrition fund.

Currently, the MCPS school nutrition department is not a profitable enough organization to maintain a fund balance large enough to pay for all direct and indirect costs in addition to other departmental expenditures. Nonetheless, the department should pay for all work activities associated with school nutrition operations, in keeping with industry standards. The implementation of some of the recommendations suggested in this chapter should free up revenue to allow the school nutrition department to repay the school division for all appropriate services.

In addition to the 1.45 percent indirect rate, the school nutrition department should pay all other appropriate direct costs identified by MCPS. While the precise amount of these direct costs cannot be determined in this review, a conservative estimate would bring the total percentage of indirect and direct costs to a minimum of five percent. Applying this estimate to the total expenditures for 2005-06 ($3,676,157) produces an annual expected cost savings of $183,808. The end result would be a five-year savings of approximately $735,232 to the general fund and increased costs of a similar amount for the school nutrition fund.

Recommendation	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12
Charge Direct and Indirect Costs to the School Nutrition Fund	$0	($183,808)	($183,808)	($183,808)	($183,808)
Cost Savings to the General Fund	$0	$183,808	$183,808	$183,808	$183,808
Net Cost Savings	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0

9.0 SUMMARY OF POTENTIAL SAVINGS AND COSTS

9.0 SUMMARY OF POTENTIAL SAVINGS AND COSTS

Based on the analyses of data obtained from interviews with MCPS personnel, parents, and the community at large, MCPS surveys, state and school division documents, and first-hand observations during the division, the MGT team developed 85 recommendations, 19 of which are accompanied by fiscal implications.

As shown in **Exhibit 9-1**, full implementation of the recommendations in this report would generate total savings of $5,504,220 over a five-year period. Costs over that same period equal $1,809,610, to equal net savings of **$3,672,554** over a five-year period.

EXHIBIT 9-1
SUMMARY OF ANNUAL SAVINGS (COSTS)

	YEARS					TOTAL FIVE-YEAR SAVINGS (COSTS)
CATEGORY	**2007-08**	**2008-09**	**2009-10**	**2010-11**	**2011-12**	
TOTAL SAVINGS	$423,224	$1,270,249	$1,270,249	$1,270,249	$1,270,249	$5,504,220
TOTAL (COSTS)	($361,922)	($361,922)	($361,922)	($361,922)	($361,922)	($1,809,610)
TOTAL NET SAVINGS (COSTS)	$61,302	$908,327	$908,327	$908,327	$908,327	$3,694,610
ONE-TIME SAVINGS(COSTS)						($22,056)
TOTAL FIVE-YEAR NET SAVINGS (COSTS) INCLUDING ONE-TIME SAVINGS (COSTS)						$3,672,554

Exhibit 9-2 provides a chapter-by-chapter summary for all costs and savings. It is important to note that only the 19 recommendations with fiscal impacts are identified in this chapter. The remaining 66 recommendations to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of Montgomery County Public Schools are included in chapters 2 through 8 of this report. A full summary of all 86 recommendations are listed in the executive summary.

MGT recommends that MCPS give each of the recommendations serious consideration and develop plans to proceed with their implementation and a system to monitor subsequent progress.

EXHIBIT 9-2
CHAPTER-BY-CHAPTER SUMMARY OF POTENTIAL SAVINGS (COSTS)

CHAPTER REFERENCE		ANNUAL SAVINGS (COSTS)					TOTAL FIVE YEAR SAVINGS (COSTS)	ONE-TIME SAVINGS (COSTS)
		2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12		
CHAPTER 2: DIVISION ORGANIZATION AND MANAGEMENT								
2-3	Purchase One Four-Drawer, Fire-Rated, Lockable File Cabinet	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	($1,500)
2-7	Reduce the Costs Associated with Legal Services by 10 Percent	$7,586	$7,586	$7,586	$7,586	$7,586	$37,930	$0
2-9	Change the Role of the Director of Management to Assistant Superintendent of Administrative Services	($9,720)	($9,720)	($9,720)	($9,720)	($9,720)	($48,600)	$0
2-10	Hire a New Controller	($106,359)	($106,359)	($106,359)	($106,359)	($106,359)	($531,795)	$0
2-11	Hire Two Directors of Education	($212,718)	($212,718)	($212,718)	($212,718)	($212,718)	($1,063,590)	$0
TOTAL SAVINGS/(COSTS)		**($321,211)**	**($321,211)**	**($321,211)**	**($321,211)**	**($321,211)**	**($1,606,055)**	**($1,500)**
CHAPTER 3: FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT, PURCHASING, AND COST OF EDUCATION SERVICES								
3-7	Acquire a Digital Scanner	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	($2,000)
3-10	Stop Providing "Free" Supplies	$47,975	$47,975	$47,975	$47,975	$47,975	$239,875	$0
3-14	Institute a Fixed Hourly Rate for Summer School and Eliminate the Sign-on Bonus	$68,500	$68,500	$68,500	$68,500	$68,500	$342,500	$0
3-15	Increase Nursing Hours at Three Middle Schools to 32.5 Hours	($33,125)	($33,125)	($33,125)	($33,125)	($33,125)	($165,625)	$0
TOTAL SAVINGS/(COSTS)		**$83,350**	**$83,350**	**$83,350**	**$83,350**	**$83,350**	**$416,750**	**$0**
CHAPTER 4: HUMAN RESOURCES								
4-6	Automate the data entry process in MUNIS for contract production	$0	$5,329	$5,329	$5,329	$5,329	$21,316	($6,556)
4-8	Acquire an electronic scanning system for fingerprinting new employees	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	($9,000)
TOTAL SAVINGS/(COSTS)		**$0**	**$5,329**	**$5,329**	**$5,329**	**$5,329**	**$21,316**	**($15,556)**
CHAPTER 5: FACILITIES USE AND MANAGEMENT								
5-7	Sell 28 Modular Units for $1,500 per Unit	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$42,000
5-7	Savings from Maintenance and Operational Costs	$160,400	$160,400	$160,400	$160,400	$160,400	$802,000	$0
5-11	Eliminate the Maintenance and Utilities Operations Supervisor	$68,923	$68,923	$68,923	$68,923	$68,923	$344,615	$0
5-16	Digitize Blueprints and Purchase a Fire-proof Storage Cabinet	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	($45,000)
TOTAL SAVINGS/(COSTS)		**$229,323**	**$229,323**	**$229,323**	**$229,323**	**$229,323**	**$1,146,615**	**($3,000)**

EXHIBIT 9-2 (Continued)
CHAPTER-BY-CHAPTER SUMMARY OF POTENTIAL SAVINGS (COSTS)

CHAPTER REFERENCE	ANNUAL SAVINGS (COSTS)					TOTAL FIVE YEAR SAVINGS (COSTS)	ONE-TIME SAVINGS (COSTS)
	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12		
CHAPTER 6: TRANSPORTATION							
6-6 Remove Misidentified Students from Exclusive Buses	$0	$137,366	$137,366	$137,366	$137,366	$549,464	$0
6-8 Enforce Student Walk Policy	$0	$163,010	$163,010	$163,010	$163,010	$652,040	$0
TOTAL SAVINGS/(COSTS)	**$0**	**$300,376**	**$300,376**	**$300,376**	**$300,376**	**$1,201,504**	**$0**
CHAPTER 7: ADMINISTRATIVE AND INSTRUCTIONAL TECHNOLOGY							
7-6 Renegotiate for a 36-Month Rental Term for the Division's 97 Copiers	$69,840	$69,840	$69,840	$69,840	$69,840	$349,200	$0
TOTAL SAVINGS/(COSTS)	**$69,840**	**$69,840**	**$69,840**	**$69,840**	**$69,840**	**$349,200**	**$0**
CHAPTER 8: FOOD SERVICE							
8-6 Reduce Food Costs to Industry Benchmark Levels	$0	$371,353	$371,353	$371,353	$371,353	$1,485,412	$0
8-7 Reduce Labor Hours to Industry Benchmark Levels	$0	$169,967	$169,967	$169,967	$169,967	$679,868	$0
TOTAL SAVINGS/(COSTS)	**$0**	**$541,320**	**$541,320**	**$541,320**	**$541,320**	**$2,165,280**	**$0**
TOTAL SAVINGS	**$423,224**	**$1,270,249**	**$1,270,249**	**$1,270,249**	**$1,270,249**	**$5,504,220**	**$42,000**
TOTAL (COSTS)	**($361,922)**	**($361,922)**	**($361,922)**	**($361,922)**	**($361,922)**	**($1,809,610)**	**($64,056)**
NET SAVINGS (COSTS)	**$61,302**	**$908,327**	**$908,327**	**$908,327**	**$908,327**	**$3,694,610**	**($22,056)**
TOTAL NET SAVINGS (COSTS) LESS ONE TIME SAVINGS (COSTS)						**$3,672,554**	

APPENDIX A

APPENDIX A
SURVEY RESULTS

EXHIBIT A-1
COMPARISON SURVEY RESPONSES
PART A: OVERALL QUALITY

Total responses for Central Office Administrators = 28
Total responses for Principal/Assistant Principals = 29
Total responses for Teachers = 282

STATEMENT	CENTRAL OFFICE ADMINISTRATOR	PRINCIPAL/ ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL	TEACHER
1. How long have you worked in the district?			
Five years or less	32%	34%	34%
6-10 years	25	17	22
11-20 years	21	24	27
21 years or more	21	24	17
2. How long have you been in your current position?			
Five years or less	57	76	44
6-10 years	29	10	27
11-20 years	14	14	20
21 years or more	0	0	10
1. Overall quality of public education in our school district is:			
Good or Excellent	96	97	90
Fair or Poor	4	3	10
2. Overall quality of education in our school district is:			
Improving	82	72	51
Staying the Same	14	21	29
Getting Worse	4	3	14
Don't Know	0	3	6
5. Grade given to our school district teachers:			
Above Average (A or B)	97	89	89
Below Average (D or F)	0	0	0
6. Grade given to our school district school level administrators:			
Above Average (A or B)	97	93	67
Below Average (D or F)	0	0	10
7. Grade given to our school district central office administrators:			
Above Average (A or B)	90	59	49
Below Average (D or F)	4	10	16

EXHIBIT A-2
COMPARISON OF RESPONSES WITHIN THE DISTRICT
PART B: SCHOOL/DISTRICT CLIMATE

STATEMENT	(%A + SA) / (%D + SD)[1]		
	CENTRAL OFFICE ADMINISTRATOR	PRINCIPAL/ ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL	TEACHER
1. I feel that I have the authority to adequately perform my job responsibilities.	75/18	87/10	77/12
2. I am actively looking for a job outside of this school division.	11/83	10/68	8/71
3. I am very satisfied with my job in this school division.	83/8	69/17	63/17
4. The work standards and expectations in this school district are equal to or above those of most other school districts.	68/4	69/14	64/13
5. This school district's officials enforce high work standards.	82/8	83/10	65/13
6. Workload is evenly distributed.	54/25	41/38	34/53
7. I feel that my work is appreciated by my supervisor(s).	90/8	62/20	60/20
8. Teachers who do not meet expected work standards are disciplined.	18/29	48/7	20/44
9. Staff (excluding teachers) who do not meet expected work standards are disciplined.	50/11	72/0	22/29
10. I feel that I am an integral part of this school division team.	89/4	79/10	62/14

[1]Percentage responding *agree* or *strongly agree*/Percentage responding *disagree* or *strongly disagree.* The *neutral* and *don't know* responses are omitted.

EXHIBIT A-3
COMPARISON OF RESPONSES WITHIN THE DISTRICT
PART C1: DISTRICT ORGANIZATION

STATEMENT	(%A + SA) / (%D + SD)[1]		
	CENTRAL OFFICE ADMINISTRATOR	PRINCIPAL/ ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL	TEACHER
1. Teachers and administrators in our district have excellent working relationships.	65/7	76/0	48/24
2. Most administrative practices in our school district are highly effective and efficient.	68/8	69/14	38/28
3. Administrative decisions are made promptly and decisively.	64/11	55/14	47/26
4. Central Office Administrators are easily accessible and open to input.	72/8	28/38	36/34
5. Authority for administrative decisions is delegated to the lowest possible level.	18/36	24/31	19/32
6. Teachers and staff are empowered with sufficient authority to perform their responsibilities effectively.	68/14	73/7	49/31
7. The extensive committee structure in our school district ensures adequate input from teachers and staff on most important decisions.	47/22	45/27	35/34
8. Our school district has too many committees.	7/36	24/41	45/15
9. Our school district has too many layers of administrators.	0/85	3/76	28/33
10. Most of district administrative processes (e.g., purchasing, travel requests, leave applications, personnel, etc.) are highly efficient.	78/0	62/10	50/24
11. Central office administrators are responsive to school needs.	85/4	59/24	39/30
12. School-based personnel play an important role in making decisions that affect schools in our school district.	65/11	65/13	46/26

[1]Percentage responding *agree* or *strongly agree*/Percentage responding *disagree* or *strongly disagree.* The *neutral* and *don't know* responses are omitted.

EXHIBIT A-4
COMPARISON OF RESPONSES WITHIN THE DISTRICT
PART C2: DISTRICT ORGANIZATION

STATEMENT	(%G + E) / (%F + P)[1]		
	CENTRAL OFFICE ADMINISTRATOR	PRINCIPAL/ ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL	TEACHER
1. Board of Education members' knowledge of the educational needs of students in this school division.	40/39	45/41	29/45
2. Board of Education members' knowledge of operations in this school division.	54/40	31/48	30/44
3. Board of Education members' work at setting or revising policies for this school division.	54/29	62/31	29/41
4. The School Division Superintendent's work as the educational leader of this school division.	71/25	62/38	50/43
5. The School Division Superintendent's work as the chief administrator (manager) of this school division.	75/22	55/45	49/46
6. Principals' work as the instructional leaders of their schools.	71/21	93/3	64/34
7. Principals' work as the managers of the staff and teachers.	79/15	93/3	67/32

[1]Percentage responding *good* or *excellent* / Percentage responding *fair* or *poor*. The *don't know* responses are omitted.

EXHIBIT A-5
COMPARISON OF RESPONSES WITHIN THE DISTRICT
PART D1: CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

STATEMENT	(%A + SA) / (%D + SD)[1]		
	CENTRAL OFFICE ADMINISTRATOR	**PRINCIPAL/ ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL**	**TEACHER**
1. The emphasis on learning in this school district has increased in recent years.	79/0	82/10	60/19
2. Sufficient student services are provided in this school district (e.g., counseling, speech therapy, health).	54/29	41/51	43/45
3. Our schools have the materials and supplies necessary for instruction in basic skills programs such as writing and mathematics.	86/0	76/13	61/23
4. I know who to contact in the central office to assist me with curriculum and instruction matters.	90/0	83/6	84/6
5. Lessons are organized to meet students' needs.	58/0	93/3	78/9
6. The curriculum is broad and challenging for most students.	61/7	93/0	73/14
7. Teachers in our schools know the material they teach.	79/0	97/0	93/1
8. Teachers and staff are given opportunities to participate in the textbook and material adoption processes.	93/0	93/0	83/3
9. Teachers have adequate supplies and equipment needed to perform their jobs effectively.	78/7	73/17	52/34
10. Our district provides curriculum guides for all grades and subject areas.	54/15	69/17	75/7
11. Our district uses the results of benchmark tests to monitor student performance and identify performance gaps.	64/15	62/17	82/5
12. Our district has effective educational programs for the following:			
a) Reading and Language Arts	93/0	86/7	74/11
b) Writing	79/7	59/10	54/22
c) Mathematics	86/8	76/17	74/11
d) Science	89/4	79/10	72/7
e) Social Studies (history or geography)	85/4	86/7	74/5
f) Foreign Language	68/4	48/14	40/6
g) Basic Computer Instruction	75/7	52/17	52/13
h) Advanced Computer Instruction	40/14	38/27	25/15
i) Music, Art, Drama, and other Fine Arts	82/4	87/3	74/6
j) Physical Education	75/7	87/0	73/6
k) Career and Technical (Vocational) Education	78/7	55/6	39/10
l) Business Education	71/11	52/7	36/3
13. The district has effective programs for the following:			
a) Special Education	75/11	72/17	50/39
b) Literacy Program	78/0	65/17	48/22
c) Advanced Placement Program	78/0	65/3	49/4
d) Drop-out Prevention Program	43/29	20/28	13/21
e) Summer School Programs	75/11	37/38	44/19
f) Honors and Gifted Education	72/18	69/17	48/26
g) Alternative Education Programs	79/11	41/27	29/17
h) Career Counseling Program	36/18	31/10	17/16
i) College Counseling Program	39/18	35/7	21/13
14. The students-to-teacher ratio is reasonable.	71/7	72/14	57/30
15. Our district provides a high quality education that meets or exceeds state and federal mandates.	79/7	80/7	72/6

[1]Percentage responding *agree* or *strongly agree*/Percentage responding *disagree* or *strongly disagree.* The *neutral* and *don't know* responses are omitted.

EXHIBIT A-6
COMPARISON OF RESPONSES WITHIN THE DISTRICT
PART D2: CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

STATEMENT	(%G + E) / (%F + P)[1]		
	CENTRAL OFFICE ADMINISTRATOR	PRINCIPAL/ ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL	TEACHER
1. Teachers' work in meeting students' individual learning needs.	58/36	76/24	86/13
2. Teachers' work in communicating with parents/guardians.	43/47	76/24	84/15
3. How well students' test results are explained to parents/guardians.	46/43	65/31	54/33
4. The amount of time students spend on task learning in the classroom.	50/43	83/17	78/19

[1]Percentage responding *good* or *excellent* / Percentage responding *fair* or *poor*. The *don't know* responses are omitted.

EXHIBIT A-7
COMPARISON OF RESPONSES WITHIN THE DISTRICT
PART E1: HUMAN RESOURCES

STATEMENT	(%A + SA) / (%D + SD)[1]		
	CENTRAL OFFICE ADMINISTRATOR	PRINCIPAL/ ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL	TEACHER
1. Salary levels in this school district are competitive.	29/54	28/69	8/84
2. Our district has an effective employee recognition program.	18/36	10/65	13/54
3. Our district has an effective process for staffing critical shortage areas of teachers.	36/25	24/55	8/47
4. My supervisor evaluates my job performance annually.	86/7	93/3	85/9
5. Our district offers incentives for professional advancement.	25/33	34/49	22/46
6. I know who to contact in the central office to assist me with professional development.	97/4	93/0	77/11
7. I know who to contact in the central office to assist me with human resources matters such as licensure, promotion opportunities, employee benefits, etc	100/0	97/0	82/10
8. My salary level is adequate for my level of work and experience.	29/50	24/58	7/83
9. Our district has an effective teacher recruitment plan.	57/4	38/24	17/22
10. I have a professional growth plan that addresses areas identified for my professional growth.	61/14	62/28	62/19

[1]Percentage responding *agree* or *strongly agree*/Percentage responding *disagree* or *strongly disagree.* The *neutral* and *don't know* responses are omitted.

EXHIBIT A-8
COMPARISON OF RESPONSES WITHIN THE DISTRICT
PART E2: HUMAN RESOURCES

STATEMENT	(%G + E) / (%F + P)[1]		
	CENTRAL OFFICE ADMINISTRATOR	PRINCIPAL/ ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL	TEACHER
1. Staff development opportunities provided by this school division for teachers.	82/11	80/21	54/45
2. Staff development opportunities provided by this school division for school administrators.	46/47	41/55	17/9
3. Staff development opportunities provided by this school division for support staff.	40/57	27/55	15/19

[1]Percentage responding *good* or *excellent* / Percentage responding *fair* or *poor*. The *don't know* responses are omitted.

EXHIBIT A-9
COMPARISON OF RESPONSES WITHIN THE DISTRICT
PART F: FACILITIES MANAGEMENT

STATEMENT	(%A + SA) / (%D + SD)[1]		
	CENTRAL OFFICE ADMINISTRATOR	PRINCIPAL/ ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL	TEACHER
1. Our school buildings provide a healthy environment in which to teach.	61/18	65/27	50/37
2. Our schools have sufficient space and facilities to support the instructional programs.	32/50	38/59	26/65
3. Our facilities are clean.	75/14	90/3	61/23
4. Our facilities are well maintained.	61/18	73/20	50/28
5. Our district plans facilities in advance to support growing enrollment.	50/25	31/38	20/51
6. Parents, citizens, students, faculty, and staff have opportunities to provide input into facility planning.	75/7	76/10	45/14
7. Our school buildings and grounds are free of hazards that can cause accidental injury.	53/7	83/13	54/19

[1]Percentage responding *agree* or *strongly agree*/Percentage responding *disagree* or *strongly disagree.* The *neutral* and *don't know* responses are omitted.

EXHIBIT A-10
COMPARISON OF RESPONSES WITHIN THE DISTRICT
PART G: FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT/PURCHASING AND WAREHOUSING

STATEMENT	(%A + SA) / (%D + SD)[1]		
	CENTRAL OFFICE ADMINISTRATOR	PRINCIPAL/ ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL	TEACHER
1. Funds are managed wisely to support education in this school district.	68/4	65/10	30/25
2. The budgeting process effectively involves administrators and staff.	82/4	66/21	29/29
3. School administrators are adequately trained in fiscal management techniques.	43/7	31/35	16/5
4. My school allocates financial resources equitably and fairly.	57/4	86/3	48/19
5. The purchasing department provides me with what I need.	86/0	73/7	51/22
6. The purchasing process is easy.	75/7	62/17	46/23
7. Textbooks are distributed to students in a timely manner.	33/7	83/6	59/11
8. The books and resources in the school library adequately meet the needs of students.	46/4	80/17	60/19

[1]Percentage responding *agree* or *strongly agree*/Percentage responding *disagree* or *strongly disagree.* The *neutral* and *don't know* responses are omitted.

EXHIBIT A-11
COMPARISON OF RESPONSES WITHIN THE DISTRICT
PART H: TRANSPORTATION

STATEMENT	(%A + SA) / (%D + SD)[1]		
	CENTRAL OFFICE ADMINISTRATOR	PRINCIPAL/ ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL	TEACHER
1. Students are often late arriving at or departing from school because the buses do not arrive at school on time.	4/54	0/90	14/69
2. The district has a simple method of requesting buses for special events and trips.	79/4	89/3	65/9
3. Bus drivers maintain adequate discipline on the buses.	40/7	48/35	31/17
4. Buses are clean.	61/4	73/7	54/1
5. Buses arrive early enough for students to eat breakfast at school.	50/0	87/10	67/10
6. Buses are safe.	78/0	86/10	46/13

[1]Percentage responding *agree* or *strongly agree*/Percentage responding *disagree* or *strongly disagree.* The *neutral* and *don't know* responses are omitted.

EXHIBIT A-12
COMPARISON OF RESPONSES WITHIN THE DISTRICT
PART I1: TECHNOLOGY

	(%A + SA) / (%D + SD)[1]		
STATEMENT	CENTRAL OFFICE ADMINISTRATOR	PRINCIPAL/ ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL	TEACHER
1. Our school district provides adequate technology-related staff development.	71/4	59/31	62/26
2. Our school district requests input on the long-range technology plan.	50/21	76/6	34/28
3. Our school district provides adequate technical support.	85/4	69/17	57/29
4. I have adequate equipment and computer support to conduct my work.	75/15	80/17	52/40
5. Administrative computer systems are easy to use.	82/4	76/7	57/9
6. Technology is effectively integrated into the curriculum in our district.	50/8	44/31	51/27

[1]Percentage responding *agree* or *strongly agree*/Percentage responding *disagree* or *strongly disagree*. The *neutral* and *don't know* responses are omitted.

EXHIBIT A-13
COMPARISON OF RESPONSES WITHIN THE DISTRICT
PART I2: TECHNOLOGY

	(%G + E) / (%F + P)[1]		
STATEMENT	CENTRAL OFFICE ADMINISTRATOR	PRINCIPAL/ ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL	TEACHER
1. The school division's job of providing adequate instructional technology.	58/25	62/37	48/47
2. The school division's use of technology for administrative purposes.	89/11	83/17	52/19

[1]Percentage responding *good* or *excellent* / Percentage responding *fair* or *poor*. The *don't know* responses are omitted.

EXHIBIT A-14
COMPARISON OF RESPONSES WITHIN THE DISTRICT
PART J: FOOD SERVICES

	(%A + SA) / (%D + SD)[1]		
STATEMENT	CENTRAL OFFICE ADMINISTRATOR	PRINCIPAL/ ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL	TEACHER
1. The food services department provides nutritious and appealing meals and snacks.	50/18	73/13	50/28
2. The food services department encourages student participation through customer satisfaction surveys.	7/18	24/28	11/27
3. Cafeteria staff are helpful and friendly.	75/0	93/0	88/5
4. Cafeteria facilities are clean and neat.	82/0	93/0	94/0
5. Parents/guardians are informed about the menus.	75/8	89/0	82/2

[1]Percentage responding *agree* or *strongly agree*/Percentage responding *disagree* or *strongly disagree*. The *neutral* and *don't know* responses are omitted.

EXHIBIT A-15
COMPARISON OF RESPONSES WITHIN THE DISTRICT
PART K: SAFETY AND SECURITY

STATEMENT	(%A + SA) / (%D + SD)[1]		
	CENTRAL OFFICE ADMINISTRATOR	PRINCIPAL/ ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL	TEACHER
1. Our schools are safe and secure from crime.	79/7	86/7	56/25
2. Our schools effectively handle misbehavior problems.	72/7	93/0	44/34
3. There is administrative support for managing student behavior in our schools.	75/0	93/3	61/23
4. If there were an emergency in my school/office, I would know how to respond appropriately.	86/14	100/0	86/5
5. Our district has a problem with gangs.	7/61	0/83	4/60
6. Our district has a problem with drugs, including alcohol.	61/7	34/31	46/19
7. Our district has a problem with vandalism.	46/21	17/44	33/23
8. Our school enforces a strict campus access policy.	36/22	59/17	32/32

[1]Percentage responding *agree* or *strongly agree*/Percentage responding *disagree* or *strongly disagree*. The *neutral* and *don't know* responses are omitted.

EXHIBIT A-16
COMPARISON OF RESPONSES WITHIN THE DISTRICT
PART L1: PARENTS/GUARDIANS AND THE COMMUNITY

STATEMENT	(%A + SA) / (%D + SD)[1]		
	CENTRAL OFFICE ADMINISTRATOR	PRINCIPAL/ ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL	TEACHER
1. In general, parents/guardians take responsibility for their children's behavior in our schools.	57/7	72/17	29/50
2. Parents/guardians in this school district are satisfied with the education their children are receiving.	79/0	89/0	65/5
3. Most parents/guardians seem to know what goes on in our schools.	57/11	65/24	50/25
4. Parents/guardians play an active role in decision making in our schools.	54/11	62/10	38/26
5. This community really cares about its children's education.	89/0	89/3	70/12
6. Our district works with local businesses and groups in the community to help improve education.	72/4	69/14	60/12
7. Parents/guardians receive regular communications from the district.	89/0	90/3	83/4
8. Our school facilities are available for community use.	97/4	100/0	84/3

[1]Percentage responding *agree* or *strongly agree*/Percentage responding *disagree* or *strongly disagree*. The *neutral* and *don't know* responses are omitted.

EXHIBIT A-17
COMPARISON OF RESPONSES WITHIN THE DISTRICT
PART L2: PARENTS/GUARDIANS AND THE COMMUNITY

	(%G + E) / (%F + P)[1]		
STATEMENT	**CENTRAL OFFICE ADMINISTRATOR**	**PRINCIPAL/ ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL**	**TEACHER**
1. Parent/Guardians/guardians' efforts in helping their children to do better in school.	65/33	62/38	47/51
2. Parent/Guardians/guardians' participation in school activities and organizations.	64/33	59/41	39/59
3. How well relations are maintained with various groups in the community.	61/22	76/21	50/32

[1]Percentage responding *good* or *excellent* / Percentage responding *fair* or *poor.* The *don't know* responses are omitted.

EXHIBIT A-18
COMPARISON OF RESPONSES WITHIN THE DISTRICT
PART M: SCHOOL DISTRICT OPERATIONS

	%(NEEDS SOME IMPROVEMENT + NEEDS MAJOR IMPROVEMENT)[1]	/	% (ADEQUATE + OUTSTANDING)[1]
SCHOOL DISTRICT PROGRAMS AND FUNCTIONS	**CENTRAL OFFICE ADMINISTRATOR**	**PRINCIPAL/ ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL**	**TEACHER**
a. Budgeting	33/61	37/58	62/18
b. Strategic planning	47/39	62/34	45/18
c. Curriculum planning	36/46	48/52	40/52
d. Financial management and accounting	7/79	17/75	32/31
e. Grants administration	0/85	20/62	17/46
f. Community relations	21/61	27/72	37/51
g. Program evaluation, research, and assessment	36/32	62/34	35/36
h. Instructional technology	25/57	48/51	44/45
i. Administrative technology	21/75	24/76	23/38
j. Internal Communication	60/39	62/38	44/45
k. Instructional support	22/61	59/41	59/36
l. Coordination of Federal Programs (e.g., Title I, Special Education)	15/64	35/48	38/40
m. Personnel recruitment	21/75	55/38	33/31
n. Personnel selection	22/79	35/58	30/45
o. Personnel evaluation	50/46	75/24	30/64
p. Staff development	32/68	38/62	44/54
q. Data processing	18/68	17/55	13/34
r. Purchasing	7/86	7/82	23/39
s. Safety and security	29/58	31/69	41/50
t. Plant maintenance	22/71	42/58	38/42
u. Facilities planning	32/54	52/45	49/25
v. Transportation	11/83	27/72	31/54
w. Food service	18/71	17/80	37/58
x. Custodial services	25/68	31/69	39/58
y. Risk management	18/57	44/28	27/24

[1] Percentage responding *needs some improvement* or *needs major improvement* / Percentage responding *adequate* or *outstanding.* The *neutral* and *don't know* responses are omitted.

EXHIBIT A-19
BENCHMARK COMPARISONS

STATEMENT	CENTRAL OFFICE ADMINISTRATOR	CENTRAL OFFICE ADMINISTRATOR IN OTHER DISTRICTS	PRINCIPAL/ ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL	PRINCIPAL/ ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL IN OTHER DISTRICTS	TEACHER	TEACHER IN OTHER DISTRICTS
1. How long have you worked in the district?						
Five years or less	32%	N/A	34%	N/A	34%	N/A
6-10 years	25		17		22	
11-20 years	21		24		27	
21 years or more	21		24		17	
2. How long have you been in your current position?						
Five years or less	57	N/A	76	N/A	44	N/A
6-10 years	29		10		27	
11-20 years	14		14		20	
21 years or more	0		0		10	
3. Overall quality of public education in our school district is:						
Good or Excellent	96	85	97	89	90	74
Fair or Poor	4	14	3	11	10	25
4. Overall quality of education in our school district is:			72		51	
Improving	82	69	21	78	29	53
Staying the Same	14	20	3	15	14	27
Getting Worse	4	2	3	7	6	16
Don't Know	0	3		1		4
5. Grade given to our school district teachers:	97		89		89	
Above Average (A or B)	0	78	0	85	0	83
Below Average (D or F)		1		1		1
6. Grade given to our school district school level administrators:						
Above Average (A or B)	97	76	93	91	67	59
Below Average (D or F)	0	3	0	1	10	11
7. Grade given to our school district central office administrators:						
Above Average (A or B)	90	76	59	73	49	38
Below Average (D or F)	4	5	10	7	16	21

* Percentages may add up to more than 100 percent due to rounding.

EXHIBIT A-20
BENCHMARK COMPARISONS
PART B: SCHOOL/DISTRICT CLIMATE

STATEMENT	(%A + SA) / (%D + SD)[1]					
	CENTRAL OFFICE ADMINISTRATOR	CENTRAL OFFICE ADMINISTRATOR IN OTHER DISTRICTS	PRINCIPAL/ ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL	PRINCIPAL/ ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL IN OTHER DISTRICTS	TEACHER	TEACHER IN OTHER DISTRICTS
1. I feel that I have the authority to adequately perform my job responsibilities.	75/18	79/15	87/10	80/13	77/12	81/12
2. I am actively looking for a job outside of this school division.	11/83	8/78	10/68	8/78	8/71	11/74
3. I am very satisfied with my job in this school division.	83/8	77/12	69/17	83/8	63/17	70/15
4. The work standards and expectations in this school district are equal to or above those of most other school districts.	68/4	75/7	69/14	83/6	64/13	63/14
5. This school district's officials enforce high work standards.	82/8	73/12	83/10	81/9	65/13	63/15
6. Workload is evenly distributed.	54/25	32/46	41/38	45/35	34/53	36/43
7. I feel that my work is appreciated by my supervisor(s).	90/8	75/13	62/20	74/15	60/20	65/21
8. Teachers who do not meet expected work standards are disciplined.	18/29	26/33	48/7	48/31	20/44	25/39
9. Staff (excluding teachers) who do not meet expected work standards are disciplined.	50/11	37/34	72/0	54/25	22/29	23/36
10. I feel that I am an integral part of this school division team.	89/4	74/11	79/10	74/12	62/14	59/20

[1]Percentage responding *agree* or *strongly agree*/Percentage responding *disagree* or *strongly disagree.* The *neutral* and *don't know* responses are omitted.

EXHIBIT A-21
BENCHMARK COMPARISONS
PART C1: DISTRICT ORGANIZATION

STATEMENT	(%A + SA) / (%D + SD)[1]					
	CENTRAL OFFICE ADMINISTRATOR	CENTRAL OFFICE ADMINISTRATOR IN OTHER DISTRICTS	PRINCIPAL/ ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL	PRINCIPAL/ ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL IN OTHER DISTRICTS	TEACHER	TEACHER IN OTHER DISTRICTS
1. Teachers and administrators in our district have excellent working relationships.	65/7	54/14	76/0	76/7	48/24	45/26
2. Most administrative practices in our school district are highly effective and efficient.	68/8	54/23	69/14	69/18	38/28	34/36
3. Administrative decisions are made promptly and decisively.	64/11	44/33	55/14	62/21	47/26	36/36
4. Central Office Administrators are easily accessible and open to input.	72/8	65/18	28/38	71/15	36/34	39/35
5. Authority for administrative decisions is delegated to the lowest possible level.	18/36	28/44	24/31	36/38	19/32	15/29
6. Teachers and staff are empowered with sufficient authority to perform their responsibilities effectively.	68/14	52/18	73/7	77/12	49/31	55/27
7. The extensive committee structure in our school district ensures adequate input from teachers and staff on most important decisions.	47/22	50/20	45/27	60/21	35/34	29/39
8. Our school district has too many committees.	7/36	37/32	24/41	35/34	45/15	43/13
9. Our school district has too many layers of administrators.	0/85	19/64	3/76	27/57	28/33	53/15
10. Most of district administrative processes (e.g., purchasing, travel requests, leave applications, personnel, etc.) are highly efficient.	78/0	54/25	62/10	57/26	50/24	35/28
11. Central office administrators are responsive to school needs.	85/4	76/8	59/24	65/20	39/30	27/34
12. School-based personnel play an important role in making decisions that affect schools in our school district.	65/11	48/23	65/13	61/24	46/26	35/33

[1]Percentage responding *agree* or *strongly agree*/Percentage responding *disagree* or *strongly disagree*. The *neutral* and *don't know* responses are omitted.

EXHIBIT A-22
BENCHMARK COMPARISONS
PART C2: DISTRICT ORGANIZATION

STATEMENT	(%G + E) / (%F + P)[1]					
	CENTRAL OFFICE ADMINISTRATOR	CENTRAL OFFICE ADMINISTRATOR IN OTHER DISTRICTS	PRINCIPAL/ ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL	PRINCIPAL/ ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL IN OTHER DISTRICTS	TEACHER	TEACHER IN OTHER DISTRICTS
1. Board of Education members' knowledge of the educational needs of students in this school division.	40/39	40/51	45/41	39/57	29/45	24/64
2. Board of Education members' knowledge of operations in this school division.	54/40	36/58	31/48	41/56	30/44	29/55
3. Board of Education members' work at setting or revising policies for this school division.	54/29	44/48	62/31	50/47	29/41	27/58
4. The School Division Superintendent's work as the educational leader of this school division.	71/25	78/18	62/38	81/17	50/43	49/40
5. The School Division Superintendent's work as the chief administrator (manager) of this school division.	75/22	77/20	55/45	81/17	49/46	50/38
6. Principals' work as the instructional leaders of their schools.	71/21	70/29	93/3	89/11	64/34	63/36
7. Principals' work as the managers of the staff and teachers.	79/15	74/25	93/3	94/6	67/32	67/32

[1]Percentage responding *good* or *excellent* / Percentage responding *fair* or *poor*. The *don't know* responses are omitted.

EXHIBIT A-23
BENCHMARK COMPARISONS
PART D1: CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

STATEMENT	(%A + SA) / (%D + SD)[1]					
	CENTRAL OFFICE ADMINISTRATOR	CENTRAL OFFICE ADMINISTRATOR IN OTHER DISTRICTS	PRINCIPAL/ ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL	PRINCIPAL/ ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL IN OTHER DISTRICTS	TEACHER	TEACHER IN OTHER DISTRICTS
1. The emphasis on learning in this school district has increased in recent years.	79/0	83/6	82/10	89/4	60/19	71/13
2. Sufficient student services are provided in this school district (e.g., counseling, speech therapy, health).	54/29	57/26	41/51	56/36	43/45	53/34
3. Our schools have the materials and supplies necessary for instruction in basic skills programs such as writing and mathematics.	86/0	63/17	76/13	75/14	61/23	54/31
4. I know who to contact in the central office to assist me with curriculum and instruction matters.	90/0	N/A	83/6	N/A	84/6	N/A
5. Lessons are organized to meet students' needs.	58/0	56/10	93/3	86/6	78/9	79/9
6. The curriculum is broad and challenging for most students.	61/7	70/8	93/0	86/7	73/14	77/11
7. Teachers in our schools know the material they teach.	79/0	69/6	97/0	90/4	93/1	88/4
8. Teachers and staff are given opportunities to participate in the textbook and material adoption processes.	93/0	N/A	93/0	N/A	83/3	N/A
9. Teachers have adequate supplies and equipment needed to perform their jobs effectively.	78/7	N/A	73/17	N/A	52/34	N/A
10. Our district provides curriculum guides for all grades and subject areas.	54/15	N/A	69/17	N/A	75/7	N/A
11. Our district uses the results of benchmark tests to monitor student performance and identify performance gaps.	64/15	N/A	62/17	N/A	82/5	N/A
12. Our district has effective educational programs for the following:						
a. Reading and Language Arts	93/0	N/A	86/7	N/A	74/11	N/A
b. Writing	79/7	N/A	59/10	N/A	54/22	N/A
c. Mathematics	86/8	N/A	76/17	N/A	74/11	N/A
d. Science	89/4	N/A	79/10	N/A	72/7	N/A
e. Social Studies (history or geography)	85/4	N/A	86/7	N/A	74/5	N/A
f. Foreign Language	68/4	N/A	48/14	N/A	40/6	N/A
g. Basic Computer Instruction	75/7	N/A	52/17	N/A	52/13	N/A
h. Advanced Computer Instruction	40/14	N/A	38/27	N/A	25/15	N/A
i. Music, Art, Drama, and other Fine Arts	82/4	N/A	87/3	N/A	74/6	N/A
j. Physical Education	75/7	N/A	87/0	N/A	73/6	N/A
k. Career and Technical (Vocational) Education	78/7	N/A	55/6	N/A	39/10	N/A
l. Business Education	71/11	N/A	52/7	N/A	36/3	N/A

EXHIBIT A-23 (Continued)
BENCHMARK COMPARISONS
PART D1: CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

| STATEMENT | (%A + SA) / (%D + SD)[1] | | | | | |
	CENTRAL OFFICE ADMINISTRATOR	CENTRAL OFFICE ADMINISTRATOR IN OTHER DISTRICTS	PRINCIPAL/ ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL	PRINCIPAL/ ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL IN OTHER DISTRICTS	TEACHER	TEACHER IN OTHER DISTRICTS
13. The district has effective programs for the following:						
a. Special Education	75/11	N/A	72/17	N/A	50/39	N/A
b. Literacy Program	78/0	N/A	65/17	N/A	48/22	N/A
c. Advanced Placement Program	78/0	N/A	65/3	N/A	49/4	N/A
d. Drop-out Prevention Program	43/29	N/A	20/28	N/A	13/21	N/A
e. Summer School Programs	75/11	N/A	37/38	N/A	44/19	N/A
f. Honors and Gifted Education	72/18	N/A	69/17	N/A	48/26	N/A
g. Alternative Education Programs	79/11	N/A	41/27	N/A	29/17	N/A
h. Career Counseling Program	36/18	N/A	31/10	N/A	17/16	N/A
i. College Counseling Program	39/18	N/A	35/7	N/A	21/13	N/A
14. The students-to-teacher ratio is reasonable.	71/7	N/A	72/14	N/A	57/30	N/A
15. Our district provides a high quality education that meets or exceeds state and federal mandates.	79/7	N/A	80/7	N/A	72/6	N/A

[1]Percentage responding *agree* or *strongly agree*/Percentage responding *disagree* or *strongly disagree.* The *neutral* and *don't know* responses are omitted.

EXHIBIT A-24
BENCHMARK COMPARISONS
PART D2: CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

| STATEMENT | (%G + E) / (%F + P)[1] | | | | | |
	CENTRAL OFFICE ADMINISTRATOR	CENTRAL OFFICE ADMINISTRATOR IN OTHER DISTRICTS	PRINCIPAL/ ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL	PRINCIPAL/ ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL IN OTHER DISTRICTS	TEACHER	TEACHER IN OTHER DISTRICTS
1. Teachers' work in meeting students' individual learning needs.	58/36	62/32	76/24	80/20	86/13	79/20
2. Teachers' work in communicating with parents/guardians.	43/47	49/41	76/24	68/32	84/15	75/24
3. How well students' test results are explained to parents/guardians.	46/43	36/44	65/31	51/47	54/33	38/52
4. The amount of time students spend on task learning in the classroom.	50/43	49/34	83/17	72/27	78/19	60/37

[1]Percentage responding *good* or *excellent* / Percentage responding *fair* or *poor.* The *don't know* responses are omitted.

EXHIBIT A-25
BENCHMARK COMPARISONS
PART E1: HUMAN RESOURCES

	STATEMENT	(%A + SA) / (%D + SD)[1]					
		CENTRAL OFFICE ADMINISTRATOR	CENTRAL OFFICE ADMINISTRATOR IN OTHER DISTRICTS	PRINCIPAL/ ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL	PRINCIPAL/ ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL IN OTHER DISTRICTS	TEACHER	TEACHER IN OTHER DISTRICTS
1.	Salary levels in this school district are competitive.	29/54	45/40	28/69	40/48	8/84	33/53
2.	Our district has an effective employee recognition program.	18/36	N/A	10/65	N/A	13/54	N/A
3.	Our district has an effective process for staffing critical shortage areas of teachers.	36/25	N/A	24/55	N/A	8/47	N/A
4.	My supervisor evaluates my job performance annually.	86/7	N/A	93/3	N/A	85/9	N/A
5.	Our district offers incentives for professional advancement.	25/33	N/A	34/49	N/A	22/46	N/A
6.	I know who to contact in the central office to assist me with professional development.	97/4	N/A	93/0	N/A	77/11	N/A
7.	I know who to contact in the central office to assist me with human resources matters such as licensure, promotion opportunities, employee benefits, etc	100/0	N/A	97/0	N/A	82/10	N/A
8.	My salary level is adequate for my level of work and experience.	29/50	42/45	24/58	32/58	7/83	20/69
9.	Our district has an effective teacher recruitment plan.	57/4	N/A	38/24	N/A	17/22	N/A
10.	I have a professional growth plan that addresses areas identified for my professional growth.	61/14	N/A	62/28	N/A	62/19	N/A

[1]Percentage responding *agree* or *strongly agree*/Percentage responding *disagree* or *strongly disagree.* The *neutral* and *don't know* responses are omitted.

EXHIBIT A-26
BENCHMARK COMPARISONS
PART E2: HUMAN RESOURCES

	STATEMENT	(%G + E) / (%F + P)[1]					
		CENTRAL OFFICE ADMINISTRATOR	CENTRAL OFFICE ADMINISTATOR IN OTHER DISTRICTS	PRINCIPAL/ ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL	PRINCIPAL/ ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL IN OTHER DISTRICTS	TEACHER	TEACHER IN OTHER DISTRICTS
1.	Staff development opportunities provided by this school division for teachers.	82/11	N/A	80/21	N/A	54/45	N/A
2.	Staff development opportunities provided by this school division for school administrators.	46/47	N/A	41/55	N/A	17/9	N/A
3.	Staff development opportunities provided by this school division for support staff.	40/57	N/A	27/55	N/A	15/19	N/A

[1]Percentage responding *good* or *excellent* / Percentage responding *fair* or *poor.* The *don't know* responses are omitted.

EXHIBIT A-27
BENCHMARK COMPARISONS
PART F: FACILITIES MAN/AGEMENT

STATEMENT	(%A + SA) / (%D + SD)[1]					
	CENTRAL OFFICE ADMINISTRATOR	CENTRAL OFFICE ADMINISTRATOR IN OTHER DISTRICTS	PRINCIPAL/ ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL	PRINCIPAL/ ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL IN OTHER DISTRICTS	TEACHER	TEACHER IN OTHER DISTRICTS
1. Our school buildings provide a healthy environment in which to teach.	61/18	N/A	65/27	N/A	50/37	N/A
2. Our schools have sufficient space and facilities to support the instructional programs.	32/50	26/62	38/59	30/59	26/65	28/62
3. Our facilities are clean.	75/14	N/A	90/3	N/A	61/23	N/A
4. Our facilities are well maintained.	61/18	N/A	73/20	N/A	50/28	N/A
5. Our district plans facilities in advance to support growing enrollment.	50/25	N/A	31/38	N/A	20/51	N/A
6. Parents, citizens, students, faculty, and staff have opportunities to provide input into facility planning.	75/7	N/A	76/10	N/A	45/14	N/A
7. Our school buildings and grounds are free of hazards that can cause accidental injury.	53/7	N/A	83/13	N/A	54/19	N/A

[1]Percentage responding *agree* or *strongly agree*/Percentage responding *disagree* or *strongly disagree.* The *neutral* and *don't know* responses are omitted.

EXHIBIT A-28
BENCHMARK COMPARISONS
PART G: FIN/ANCIAL MAN/AGEMENT/PURCHASING AND WAREHOUSING

STATEMENT	(%A + SA) / (%D + SD)[1]					
	CENTRAL OFFICE ADMINISTRATOR	CENTRAL OFFICE ADMINISTRATOR IN OTHER DISTRICTS	PRINCIPAL/ ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL	PRINCIPAL/ ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL IN OTHER DISTRICTS	TEACHER	TEACHER IN OTHER DISTRICTS
1. Funds are managed wisely to support education in this school district.	68/4	68/18	65/10	67/19	30/25	28/46
2. The budgeting process effectively involves administrators and staff.	82/4	N/A	66/21	N/A	29/29	N/A
3. School administrators are adequately trained in fiscal management techniques.	43/7	N/A	31/35	N/A	16/5	N/A
4. My school allocates financial resources equitably and fairly.	57/4	N/A	86/3	N/A	48/19	N/A
5. The purchasing department provides me with what I need.	86/0	N/A	73/7	N/A	51/22	N/A
6. The purchasing process is easy.	75/7	N/A	62/17	N/A	46/23	N/A
7. Textbooks are distributed to students in a timely manner.	33/7	N/A	83/6	N/A	59/11	N/A
8. The books and resources in the school library adequately meet the needs of students.	46/4	N/A	80/17	N/A	60/19	N/A

[1]Percentage responding *agree* or *strongly agree*/Percentage responding *disagree* or *strongly disagree.* The *neutral* and *don't know* responses are omitted.

EXHIBIT A-29
BENCHMARK COMPARISONS
PART H: TRANSPORTATION

	(%A + SA) / (%D + SD)[1]					
STATEMENT	**CENTRAL OFFICE ADMINISTRATOR**	**CENTRAL OFFICE ADMINISTRATOR IN OTHER DISTRICTS**	**PRINCIPAL/ ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL**	**PRINCIPAL/ ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL IN OTHER DISTRICTS**	**TEACHER**	**TEACHER IN OTHER DISTRICTS**
1. Students are often late arriving at or departing from school because the buses do not arrive at school on time.	4/54	8/55	0/90	18/68	14/69	17/60
2. The district has a simple method of requesting buses for special events and trips.	79/4	N/A	89/3	N/A	65/9	N/A
3. Bus drivers maintain adequate discipline on the buses.	40/7	N/A	48/35	N/A	31/17	N/A
4. Buses are clean.	61/4	N/A	73/7	N/A	54/1	N/A
5. Buses arrive early enough for students to eat breakfast at school.	50/0	N/A	87/10	N/A	67/10	N/A
6. Buses are safe.	78/0	N/A	86/10	N/A	46/13	N/A

[1]Percentage responding *agree* or *strongly agree*/Percentage responding *disagree* or *strongly disagree.* The *neutral* and *don't know* responses are omitted.

EXHIBIT A-30
BENCHMARK COMPARISONS
PART I1: TECHNOLOGY

	(%A + SA) / (%D + SD)[1]					
STATEMENT	**CENTRAL OFFICE ADMINISTRATOR**	**CENTRAL OFFICE ADMINISTRATOR IN OTHER DISTRICTS**	**PRINCIPAL/ ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL**	**PRINCIPAL/ ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL IN OTHER DISTRICTS**	**TEACHER**	**TEACHER IN OTHER DISTRICTS**
1. Our school district provides adequate technology-related staff development.	71/4	N/A	59/31	N/A	62/26	N/A
2. Our school district requests input on the long-range technology plan.	50/21	N/A	76/6	N/A	34/28	N/A
3. Our school district provides adequate technical support.	85/4	N/A	69/17	N/A	57/29	N/A
4. I have adequate equipment and computer support to conduct my work.	75/15	70/22	80/17	74/19	52/40	54/36
5. Administrative computer systems are easy to use.	82/4	N/A	76/7	N/A	57/9	N/A
6. Technology is effectively integrated into the curriculum in our district.	50/8	N/A	44/31	N/A	51/27	N/A

[1]Percentage responding *agree* or *strongly agree*/Percentage responding *disagree* or *strongly disagree.* The *neutral* and *don't know* responses are omitted.

EXHIBIT A-31
BENCHMARK COMPARISONS
PART I2: TECHNOLOGY

STATEMENT	(%G + E) / (%F + P)[1]					
	CENTRAL OFFICE ADMINISTRATOR	CENTRAL OFFICE ADMINISTRATOR IN OTHER DISTRICTS	PRINCIPAL/ ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL	PRINCIPAL/ ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL IN OTHER DISTRICTS	TEACHER	TEACHER IN OTHER DISTRICTS
1. The school division's job of providing adequate instructional technology.	58/25	54/43	62/37	46/52	48/47	47/51
2. The school division's use of technology for administrative purposes.	89/11	53/46	83/17	54/45	52/19	43/44

[1]Percentage responding *good* or *excellent* / Percentage responding *fair* or *poor*. The *don't know* responses are omitted.

EXHIBIT A-32
BENCHMARK COMPARISONS
PART J: FOOD SERVICES

STATEMENT	(%A + SA) / (%D + SD)[1]					
	CENTRAL OFFICE ADMINISTRATOR	CENTRAL OFFICE ADMINISTRATOR IN OTHER DISTRICTS	PRINCIPAL/ ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL	PRINCIPAL/ ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL IN OTHER DISTRICTS	TEACHER	TEACHER IN OTHER DISTRICTS
1. The food services department provides nutritious and appealing meals and snacks.	50/18	62/14	73/13	58/26	50/28	43/34
2. The food services department encourages student participation through customer satisfaction surveys.	7/18	N/A	24/28	N/A	11/27	N/A
3. Cafeteria staff are helpful and friendly.	75/0	N/A	93/0	N/A	88/5	N/A
4. Cafeteria facilities are clean and neat.	82/0	N/A	93/0	N/A	94/0	N/A
5. Parents/guardians are informed about the menus.	75/8	N/A	89/0	N/A	82/2	N/A

[1]Percentage responding *agree* or *strongly agree*/Percentage responding *disagree* or *strongly disagree*. The *neutral* and *don't know* responses are omitted.

EXHIBIT A-33
BENCHMARK COMPARISONS
PART K: SAFETY AND SECURITY

STATEMENT	(%A + SA) / (%D + SD)[1]					
	CENTRAL OFFICE ADMINISTRATOR	CENTRAL OFFICE ADMINISTRATOR IN OTHER DISTRICTS	PRINCIPAL/ ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL	PRINCIPAL/ ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL IN OTHER DISTRICTS	TEACHER	TEACHER IN OTHER DISTRICTS
1. Our schools are safe and secure from crime.	79/7	66/16	86/7	81/9	56/25	53/28
2. Our schools effectively handle misbehavior problems.	72/7	54/24	93/0	74/14	44/34	37/48
3. There is administrative support for managing student behavior in our schools.	75/0	69/12	93/3	89/6	61/23	55/29
4. If there were an emergency in my school/office, I would know how to respond appropriately.	86/14	78/7	100/0	96/2	86/5	87/7
5. Our district has a problem with gangs.	7/61	N/A	0/83	N/A	4/60	N/A
6. Our district has a problem with drugs, including alcohol.	61/7	N/A	34/31	N/A	46/19	N/A
7. Our district has a problem with vandalism.	46/21	N/A	17/44	N/A	33/23	N/A
8. Our school enforces a strict campus access policy.	36/22	N/A	59/17	N/A	32/32	N/A

[1]Percentage responding *agree* or *strongly agree*/Percentage responding *disagree* or *strongly disagree.* The *neutral* and *don't know* responses are omitted.

EXHIBIT A-34
BENCHMARK COMPARISONS
PART L1: PARENTS/GUARDIANS AND THE COMMUNITY

STATEMENT	(%A + SA) / (%D + SD)[1]					
	CENTRAL OFFICE ADMINISTRATOR	CENTRAL OFFICE ADMINISTRATOR IN OTHER DISTRICTS	PRINCIPAL/ ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL	PRINCIPAL/ ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL IN OTHER DISTRICTS	TEACHER	TEACHER IN OTHER DISTRICTS
1. In general, parents/guardians take responsibility for their children's behavior in our schools.	57/7	42/34	72/17	51/31	29/50	27/53
2. Parents/guardians in this school district are satisfied with the education their children are receiving.	79/0	57/16	89/0	73/9	65/5	53/14
3. Most parents/guardians seem to know what goes on in our schools.	57/11	36/38	65/24	43/36	50/25	29/50
4. Parents/guardians play an active role in decision making in our schools.	54/11	35/24	62/10	60/20	38/26	36/38
5. This community really cares about its children's education.	89/0	63/15	89/3	72/14	70/12	49/27
6. Our district works with local businesses and groups in the community to help improve education.	72/4	N/A	69/14	N/A	60/12	N/A
7. Parents/guardians receive regular communications from the district.	89/0	N/A	90/3	N/A	83/4	N/A
8. Our school facilities are available for community use.	97/4	N/A	100/0	N/A	84/3	N/A

[1]Percentage responding *agree* or *strongly agree*/Percentage responding *disagree* or *strongly disagree.* The *neutral* and *don't know* responses are omitted.

EXHIBIT A-35
BENCHMARK COMPARISONS
PART L2: PARENTS/GUARDIANS AND THE COMMUNITY

STATEMENT	(%G + E) / (%F + P)[1]					
	CENTRAL OFFICE ADMINISTRATOR	CENTRAL OFFICE ADMINISTRATOR IN OTHER DISTRICTS	PRINCIPAL/ ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL	PRINCIPAL/ ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL IN OTHER DISTRICTS	TEACHER	TEACHER IN OTHER DISTRICTS
1. Parent/Guardians/guardians' efforts in helping their children to do better in school.	65/33	29/56	62/38	35/64	47/51	21/76
2. Parent/Guardians/guardians' participation in school activities and organizations.	64/33	27/59	59/41	33/66	39/59	23/75
3. How well relations are maintained with various groups in the community.	61/22	60/35	76/21	66/32	50/32	43/44

[1]Percentage responding *good* or *excellent* / Percentage responding *fair* or *poor*. The *don't know* responses are omitted.

EXHIBIT A-36
BENCHMARK COMPARISONS
PART M: SCHOOL DISTRICT OPERATIONS

SCHOOL DISTRICT PROGRAMS AND FUNCTIONS	%(NEEDS SOME IMPROVEMENT + NEEDS MAJOR IMPROVEMENT)[1]		/		% (ADEQUATE + OUTSTANDING)[1]	
	CENTRAL OFFICE ADMINISTRATOR	CENTRAL OFFICE ADMINISTRATOR IN OTHER DISTRICTS	PRINCIPAL/ ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL	PRINCIPAL/ ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL IN OTHER DISTRICTS	TEACHER	TEACHER IN OTHER DISTRICTS
a. Budgeting	33/61	47/45	37/58	49/48	62/18	65/16
b. Strategic planning	47/39	44/42	62/34	38/53	45/18	47/24
c. Curriculum planning	36/46	30/50	48/52	40/59	40/52	52/41
d. Financial management and accounting	7/79	36/53	17/75	35/60	32/31	49/23
e. Grants administration	0/85	24/49	20/62	34/49	17/46	53/38
f. Community relations	21/61	39/53	27/72	37/61	37/51	42/38
g. Program evaluation, research, and assessment	36/32	34/50	62/34	32/65	35/36	53/40
h. Instructional technology	25/57	48/41	48/51	60/39	44/45	65/16
i. Administrative technology	21/75	42/49	24/76	48/49	23/38	24/34
j. Internal Communication	60/39	N/A	62/38	N/A	44/45	N/A
k. Instructional support	22/61	32/51	59/41	48/49	59/36	48/45
l. Coordination of Federal Programs (e.g., Title I, Special Education)	15/64	24/52	35/48	32/53	38/40	36/40
m. Personnel recruitment	21/75	47/42	55/38	47/48	33/31	40/35
n. Personnel selection	22/79	46/48	35/58	41/57	30/45	42/37
o. Personnel evaluation	50/46	47/49	75/24	40/58	30/64	41/48
p. Staff development	32/68	48/49	38/62	48/49	44/54	42/52
q. Data processing	18/68	38/45	17/55	39/51	13/34	21/34
r. Purchasing	7/86	34/53	7/82	37/58	23/39	33/30
s. Safety and security	29/58	26/61	31/69	29/67	41/50	40/46
t. Plant maintenance	22/71	43/48	42/58	55/43	38/42	41/37
u. Facilities planning	32/54	38/48	52/45	51/43	49/25	41/28
v. Transportation	11/83	21/65	27/72	43/54	31/54	32/46
w. Food service	18/71	18/67	17/80	35/65	37/58	41/47
x. Custodial services	25/68	37/54	31/69	47/52	39/58	44/49
y. Risk management	18/57	20/54	44/28	23/63	27/24	22/32

[1] Percentage responding *needs some improvement* or *needs major improvement* / Percentage responding *adequate* or *outstanding*. The *neutral* and *don't know* responses are omitted.