WINCHESTER PUBLIC SCHOOLS
SCHOOL DIVISION EFFICIENCY REVIEW

FINAL REPORT

Submitted by:

MGT
OF AMERICA, INC.

March 24, 2006

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2123 Centre Pointe Boulevard
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Commonwealth of Virginia has created the School Efficiency Review program, which provides outside educational expertise to school divisions for assistance in utilizing educational dollars to the fullest extent possible. This program involves contracting with educational experts to perform efficiency reviews for select school divisions within the Commonwealth that volunteer to participate. School division efficiency reviews, in conjunction with the Standards of Learning results, enable Virginians to see how well each school division is performing and ensure that ideas for innovative reform are made available to all school divisions in the Commonwealth.

Since its creation in 2003 the program has expanded every year and will include more than ten school divisions in the 2005-06 school year. In August of 2005, MGT of America was awarded a contract to conduct an Efficiency Review of Winchester Public School Division (WPS). As stated in the Request for Proposals (RFP), the purpose of the study is to conduct an external review to provide findings, commendations, recommendations, and include projected costs and/or cost savings with recommendations. The object of the review is to identify ways that WPS could realize cost savings in non-instructional areas in order to redirect those funds towards classroom activities.

Overview of Winchester Public School Division

Winchester Public Schools consists of one high school, one middle school, four elementary schools, and one early childhood development center for 4-year-olds. Division administrative functions are centrally housed in the administrative offices at 12 N. Washington Street in downtown Winchester.

Over 300 teachers, staff, and support personnel work together to meet the educational needs of nearly 3,700 students. Nearly 36 percent of WPS students are minorities, and 42 percent qualify for free or reduced lunch. All of the WPS schools are fully accredited.

Review Methodology

The methodology MGT used to prepare for and conduct the Winchester Public School Division 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 work plan 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; and

■ 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 the Winchester Public Schools.

More than 100 documents were requested from WPS. 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; and
■ 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 the Winchester Public School Division was conducted on October 6, 2005. An MGT consultant interviewed central office administrators, community leaders, school board members, and county board of supervisors concerning the management and operations of WPS.

Employee Surveys

To secure the involvement of central office administrators, principals/assistant principals, and teachers in the focus and scope of the efficiency review, a survey for each group was prepared and available on-line in October 2005. Through the use of anonymous surveys, division staff were given the opportunity to express their views about the management and operations of the Winchester Public School Division. 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.

Surveys results are published 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 Winchester Public Schools during the week of October 31, 2005. As part of our on-site review, we examined the following WPS systems and operations:

- Division Administration;
- Personnel and Human Resources Management;
- Financial Management;
- Purchasing, Warehousing, and Fixed Assets;
- Education Service Delivery and Management;
- Special Programs;
- Facilities Use and Management;
- Transportation;
- Technology Management; and
- Food Service.

Prior to the on-site review, each team member was provided with an extensive set of information about WPS operations. During the on-site work, team members conducted detailed reviews of the structure and operations of WPS in their assigned functional areas. All WPS schools were visited at least once, and most schools were visited more than once.

Our systematic assessment of WPS 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 analyses of existing data and new information, we tailored our guidelines to reflect local policies and administrative procedures, the unique conditions of WPS, and the input of administrators in the school division. We met with appropriate central office and school-level staff as well as Winchester city officials and reviewed all of documentation provided by these individuals.

Comparison Summary

When comparing data on the Winchester Public Schools to the other specified school divisions within the Commonwealth of Virginia, the number of division-level administrators in Winchester is lower than the average for the peer divisions. Per 1,000 students, WPS has the second lowest number of principals/assistant principals, the second highest number of teacher aides, technology instructors, and guidance counselors and librarians, and the third highest number of teachers. Winchester has a higher number of elementary and secondary principal positions than the peer division average, but substantially lower average salaries for these positions. The same is true for districtwide instructional positions.

In comparison to the peer school divisions averages, WPS reports slightly higher percentages of total disbursements in instruction, attendance and health services, and operation and maintenance services as well as a higher per pupil expenditure. In regard to revenues by fund source, the division reports that most of their revenue comes from local funds, and the percentage of their local funds is higher than the peer average. The percentages of state and federal funds that Winchester receives are comparable to the peer division averages.

WPS pays the second highest share cost for health insurance on employees only and the lowest among the peer divisions for family coverage. WPS has the lowest teacher salary at the minimum benchmark and at 20 years, with the gap between highest and lowest salaries increasing from $4,201 to $25,094, respectively. At five and 10 years, three peer divisions have salaries lower than WPS, and at 15 years, two are lower.

In terms of student demographics, Winchester has the third-lowest student population and the third-lowest student population per 1,000 general population. Winchester has the same number of schools as the peer average and the third-highest percentage of economically disadvantaged students.

Major Commendations

Detailed commendations for exemplary efficiencies are found in the full report in Chapters 2 through 10. Among the major commendations for which Winchester Public Schools is recognized are:

- developing a consistent and predictable process for the development and dissemination of materials necessary for the conduct of business-like school board meetings;

- establishing a subcommittee structure that provides ongoing study and analysis of critical issues facing the Winchester Public Schools;

- developing a thoughtful School Board decision-making and conflict resolution process that brings stability to the school division;

- updating the School Board Policy Manual on a timely schedule;

- controlling legal expenses;

- establishing processes designed to ensure an effective relationship between the Board and Superintendent and unify efforts to improve the Winchester Public Schools;

- providing training to the Administrative Team in team development, facilitative leadership techniques, planning, and other related skills.

- placing the School Board Policy Manual on its Web site;

- implementing a pragmatic Strategic Plan and accompanying Comprehensive Plan that are "living documents" for the School Board and staff;

- providing systematic cross-training of key secretarial personnel serving the board and the Superintendent;

- using a combination of contracted services and internal efforts to accomplish its public information goals;

- providing an efficient, well-organized orientation program;

- adopting a video training program on Bloodborne Pathogen Awareness, thus standardizing training delivered to Winchester Public Schools staff members and ensuring timeliness in hiring substitute teachers;

- utilizing a participative budget process that is understood by all stakeholders;

- documenting the improvements needed to district facilities and the funding necessary to fund the projects through a Capital Improvement Plan and budget process;

- demonstrating a commitment to provide necessary funding for school facilities;

- requiring immediate responses from school principals when the independent auditor identifies any questionable transactions in student activity funds;

- increasing the collection, analysis, and use of data as a basis for instructional decision making along with public reporting procedures that have contributed to improved student achievement, closer ongoing examination of the performance of student subgroups, and increased accountability procedures that mirror state and federal desires.

- using a retired teacher to collect and make exemplary lesson plans that incorporate technology into instruction, are created by peers in the division, and are easily accessible to teachers;

- actualizing its beliefs in the ability of all students to achieve at high levels through data analysis, strategic instructional planning, and teacher

development, and opening doors to courses traditionally closed to students other than high achievers.

- making a concerted effort to provide opportunities for career education to all groups of students in the division to prepare them for forecasted job needs within the Commonwealth;

- focusing on learning for all students and schools and offering individualized approaches to remediation that are varied and give students opportunities to succeed without necessarily singling them out as slow learners.

- seeking tools to improve student services and channel teacher time from paperwork toward provision of direct student services;

- providing targeted support services to the burgeoning ESL population;

- having five-year enrollment projections and using several enrollment projection methods, including a cohort survival method in the Capital Improvement Plan;

- keeping accurate and complete building blueprint records, including "red-lined" drawings;

- providing systematic training for custodial and maintenance employees to improve their productivity;

- employing bus drivers and aides who demonstrate dedication, flexibility, and professionalism in accomplishing the core Transportation mission to move the students safely to and from school.

- making the Transportation Coordinator a 12-month position and creating a Lead Driver position;

- utilizing an exceptional Vehicle Maintenance Information System;

- having the Technology Resource Teachers report to the Director of Technology;

- implementing successfully a proven infrastructure for school division operations;

- having an informative and user-friendly Web site;

- implementing an efficient and effective disaster recovery system for the school division;

- creating a comprehensive standard operating procedure manual for the Technology Department staff;

- performing regularly scheduled inventories for technology-related assets;

- performing thorough evaluations on technology-related items that are requested for approval by the school division;

- receiving noted and substantial compliance in the central office and two elementary schools during the Commonwealth of Virginia's Federal Program Monitoring Review for Food Services;

- establishing a process to review food service operation equipment on an annual basis to determine replacement needs and the available monies in the Fund Balance;

- involving food service staff in discussions involving renovation work when kitchens are cafeterias are part of the construction plans;

- using direct certification and following up on all students that may be eligible for free or reduced-price meals;

- improving dramatically its cash balance during the 2004-05 school year;

- using commodities that produce rebates based on commodity values assigned by the USDA; and

- keeping meal prices in step with both peer division averages and prices throughout the Commonwealth of Virginia.

Major Findings and Recommendations

Although this Executive Summary briefly highlights key efficiency issues in WPS, detailed recommendations for improving operations are found throughout the main body of the full report. Fiscal impacts using existing resources should be scheduled by the division using a comprehensive implementation plan in order to systematically allocate staff time. Major findings and recommendations for improvement include the following:

- Provide for an annual self-evaluation of the School Board **(Chapter 2, Recommendation 2-2).**

- Redefine the role of Director of Instruction as the Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction **(Chapter 2, Recommendation 2-3).**

- Reorganize the administration of the division office to reduce the number of direct reports to the Superintendent of Schools **(Chapter 2, Recommendation 2-4).**

- Consolidate all employee personnel files within the Human Resources Department and establish procedures for their maintenance and security **(Chapter 3, Recommendation 3-1).**

- Develop a comprehensive personnel policy and procedures manual for the Human Resources Department **(Chapter 3, Recommendation 3-2).**

- Develop and implement an on-line staff feedback survey to assist the Human Resources Department in evaluating the nature and quality of services provided by the Central Office **(Chapter 3, Recommendation 3-3).**

- Intensify efforts to recruit qualified minority applicants for job openings **(Chapter 3, Recommendation 3-4).**

- Develop an internal, on-line exit survey designed to provide Winchester Public Schools with a comprehensive evaluation of all the reasons why teachers and employees are leaving the school division **(Chapter 3, Recommendation 3-6).**

- Develop job descriptions for each position in the school division using a standardized format that is reviewed and updated every three years **(Chapter 3, Recommendation 3-7).**

- Direct a wider range of training activities to increase staff development for classified, administrative, and paraprofessional staff **(Chapter 3, Recommendation 3-8)**.

- Review the adequacy of the Insurance Fund reserve and establish a Board policy **(Chapter 4, Recommendation 4-1).**

- Conduct a labor market survey with assistance from Human Resources to determine competitive salaries and benefits for Winchester Public School teachers and principals **(Chapter 4, Recommendation 4-2).**

- Identify alternative solutions and prepare a cost benefit analysis for services currently obtained from the Northwest Regional Education Programs **(Chapter 4, Recommendation 4-5).**

- Increase emphasis of the division's state fiduciary responsibility concerning Student Activity Funds and improve guidance pertaining to documentation of transactions to school principals **(Chapter 4, Recommendation 4-6).**

- Hire a Director of Purchasing and Risk Management **(Chapter 5, Recommendation 5-1).**

- Develop a process to monitor aggregate purchases made from individual vendors **(Chapter 5, Recommendation 5-2).**

- Develop and implement a cell phone policy **(Chapter 5, Recommendation 5-4).**

- Analyze current insurance coverage to determine if the division is protected from losses with the proper level of coverage and deductibles and develop a process to annually review coverage and deductibles **(Chapter 5, Recommendation 5-7).**

- Adopt the proposed revised organizational structure for the Department of Instruction **(Chapter 6, Recommendation 6-1).**

- Plan and implement training on the new database as soon as it is available throughout the division to ensure that all personnel have access to make instructional decisions relative to their positions **(Chapter 6, Recommendation 6-3).**

- Revise Board policies relating to curriculum and instruction to include clear expectations for timelines, reporting and monitoring structures, and a revision cycle that will ensure that, at least annually, feedback is solicited and incorporated into all aspects of the curriculum, instruction, and professional development that serve as the backbone of the division's instructional program **(Chapter 6, Recommendation 6-4).**

- Evaluate the efficacy of a single school-based person maintaining responsibility for curricular support/leadership, testing coordination, and administrative assistant responsibilities on an annual basis **(Chapter 6, Recommendation 6-5).**

- Consider developing a clear, uniform set of expectations for TRTs along with guidelines that ensure that their responsibilities are aligned with division technology and strategic plans and that their time is protected to focus on the purpose for which they were hired **(Chapter 6, Recommendation 6-7).**

- Expand monitoring of instruction at the school level to ensure that differentiation is meeting the needs at students at all ability levels **(Chapter 6, Recommendation 6-10).**

- Intensify plans to identify and place students who are representative of the entire student body in classes for gifted students **(Chapter 6, Recommendation 6-11).**

- Provide data analysis as it pertains to the ongoing school improvement process **(Chapter 6, Recommendation 6-12).**

- Formalize the division's approach to professional development related to curriculum and instruction **(Chapter 6, Recommendation 6-13).**

- Schedule all students in one grade into the Inventions and Innovations lab during the 2006-07 school year **(Chapter 6, Recommendation 6-14).**

- Explore the addition of career and technical courses and programs or academies at the secondary level **(Chapter 6, Recommendation 6-16).**

- Implement a system-wide early intervention process prior to referral for evaluation for special education services **(Chapter 7, Recommendation 7-1).**

- Expand formal processes in the division to enhance efforts to ensure that differentiation and inclusive practices are used systematically in all Special Education classes **(Chapter 7, Recommendation 7-2).**

- Continue to evaluate the efficiency of the use of on-line IEP software to determine that it is being used consistently and contributing to more use of teacher time for instruction **(Chapter 7, Recommendation 7-4).**

- Solicit sample job descriptions from other school divisions so that the position that has been allocated can be filled **(Chapter 7, Recommendation 7-5).**

- Conduct a physical assessment of all school division buildings, including support buildings, to include structural, electrical-mechanical, safety, and accessibility issues **(Chapter 8, Recommendation 8-3).**

- Conduct an educational suitability assessment of all school division buildings to include general classrooms, special learning spaces, and support spaces **(Chapter 8, Recommendation 8-4).**

- Create maintenance standards that define expectations for the maintenance of school buildings **(Chapter 8, Recommendation 8-9).**

- Explore the possibility of reduced insurance premiums as a result of the record of custodial and maintenance training **(Chapter 8, Recommendation 8-13).**

- Use automatic product dispensing devices for each custodial closet to reduce excessive use of custodial products **(Chapter 8, Recommendation 8-14)**.

- Hire 6.3 FTE custodian positions to the work force and balance the square feet per custodian loads **(Chapter 8, Recommendation 8-15).**

- Install additional energy- and utility-saving devices throughout the Winchester Public Schools **(Chapter 8, Recommendation 8-16).**

- Employ a half-time Resource Conservation Manager to lower utility costs (**Chapter 8, Recommendation 8-18).**

- Hire a Contract Substitute Driver and use the Transportation Coordinator as a driver in emergencies only **(Chapter 9, Recommendation 9-1).**

- Improve communications immediately between the Transportation base station and buses operating in WPS by installing a power pack, mobile unit, and outside antenna and ensure that either the Transportation Coordinator or Lead Driver is present in the office during critical morning and afternoon bus runs **(Chapter 9, Recommendation 9-11).**

- Centralize overall responsibility for the training, safety, and accident program in WPS to ensure that personnel who manage the program are adequately trained **(Chapter 9, Recommendation 9-12).**

- Initiate and formalize a contract, memorandum of agreement, or other formal document with the City of Winchester for vehicle and equipment maintenance services **(Chapter 9, Recommendation 9-13).**

- Implement spare bus policy mandating 10 percent of the peak use bus fleet as spares **(Chapter 9, Recommendation 9-14).**

- Review the WPS Technology Plan on an annual basis and include departments or positions responsible for implementation within specific and limited time frames **(Chapter 10, Recommendation 10-3).**

- Create and maintain a formal technology-related equipment replacement policy using formal specifications and incorporate it into the Technology Plan for Winchester Public Schools **(Chapter 10, Recommendation 10-6).**

- Develop a database that provides a comprehensive inventory for all software used throughout Winchester Public Schools **(Chapter 10, Recommendation 10-11).**

- Add a phase to technology-related initiatives that includes staff training **(Chapter 10, Recommendation 10-13).**

- Establish a policy on MPLH to implement benchmark staffing levels on an annual basis **(Chapter 11, Recommendation 11-1).**

- Reduce labor costs to best practice levels of 40 percent of revenue and expand reporting by each school for better staffing analyses **(Chapter 11, Recommendation 11-2).**

- Use Daniel Morgan Middle School's expansive kitchen as the cooking school for Handley High **(Chapter 11, Recommendation 11-4).**

- Implement strategies to raise student participation rates for breakfast **(Chapter 11, Recommendation 11-6).**

- Reduce food costs to 36 percent of revenue, which is according to best practices, in Winchester Public Schools **(Chapter 11, Recommendation 11-11).**

- Produce an automated program to create monthly profit and loss statements for food service operations **(Chapter 11, Recommendation 11-13).**

Fiscal Impact

Based on the analyses of data obtained from interviews, surveys, community input, state and division documents, and first-hand observations in Winchester Public Schools, the MGT team developed 44 commendations and 110 recommendations in this report. Nineteen (19) recommendations have fiscal implications.

As shown below in Exhibit 1, full implementation of the recommendations in this report would generate a gross savings of more than $2.3 million over five years with a net cost of about $1.7 million. It is important to note that many of the recommendations MGT made without specific fiscal impacts are expected to result in a net cost savings to the division, depending on how the division elects to implement them. It is also important to note that costs and savings presented in this report are in 2004-05 dollars and do not reflect increases due to salary or inflation adjustments.

Exhibit 1 shows the total costs and savings for all recommendations.

EXHIBIT 1
WINCHESTER PUBLIC SCHOOLS
SUMMARY OF ANNUAL SAVINGS AND COSTS

CATEGORY	YEARS					TOTAL FIVE-YEAR SAVINGS (COSTS)
	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	
TOTAL SAVINGS	$417,504	$486,020	$486,020	$486,020	$486,020	$2,361,584
TOTAL (COSTS)	($281,061)	($352,502)	($352,502)	($352,502)	($352,502)	($1,691,069)
TOTAL NET SAVINGS (COSTS)	$136,443	$133,518	$133,518	$133,518	$133,518	$670,515
ONE-TIME SAVINGS (COSTS)						($328,711)
TOTAL FIVE-YEAR NET SAVINGS (COSTS) INCLUDING ONE-TIME SAVINGS (COSTS)						$341,804

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

In September 2005, the Commonwealth of Virginia contracted with MGT of America, Inc., to conduct a School Division Efficiency Review of Winchester Public Schools (WPS). The review focused on the financial, organizational, and operational effectiveness of WPS. Exhibit 1-1 shows an overview of MGT's work plan, and Exhibit 1-2 provides the timeline for the project activities.

1.1 *Overview of Winchester Public Schools*

Winchester Public Schools consists of one high school, one middle school, four elementary schools, and one early childhood development center for 4-year-olds. Division administrative functions are centrally housed in the administrative offices at 12 N. Washington Street in downtown Winchester.

Over 300 teachers, staff, and support personnel work together to meet the educational needs of nearly 3,700 students. Thirty-six percent (36%) of WPS students are minorities, and forty-two percent (42%) qualify for free or reduced lunch. All of the WPS schools are fully accredited.

1.2 *Methodology*

The methodology MGT used to prepare for and conduct the WPS School Division 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 work plan 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, and staff;

- 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;

EXHIBIT 1-1
OVERVIEW OF THE WORK PLAN FOR THE EFFICIENCY REVIEW
OF WINCHESTER PUBLIC SCHOOLS

PHASE I - PROJECT INITIATION

Task 1.0 Initiate Project	**Task 2.0** Develop Preliminary Profile of Winchester Public Schools
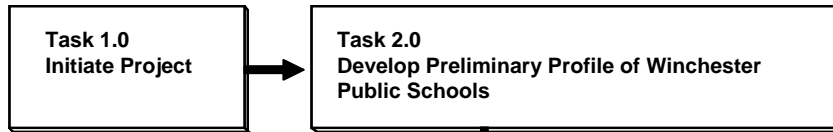
PHASE II - STAKEHOLDER INVOLVEMENT AND DIAGNOSTIC REVIEW

Task 3.0 Conduct Preliminary Review	**Task 4.0** Conduct Written Surveys of District Administrators, Principals, and Teachers	**Task 5.0** Solicit Public Input in the Management and Performance Review	**Task 6.0** Tailor MGT and Virginia Study Guidelines for Winchester Public Schools
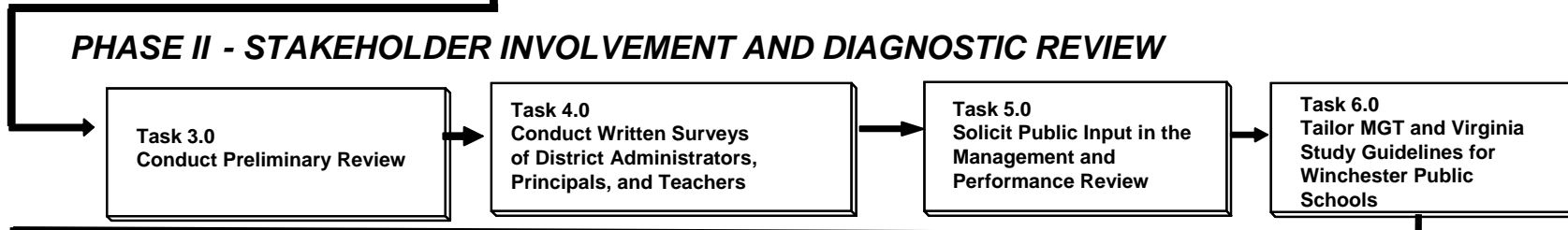
PHASE III - IN-DEPTH EFFICIENCY STUDY

Task 7.0 Review Division Administration	**Task 12.0** Review Special Education Programs
Task 8.0 Review Personnel and Human Resources Management	**Task 13.0** Review Facilities Use and Management
Task 9.0 Review Financial Management	**Task 14.0** Review Transportation
Task 10.0 Review Purchasing, Warehousing, and Fixed Assets	**Task 15.0** Review Technology Management
Task 11.0 Review Educational Service Delivery and Management	**Task 16.0** Food Service

PHASE V - PROJECT REPORTING

Task 18.0 Prepare Draft and Final Reports
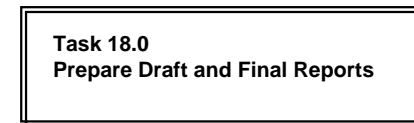
PHASE IV - COMPARISON TO OTHER SCHOOL DIVISIONS

Task 17.0 Conduct Benchmark Analysis with Comparison School Divisions
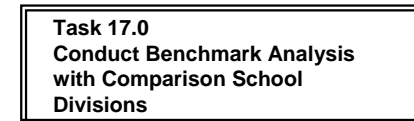
EXHIBIT 1-2
TIMELINE FOR THE EFFICIENCY REVIEW OF
WINCHESTER PUBLIC SCHOOLS

TIME FRAME	ACTIVITY
September 2005	■ Finalized contract with the Commonwealth of Virginia. ■ Conducted initial meeting with Winchester Public Schools officials. ■ Designed tailor-made, written surveys for central office administrators, principals, and teachers.
October 2005	■ Collected and analyzed existing and comparative data available from the school division. ■ Produced profile tables of Winchester Public Schools. ■ Disseminated surveys to administrators and teachers.
October 6, 2005	On-site visit with Winchester Public Schools. ■ Conducted diagnostic review. ■ Collected data. ■ Interviewed School Board members and City and County officials. ■ Interviewed central office administrators. ■ Interviewed business and community leaders.
Week of October 10, 2005	Analyzed collected data.
Week of October 17, 2005	Tailored review guidelines and trained MGT team members using findings from the above analyses.
Week of October 31, 2005	Conducted formal on-site review, including school visits.
November – December 2005	Requested additional data from the school division and analyzed data.
November – December 2005	Prepared Draft Final Report.
January 2006	Submitted Draft Final Report.
March 2006	Revised Draft Report.
To Be Determined	Submitted Final Report.

- identify exemplary programs and practices as well as needed improvements;

- document all findings; and

- 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.

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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 October 2005. Through the use of anonymous surveys,

administrators and teachers were given the opportunity to express their views about the management and operations of Winchester 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.

WPS staff were given from October 3, 2005, through October 11, 2005, to respond. The response rates for the three surveys were good. Sixty-seven (67) percent of central office administrators returned a survey, as did 92 percent of principals and assistant principals, and 36 percent of teachers. MGT compared all survey responses among the three employee groups and compared all WPS administrators and teachers to those in the more than 30 districts where we have conducted similar surveys.

The surveys are contained 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

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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 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" refers to 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 assess comparative operating performance and identify best practices.

With this in mind, MGT initiated a benchmarking comparison of the Winchester Public Schools 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 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. WPS is identified in Cluster 6 and MGT, in conjunction with the Governor's Office and WPS leadership, selected a set of school divisions from Cluster 6 to try to capture the characteristics of comparable city school divisions. The Virginia public school divisions chosen for comparison were:

- Fredericksburg City Public Schools Division;
- Charlottesville City Public Schools Division;
- Manassas Park City Public Schools Division;
- Manassas City Public Schools Division; and
- Salem City Public Schools Division.

Exhibit 1-3 illustrates how the comparison school divisions compare to WPS in terms of enrollment, number of schools, and number of school division staff. As can be seen:

- WPS (3,678) has roughly 300 fewer students than the peer division average student population of 3,936.

- With 156 students per 1,000 people in the general population, WPS falls in the middle of the range of peer division student to general population ratio.

- WPS' percent of economically disadvantaged students (38.8 percent) is slightly higher than the peer division average (35 percent).

- WPS, with six schools, is equal to the peer division average.

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

SCHOOL DIVISION	CLUSTER IDENTIFICATION	TOTAL STUDENT POPULATION	STUDENT POPULATION PER 1,000 GENERAL POPULATION	PERCENT ECONOMICALLY DISADVANTAGED	TOTAL NUMBER OF SCHOOLS
Winchester	**6**	**3,678**	**156**	**42.08%**	**6**
Fredericksburg City	6	2,473	128	48.2%	4
Charlottesville City	6	4,388	97	48.1%	10
Manassas Park City	6	2,374	232	31.3%	4
Manassas City	6	6,761	192	23.3%	7
Salem City	6	3,944	159	20.3%	6
Peer Division Averages	N/A	**3,936**	**161**	**35%**	**6**

Sources: Virginia Department of Education Web site, 2005; United States Census Bureau, 2000 Census Data; www.schoolmatters.com.

Exhibit 1-4 offers a comparison of classroom teachers per 1,000 students among the comparison school divisions. As shown in the exhibit:

- At 92.6, WPS has the third highest number of teachers per 1,000 students of its peer divisions, and a higher number than the state average of 81.45.

- In grades K through 7, WPS has a ratio of 12.1 students per classroom teaching position, which is below the peer division average, and below the state average.

- In grades 8 through 12, WPS has a ratio of 8.8 students per classroom teaching position, the lowest of all the peer divisions, and lower than the state average of 11.2.

EXHIBIT 1-4
TEACHER STAFFING LEVELS AND PUPIL: TEACHER RATIOS
PEER SCHOOL DIVISIONS
2003-04 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
Winchester	**92.6**	**12.1**	**8.8**
Fredericksburg City	95.5	10.3	11.2
Charlottesville City	103.7	9.8	9.2
Manassas Park City	83.7	13.0	10.9
Manassas City	77.2	12.7	13.5
Salem City	77.0	17.2	9.4
Division Average	**88.3**	**12.5**	**10.5**
COMMONWEALTH AVERAGE	**81.45**	**13.1**	**11.2**

Sources: *2003 Superintendent's Annual Report for Virginia;* Virginia Department of Education Web site, 2005.
*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 6–8.

Exhibit 1-5 displays revenue percentages by federal, state, and local funding sources. As is shown:

- WPS received 50 percent of its funds from local sources, a higher percentage than the peer division average of 33 percent. Among the peers, WPS had the third highest percent of local funding.

- WPS, at 21 percent, received the second lowest percentage of its funds from state sources and was a percentage point lower than the peer division average.

- WPS received nearly 6 percent (5.99 percent) of its funds from federal sources, a slightly higher percentage than the peer division average of just over 5 percent (5.42 percent).

**EXHIBIT 1-5
RECEIPTS BY FUND SOURCE
PEER SCHOOL DIVISIONS
2004 FISCAL YEAR**

SCHOOL DIVISION	SALES AND USE TAX	STATE FUNDS	FEDERAL FUNDS	LOCAL FUNDS	OTHER FUNDS	LOANS, BONDS, ETC.
Winchester	**5.87%**	**21.14%**	**5.99%**	**50.49%**	**3.21%**	**13.30%**
Fredericksburg City	2.07%	5.69%	6.04%	19.56%	0.76%	65.89%
Charlottesville City	7.47%	23.18%	9.35%	55.70%	4.29%	0.01%
Manassas Park City	5.21%	31.21%	3.79%	38.21%	2.04%	19.54%
Manassas City	7.02%	29.38%	3.63%	54.96%	2.45%	2.56%
Salem City	5.93%	23.08%	3.72%	39.19%	3.10%	24.99%
Division Average	**5.59%**	**22.28%**	**5.42%**	**43.02%**	**2.64%**	**21.05%**

Sources: *2004 Superintendent's Annual Report for Virginia;* Virginia Department of Education Web site, 2005.

Exhibit 1-6 displays the operating and administrative disbursements per pupil for a regular school day. As is shown:

■   On regular operating-related items, WPS spent $7,368 per student, which was slightly more than the peer division average of $7,053, and second highest of the comparison divisions.

■   On administration-related items, WPS spent $321 per student, which was less than the peer division average of $406, and third lowest among the comparison divisions.

**EXHIBIT 1-6
DISBURSEMENTS PER PUPIL FOR A REGULAR SCHOOL DAY
PEER SCHOOL DIVISIONS
2003 FISCAL YEAR**

SCHOOL DIVISION	INSTRUCTION PER PUPIL[1]	ADMINISTRATION PER PUPIL[2]
Winchester	**$7,368.88**	**$321.69**
Fredericksburg City	$6,961.24	$470.32
Charlottesville City	$8,784.94	$631.23
Manassas Park City	$6,311.13	$488.70
Manassas City	$6,847.26	$312.45
Salem City	$6,044.64	$216.85
Division Average	**$7,053.02**	**$406.87**

Sources: *2004 Superintendent's Annual Report for Virginia;* Virginia Department of Education Web site, 2005.

[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.

1.4   Overview of Final Report

MGT's final report is organized into 12 chapters. Chapters 2 through 11 present the results of the School Division Efficiency Review of Winchester Public Schools. Findings, commendations, and recommendations are presented for each of the operational areas of the school division which we were required to review. In each chapter, we analyze a specific function within the school division based on the current organizational structure. The following data on each component are included:

- a description of the current situation in Winchester Public Schools;

- a summary of our study findings:

  - findings from report and data sources that we obtained; and

  - a summary of our on-site findings;

- MGT's commendations and recommendations for each finding;

- implementation strategies and a completion timeline for each recommendation; and

- a five-year fiscal impact for recommended costs or cost savings, which are stated in 2004-05 dollars.

We conclude this report with a summary of the fiscal impact of our study recommendations in Chapter 12.

2.0 DIVISION ADMINISTRATION

This chapter presents our findings and recommendations regarding the overall organization of the Winchester Public Schools (WPS). The major sections of the chapter include:

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

CHAPTER SUMMARY

WPS is effectively governed by an appointed school board and managed by an experienced superintendent with the assistance of his leadership team. The commendations and recommendations contained in this chapter focus on helping the school division continue on the path of improvement and preparing it to more fully meet the needs of its students. A number of commendations are included to identify best practices and encourage their replication where appropriate. The recommendations are key suggestions that should assist the Superintendent and School Board as they continue to improve Winchester Public Schools.

INTRODUCTION

Education of students is reserved to the states by the Constitution of the United States of America. Historically, states have adopted provisions that place the governance and day-to-day management of schools in the hands of local authorities, typically local school boards. These boards generally have broad powers to establish policy, enter into contracts, develop budgets, and employ personnel. Among the 50 states there is considerable variation in the legal structure of school divisions. Some school divisions are fiscally independent (do not have to depend upon the state or another body politic for fiscal resources), while others are totally dependent upon other entities for their resources (some divisions must rely on city councils, county commissions or like bodies, and the state for budget approval and funds). Some school divisions must take budget proposals or operating tax levies to the public for approval, and other boards have latitude to set budgets and approve revenue levies within the constraints of law. The legal foundation of school divisions is critical to the overall functioning of the organization as it defines the focus of power that determines how school boards and executive personnel may carry out their assigned responsibilities.

The primary state laws controlling the governance and operation of schools in Virginia are found in Title 22.1 of the Virginia Code. These laws give the School Board broad powers to adopt policies, fix contracts, approve the appointment of personnel, develop a budget for further review and approval by the city, and take other actions designed to ensure secure, safe, and proper schools for the City of Winchester.

Exhibit 2-1 details information about the nine members of the School Board. The ninth position was appointed by the Winchester City Council subsequent to the on-site visit by the consultants.

EXHIBIT 2-1
WINCHESTER PUBLIC SCHOOLS
2005-06 SCHOOL YEAR

NAME	TITLE	PRECINCT	TERM EXPIRES	LENGTH OF SERVICE AS OF END OF 2005-06
N. Randolph Bryant	Chair	At Large	2009	1 Year
Barry W. Deuel	Member	At Large	2008	2 Years
Thomas P. Keenan	Member	At Large	2006	7 Years
Linda K. Miller	Member	War Memorial	2008	2 Years
Michael E. Noel	Member	Shawnee	2009	1 Year
Karen K. Shultz	Member	At Large	2008	5 years
Jeffrey M. Webber	Member	South End	2006	3 Years
Velma N. Whitmire	Member	Library	2009	4 Years
Cynthia Ford	Member	Friendship	2006	1 year

Source: Winchester Public Schools, Office of the Superintendent, 2005.

2.1   School Board Governance

FINDING

The School Board has adequate time and background materials to conduct their business meetings twice each month. The Superintendent, in consultation with the Board Chair, develops an agenda and background information for each agenda item as necessary. WPS has explored software for an electronic Board meeting packet, but has found it not to be cost effective. The Board meeting packet is therefore provided in hard copy format at this time. Unless there is an emergency, no action items are placed on the School Board agenda unless that item has been discussed at a prior Board meeting. By allowing the School Board to study the issues and deliberate at some length before acting; this practice creates stability in the decision-making process.

COMMENDATION

WPS has developed a consistent and predictable process for the development and dissemination of materials necessary for the conduct of business-like school board meetings.

FINDING

The School Board has developed a subcommittee structure that enables it to study issues that commonly come before it for action. By meeting in smaller study groups, the Board is able to delve deeply into issues that are critical to the mission of WPS and thus make more informed decisions. There are two subcommittees that meet monthly, except during summer, and three subcommittees that meet as needed. Although the Superintendent attends each of these meetings, a School Board member chairs each meeting. Exhibit 2-2 details the sub-committees and their meeting schedule.

**EXHIBIT 2-2
WINCHESTER PUBLIC SCHOOLS
SCHOOL BOARD SUBCOMMITTEES**

SCHOOL BOARD SUB-COMMITTEE	MEETING SCHEDULE
Building and Grounds	2nd Friday of each month
Instruction	3rd Thursday of each month
Finance	As Needed
Personnel	As Needed
Discipline	As Needed

Source: Winchester Public Schools, 2005.

COMMENDATION

The School Board and Superintendent are commended for establishing a subcommittee structure that provides ongoing study and analysis of critical issues facing the Winchester Public Schools.

FINDING

The Winchester School Board's agendas and meeting packets, though complete, do not have a consent calendar. Many school divisions include a consent calendar item on the school board meeting agenda to cover items such as the payment of bills, approval of the sale of surplus items, approval of travel expenses, acceptance of gifts, etc. The use of a consent calendar allows the School Board to group routine items into one motion and proceed to more important issues. Although the present practice of acting on each item has not taken an undue amount of time, using a consent calendar sends a message about the Board's desire to focus on policy issues, set priorities, and maximize its use of time.

RECOMMENDATION

Recommendation 2-1:

Include a consent calendar on the Board agenda.

The use of a consent calendar will allow the School Board to group routine items into one motion and proceed to more important issues. Should any School Board member wish to discuss an item in more detail or act on it separately, the item can be removed from the consent calendar and added to the regular agenda. By using a consent calendar, the School Board should be able to shorten its meetings or spend more time on "mission critical" issues.

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING

The School Board has developed a process for gathering information on the operations of the School Division. In addition to developing Board meeting materials and a Board subcommittee structure, the School Board has established a policy of trying to resolve problems or conflicts at the lowest level in the organization, as stated on the WPS Web site:

> *School Board members are often involved in conflict resolution; however it is agreed by educators and School Board members that it is usually in the best interests of students to solve problems through contact with their teacher or principal and for employees to refer concerns to their principal or immediate supervisor.*
>
> *If a problem cannot be resolved through contact with a teacher, principal, or immediate supervisor, the next step is to contact the Superintendent or the Superintendent's designated representative.*
>
> *If these efforts fail, contact with the School Board members is encouraged.*

COMMENDATION

WPS has developed a thoughtful School Board decision-making and conflict resolution process that brings stability to the school division.

FINDING

The Board does not evaluate itself, although some Board members reported participation in "informal" feedback communications. The Winchester School Board is comprised of nine members who receive both formal and informal Board training each year. However, the effects of the training and general School Board effectiveness are not evaluated. The school division, as a whole, has a culture of evaluating its personnel, programs, and financial condition. The School Board evaluates the Superintendent annually, but does not have a self-evaluation. Some might say that re-appointment by the City Council is adequate feedback, but this form of feedback or evaluation does not allow the "mid-stream" adjustments necessary to make good a school board great.

RECOMMENDATION

Recommendation 2-2:

Provide for an annual self-evaluation of the School Board.

Providing feedback, both formally and informally, is one of the "basics" of any improvement process. Structured feedback in the form of an evaluation instrument can supplement honest ongoing dialogue and discussion.

Governing boards in any organization can improve their performance through a formal self-evaluation in addition to an informal feedback process. Moreover, by conducting an annual evaluation, the board models for its organization the importance of the evaluation process. As a result, both the board and the organization develop a culture of participation in improvement cycles. A better organization and improved performance are the end results. Exhibit 2-3 is one example of a self-assessment instrument used by some boards.

EXHIBIT 2-3
SAMPLE BOARD SELF-ASSESSMENT INSTRUMENT

<div style="border:1px solid">

Meeting Evaluation

DIRECTIONS: By evaluating our past meeting performance, we can discover ways to make future meetings shorter and more productive. Check each item "Adequate" or "Needs Improvement." If you check "Needs Improvement," include suggestions.

Adequate	Needs Improvement	
_____	_____	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.
_____	_____	Our agenda included 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 president or 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, 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—and the meeting began and concluded on time.
_____	_____	For committees and ad hoc groups: There was adequate reason for us to meet.

My best suggestions for improving our next meeting are…

</div>

Source: Created by MGT of America, 2005.

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

2.2   *Policies and Procedures*

The development of policy and procedures constitutes the means by which an organization can communicate expectations to its constituents. In addition, adopting policy and establishing related procedures provide the mechanism for:

■   establishing the School Board's expectations and what may be expected from the Board;

■   keeping the School Board and administration out of trouble;

■   establishing an essential division between policy-making and administrative roles;

■   creating guidelines within which people operate;

■   providing reasonable assurances of consistency and continuity in decisions;

■   providing a legal basis for the allocation of funds, facilities, and other resources;

■   facilitating and guiding the orientation of School Board members and employees; and

■   acquainting the public with school functions and encouraging citizen involvement within structured guidelines.

Policy and procedures, therefore, reveal the philosophy and position of the School Board and should be stated clearly enough to provide for executive or staff direction.

FINDING

WPS policies are maintained by the Assistant Superintendent.

The policy manual is composed of 12 chapters denoted as major sections; each contains a table of contents. Individual policies are coded within alpha sections (chapters) from A through L. This codification division was developed by the Educational Policy Services of the National School Boards Association and provided to school divisions through the Virginia School Boards Association.

Exhibit 2-4 presents the policy manual section codes (chapters), titles, and policy codes.

EXHIBIT 2-4
WINCHESTER PUBLIC SCHOOLS
ORGANIZATION OF POLICY MANUAL

SECTIONS	SECTION TITLES	POLICY CODES
A	Foundations and Basic Commitments	AA - AF
B	School Board Governance and Operations	BB - BHE
C	General School Administration	CA - CMA
D	Fiscal Management	DA - DO
E	Support Services	EA - EIC
F	Facilities Development	FA - FG
G	Personnel	GA - GE
H	Negotiations	Under Revision
I	Instructional Program	IA - IZB
J	Students	JA - JZD
K	School-Community Relations	KA - KZ
L	Education Agency Relations	LA - LI

Source: Winchester School Board Policy Manual, November 2005.

The policies of the Winchester Public Schools are updated at least once every five years. Some policies are updated more often depending on legislative and governmental decision cycles. Most policies are brought to the School Board during the summer after the spring legislative actions. All policy changes are reviewed by the school division's legal counsel prior to adoption.

COMMENDATION

WPS is commended for updating the School Board Policy Manual on a timely schedule.

FINDING

The policy manual has been placed on the Winchester Public Schools Web site. Whenever new or revised policies are developed, the Web site is updated, thus preventing the publication and distribution of multiple hard or paper copies of the revisions to all policy manual holders. The clerk of the School Board, in cooperation with the Assistant Superintendent, oversees the updating process for the school division Web site. This practice provides a single authoritative source for WPS policies and prevents this kind of inconsistencies and errors that occur when hard copy policy manuals are not updated regularly.

COMMENDATION

WPS is commended for placing the School Board Policy Manual on its Web site.

2.3   *Legal Services*

Throughout the United States, school divisions procure legal services either through in-house counsel, with the use of outside counsel for situations requiring additional expertise, or exclusively from outside firms or attorneys. In the latter situation, some school divisions, particularly those in urban areas, can secure the services of a single, large, diversified firm, while other divisions must depend on more than one firm. Fees for services vary greatly, depending on the locale and the specialization required.

Costs for legal work have increased dramatically over the last three decades due to a number of circumstances. These include due process activity associated with disciplinary proceedings, complicated issues related to special education students, risk management matters, and a variety of other issues. Areas of special education and student disciplinary activity are particularly troublesome and require special legal expertise. These areas are typically complicated by the complexities of federal requirements and their relationship to local and state regulations, coupled with the school division's need to maintain an orderly educational environment.

FINDING

WPS has incurred less than $66,000 in legal costs from July 1, 2002, to November 30, 2005. Legal services for WPS staff and the School Board are provided by the firm of Timberlake, Smith, Thomas & Moses, P.C. in Staunton, Virginia. Most of the expenses have been incurred in the last fiscal year as a result of Federal Office of Civil Rights activities. In prior years, the legal costs have been very modest. In order to minimize legal expenses, the WPS legal counsel does not attend School Board meetings. Exhibit 2-5 details the legal expenses to date.

EXHIBIT 2-5
WINCHESTER PUBLIC SCHOOLS
LEGAL EXPENSES HISTORY

FISCAL YEAR	AMOUNT
2002	$ 10,509
2003	$ 12,706
2004	$ 13,608
2005	$ 22,197
2006 (to date)	$ 6,456
TOTAL	**$ 65,476**

Source: Winchester Public Schools, 2005.

COMMENDATION

WPS is commended for controlling legal expenses.

2.4 Organization and Management

The effective organization and management of a large organization is typically composed of the executive and management functions incorporated into a division organization. Each division contains a series of functional areas determined by its mission and related goals. The successful, contemporary organization has, among its essential characteristics, the capacity to alter its structure to meet changing client requirements. The more the existent culture of the organization restricts this response, the less likely it is that the organization will meet client requirements and, as a result, experience success.

This section reviews the Winchester Public Schools' organization, decision-making, management, planning and accountability, internal and external communications, and school organization and management.

2.4.1 Division Organization

WPS executive and administrative functions are managed through a division that is organized into line and staff relationships that define official spans of authority 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 is developed to graphically depict this scheme. Large school divisions may have multiple layers within the organization (e.g., superintendent to deputy to assistant superintendents to directors to coordinators and supervisors to managers and specialists and on to school levels—perhaps as many as four to eight authority layers). These layers create special challenges related to ensuring effective and efficient communication of information and decisions through the division and to its public. The reduction in layers requires the division to address issues related to span of control.

FINDING

The School Board and the Superintendent hold annual retreats, meet regularly through bi-monthly meetings, and study ongoing issues through a Board subcommittee structure. The retreats, meetings, and subcommittee work represent a major and important initiative to ensure stable School Board and Superintendent relations. These ongoing activities include efforts to:

- continue to build a unified vision for the education of WPS students;

- develop guidelines to support strategic plans; and

- seek adequate resources and ensure that those resources are directed to identified needs.

Additionally, they serve to provide a foundation upon which to build sound problem-solving and planning initiatives.

COMMENDATION

WPS is commended for establishing processes designed to ensure an effective relationship between the Board and Superintendent and unify efforts to improve the Winchester Public Schools.

FINDING

The Strategic Plan of the Winchester Public Schools is a working document that guides decision-making throughout the school division. It is not developed in a high-profile manner and shelved like many strategic plans. The Strategic Plan is a very short (one page front and back) document that clearly states the direction for the school division. The Plan is divided into four main areas: (1) curriculum, instruction, and assessment, (2) parent and community, (3) staff development, and (4) climate and policy. Accompanying the Strategic Plan is a Comprehensive Plan, which has a more detailed set of objectives and indicators of success. Exhibit 2-6 is a sample page from the Comprehensive Plan. (Goals are typically long-range; the indicators are typically short-range.)

EXHIBIT 2-6
WINCHESTER PUBLIC SCHOOLS
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN – SAMPLE PAGE

GOAL #	COMPREHENSIVE PLAN GOALS	INDICATORS
1	All students will be reading at or above grade level by the end of second grade.	All second grade students will be reading at or above grade level by the end of second grade as defined by scores on the Rigby Reading Benchmark Assessment.
		The gap between all third grade students in AYP subgroups and other defined third grade students will decrease annually by 5% in reading and mathematics based on the VA Standards of Learning tests.
		The gap between all fifth grade students in AYP subgroups and other defined fifth grade students will decrease annually by 5% in reading and mathematics based on the VA Standards of Learning tests.
2	All schools will meet Virginia accreditation and *No Child Left Behind* Adequate Yearly Progress standards.	100 percent of all schools will meet or exceed the Virginia Standards of Accreditation.
		100 percent of all schools will meet Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) as determined by the *No Child Left Behind* standards.
		The pass rate for all students will meet or exceed 90 percent on all 3rd grade SOL tests.
		The pass rate for all students will meet or exceed 90 percent on all 5th grade VA Standards of Learning (SOL) tests.
		The pass rate for all students will meet or exceed 90 percent on all 8th grade SOL tests.
		The pass rate for all students will meet or exceed 90 percent on all End of Course (EOC) SOL tests.

Source: Winchester Public Schools, 2005.

COMMENDATION

The Superintendent is commended for implementing a pragmatic Strategic Plan and accompanying Comprehensive Plan that are "living documents" for the School Board and staff.

FINDING

The role of Director of Instruction for the Winchester Public Schools needs to be elevated to the Assistant Superintendent level. Currently, the director of Instruction interacts closely with the Superintendent and the Assistant Superintendent. Other directors on the organizational chart often come to the Director of Instruction for guidance and coordination of their services.

RECOMMENDATION

Recommendation 2-3:

Redefine the role of Director of Instruction as the Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction.

By redefining the Director of Instruction as an Assistant Superintendent position, the various jobs in curriculum and instruction can be more effectively coordinated and managed. The higher level position that answers directly to the Superintendent of Schools will also allow more efficient decision making within the curriculum and instruction areas, as every decision will not have to be taken to the Superintendent (see Recommendation 2-4).

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING

The Superintendent of Schools has too many subordinates reporting directly to him. The current Superintendent was selected to serve in this position beginning in July 2001. The Superintendent's contract with the School Board was for the period of July 2001 to June 2005 and was renewed in July 2005 for a period of four years. As reported in this section, WPS through its Superintendent has developed a relatively traditional organizational structure. There are three primary layers of authority—Superintendent, Assistant Superintendent, and Directors. There is a direct line of authority between the building principals and the Superintendent. Exhibit 2-7 shows the following information:

- the Superintendent has 13 direct reports, including the Assistant Superintendent, five directors, one executive secretary, and six building principals;

- public relations/grants development, safety, staff legal, information technology, and planning and evaluation services/functions fall within the Superintendent's Office through direct reports;

- the Superintendent is responsible for the Administrative Council of Principals, Directors, and the Assistant Superintendent;

- instructional support, curriculum services, instructional technology, assessment, professional development, and other related areas fall under the Director of Instruction assisted by additional executive directors and coordinators; and

- the Assistant Superintendent is responsible for fiscal, facilities, transportation, property, human resources, operations, and other support services .

Because of the work that necessarily occurs with the School Board and community, the Superintendent needs to have fewer subordinates that directly report to him. This will enable him to more clearly focus on the three major areas of School Board, Curriculum and Instruction, and Administration. The present organizational chart is detailed in Exhibit 2-7.

EXHIBIT 2-7
WINCHESTER PUBLIC SCHOOLS
CURRENT ORGANIZATIONAL CHART
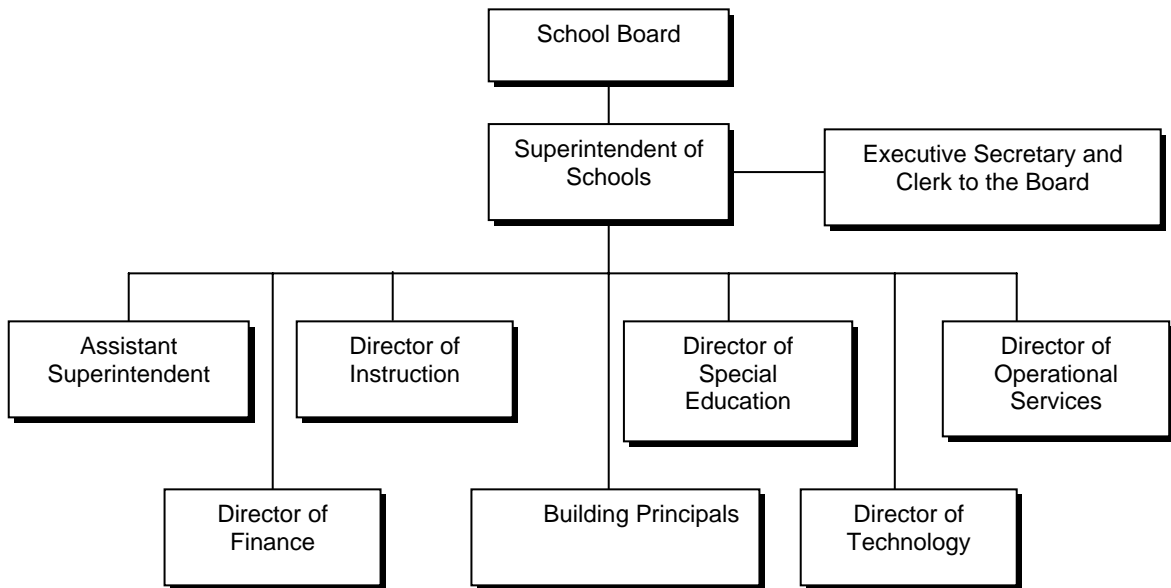
Source: Winchester Public Schools, 2005.

RECOMMENDATION

Recommendation 2-4:

Reorganize the administration of the division office to reduce the number of direct reports to the Superintendent of Schools.

By having fewer subordinates that report directly to him, the superintendent should be able to more clearly focus on the three major responsibilities of School Board, Curriculum and Instruction, and Administration. With a School Board Chair, an Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction, and an Assistant Superintendent for Administration, the Superintendent should have adequate support while still maintaining direct contact with building principals. Exhibit 2-8 details the proposed organizational chart.

EXHIBIT 2-8
WINCHESTER PUBLIC SCHOOLS
PROPOSED ORGANIZATIONAL CHART
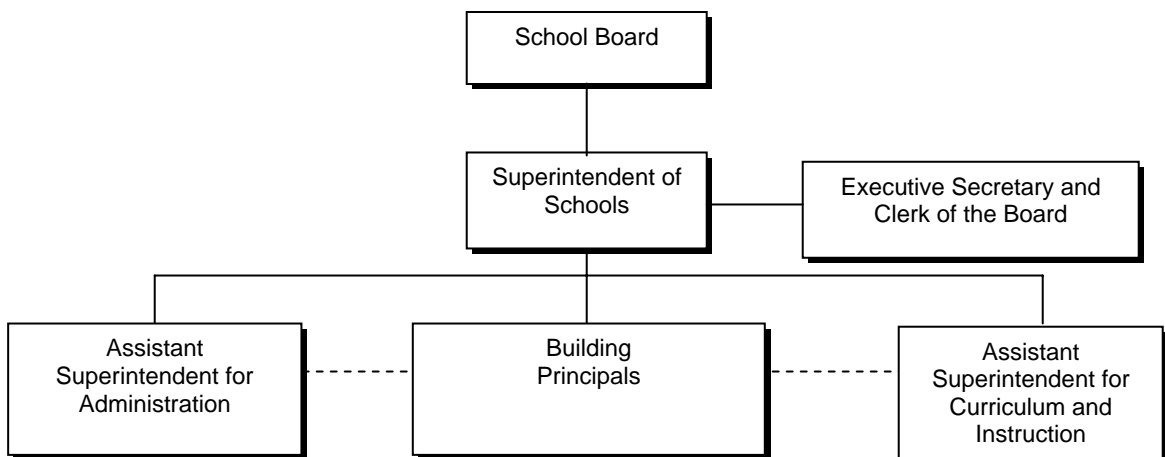
Source: Created by MGT of America, 2005.

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

2.4.2 *Decision Making and Management*

Within the heart of an organization resides its life providers—the decision-making and management processes. Richard Beckhard, in *The Organization of the Future,* profiles the healthy organization and notes, as was indicated in an earlier part of this chapter, that it:

- ■ has a strong sensing division for receiving current information on all parts of the division and their interactions (division dynamics thinking);

- operates in a "form follows function" mode—work determines the structures and mechanisms to do it and, consequently, it uses multiple structures (formal pyramidal structures, horizontal structures and teams, project structures, and temporary structures (as when managing a major change);

- has a management division that is information driven, and information is shared across functions and organization levels;

- encourages and allows decisions to be made at the level closest to the customer, where all the necessary information is available;

- communicates relatively openly throughout the division;

- operates in a learning modes and identifying learning points is part of the process of all decision making;

- makes explicit recognition for innovation and creativity, and has a high tolerance for different styles of thinking and for ambiguity; and

- is generally managed with and guided by a strong executive officer employing a variety of work groups composed of individuals possessing appropriate skills and complementary traits.

FINDING

An employee performance evaluation of the Executive Secretary and Clerk of the School Board has not been completed on a consistent basis. Periodic employee evaluations are important aspects of the improvement process for any organization. With formal written feedback, employees tend to become more goal-driven and effective team members. In addition to best practices, WPS policy requires annual evaluation of all employees. Because this position reports to both the Superintendent and the School Board, there may be some uncertainty about who evaluates the Executive Secretary/Clerk.

RECOMMENDATION

Recommendation 2-5:

Evaluate the Executive Secretary/Clerk of the Board on a regular basis as per Board policy.

By evaluating the Executive Secretary/Clerk on a regular basis, the employee will have regular formal feedback regarding his/her performance. This will enable the employee to more fully participate in the professional improvement process. In addition, the school division will have a record of performance in the event of the employee's promotion, reassignment, or dismissal.

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING

There is an ongoing organized training program designed to ensure that Administrative Team members have the skills necessary to perform their roles effectively. The Superintendent has scheduled various retreats and other activities to work on important initiatives that are part of ongoing work to implement the requirements of *No Child Left Behind* and other WPS strategic goals. Some of the training is coordinated and facilitated by WPS personnel in their areas of expertise. At other times, outside expertise is contracted to provide the training. As a result of this training, the Administrative Team communicates effectively internally and has a common frame of reference for problem solving. The implementation of this administrative training program provides an organized training support division designed to enhance skills necessary to continuously focus on and work toward development of important plans.

The training addresses the following:

- strategic and long-range plan development;

- identification of data necessary to ensure that decisions are based upon accurate and complete information;

- effective community involvement;

- preparing the team to function effectively, including identification and treatment of dysfunctional activity and establishment of effective internal communications;

- strategies for the specific and purposeful abandonment of obsolete, unproductive practices and programs; and

- means for monitoring the WPS organizational climate.

Furthermore, the group training affords the Superintendent an opportunity to assess the effectiveness of executive staff working relationships.

COMMENDATION

WPS is commended for providing training to the Administrative Team in team development, facilitative leadership techniques, planning, and other related skills.

FINDING

MGT found that there is a cross-training division for personnel filling critical support positions. Two other secretaries can cover for the Executive Secretary/Clerk of the School Board in an emergency, and vice versa, because they are fully trained to assume those responsibilities. The cross-trained personnel cover essential executive support and create efficiencies for the Superintendent and his executive staff in the performance of their responsibilities. Cross-training of personnel contributes to the efficient and effective operation of the executive offices.

COMMENDATION

WPS provides for systematic cross-training of key secretarial personnel serving the Board and the Superintendent.

2.4.3 *Public Information*

Effective internal and external communications are a key aspect of developing and maintaining organizations that succeed in realizing essential goals and objectives. The underlying key, as always, is fundamentally sound communications. The modern organization, having emerged into an age of producing results tailored to the individual client, must engage in effective communications to all stakeholders and, furthermore, produce needed responses in a timely fashion.

FINDING

In the Comprehensive Plan for the Winchester Public Schools, the following two goals help to drive the public information efforts of the school division goals:

- Communication regarding student performance and school support will increase through a wide range of media, to include technology, print, television.

- Parents will understand and support the Winchester Public Schools' basic mission and are given the opportunity to play an important role in helping the schools to achieve that mission.

WPS has developed a four-pronged approach to its public information function. The school division is a one-third partner in the WCT Channel 20 project, along with the University and the City of Winchester. The Superintendent has a show on Channel 20. Secondly, WPS contracts with the local newspaper for periodic educational information

inserts. Thirdly, the Superintendent has a weekly e-newsletter that includes educational news, School Board minutes, school closure information, etc. And finally, the Superintendent has an "Ask the Superintendent" area on the WPS Web site at http://www.wps.k12.va.us/supt/SuptQstn_Get_FORM.cfm. At this Web site, questions can be asked of the Superintendent in a more private setting. By monitoring the types of questions on the Web site, the Superintendent can determine if additional public information is necessary in some other forum. Data was not collected for specific Web hits or number of calls since this commendation is for the effective process used by WPS.

COMMENDATION

WPS is commended for using a combination of contracted services and internal efforts to accomplish its public information goals.

3.0 PERSONNEL AND HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGEMENT

This chapter reviews the personnel and human resources operations in Winchester Public Schools (WPS). The five major sections of this chapter are:

3.1 Organization and Personnel Records
3.2 Policies and Procedures
3.3 Recruitment, Hiring, and Retention
3.4 Classification, Compensation, and Job Description
3.5 Teacher Certification and Professional Development

CHAPTER SUMMARY

The effective and efficient delivery of personnel services to school division employees, adequate support for delivery of educational services to the students, sound management of human resources, and development of well-conceived policies, procedures, and practices to guide personnel functions are all fundamental to a well-managed school division. The WPS Human Resources Department provides personnel services to approximately 664 employees in the division. The school division employees 23 administrators, approximately 300 teachers and over 300 paraprofessional and classified employees. Collectively, the school division serves over 3,600 students in grades K-12. To accomplish the WPS credo, "Learning for All, Whatever It Takes," commitment from the community, students, and school division staff is crucial. Citizens in Winchester support the division's commitment to enrich and strengthen education in the schools. The volunteer service in the classrooms, English as a Second Language (ESL) parent-volunteers, extensive support of school functions, and dedication of School Board members are evidence of the community's commitment to education. Additionally, the fact that appointed School Board members do not receive compensation does not affect their commitment to continuous educational improvement in Winchester Public Schools.

WPS offers competitive salaries and benefits at all job levels in order to attract the most qualified employees. The annual average teacher salaries, as well as the ratio of pupils to classroom teachers in WPS, compare favorably with peer school divisions. The importance WPS places on quality staff is evidenced by the annual recruiting efforts the division undertakes; however, the plan should include an emphasis on recruiting minority teachers and administrators. WPS invests in routine staff development activities, as well as comprehensive orientations and workshops for new hires and substitutes, to ensure that its employees are well-trained and competent.

This chapter details MGT's findings, commendations, and recommendations with regard to the Human Resources Department.

Our recommendations include the following:

- revise the organizational structure to better align the Assistant Superintendent's responsibilities in providing division-wide administration;

- consolidate and secure personnel files within the Human Resources Department;

- develop a comprehensive personnel policy and procedures manual for the Human Resources Department;

- develop and implement an employee survey for evaluating the quality of the services the Human Resources Department provides to the school division;

- intensify efforts to recruit qualified minority applicants for job openings;

- develop and update job descriptions for each position in the school division; and

- develop an internal, on-line exit survey.

INTRODUCTION

The Human Resources Department is dedicated to providing professional and personalized human resource services to the staff of Winchester Public Schools in support of the division's vision, mission, and beliefs. Effective customer service to both internal and external customers is the foundation for the success of the Human Resources Department. In addition to customer service, the manner in which a human resources department is organized and managed is essential to the school division. Human Resources plans, develops, organizes, directs, and evaluates a comprehensive program of personnel management services tailored to meet the needs of WPS. Services include providing advice and assistance to management and employees on a full range of human resources functions including staffing, position classification, employee relations, employee counseling, management advice, and employee benefits. The Human Resources Department is available to help with any personnel or employment issues.

MGT teamed up with WPS to survey teachers, central office administrators, and school-level administrators on how they felt about various division services. The surveys make it possible to compare responses both within Winchester Public Schools and between WPS and similar school divisions. One hundred percent of administrators, 64 percent of principals, and 33 percent of teachers within WPS graded the central office administrators above average. In similar school divisions, 77 percent of administrators, 73 percent of principals, and 38 percent of teachers graded their central office administrators above average.

Exhibit 3-1 presents additional comparative findings regarding WPS central office efficiencies.

**EXHIBIT 3-1
SURVEY RESPONSES
WITHIN WINCHESTER PUBLIC SCHOOLS
REGARDING CENTRAL OFFICE PERSONNEL
2005–06 SCHOOL YEAR**

	ADMINISTRATORS	PRINCIPALS	TEACHERS
	% (Good and Excellent) / % (Fair and Poor)		
The School Division Superintendent's work as the educational leader of Winchester Public Schools	100/0	73/27	36/57
The School Division Superintendent's work as the chief administrator (manager) of Winchester Public Schools	80/20	64/36	44/47
	% Agree or Strongly Agree / %Disagree or Strongly Disagree		
Most of WPS administrative processes (e.g., purchasing, travel requests, leave applications, personnel, etc.) are highly efficient and responsive.	100/0	63/18	60/11
Central office administrators are responsive to school needs.	100/0	54/36	30/41
Central office administrators provide quality service to schools.	100/0	54/27	32/39
School-based personnel play an important role in making decisions that affect schools in this division.	83/0	55/27	36/40

Source: MGT of America, WPS Survey Results, 2005.

3.1 *Organization and Personnel Records*

The organizational structure of a human resources department is driven by the functions that the department performs, which should be reviewed periodically to ensure that the needs of the division are being effectively served. The primary responsibilities of the WPS Human Resources Department involve planning, implementing, and maintaining a sound system of personnel services that complies with local, state, and federal regulations. The Assistant Superintendent also fills the role of a human resource director overseeing a personnel staff of four. The staff is comprised of one personnel coordinator, an executive secretary, a benefits clerk (shares position with the Finance Department), and a secretary/receptionist.

Major functions of the Human Resources Department include:

- conducting recruitment and initial screening of applications;
- maintaining job applicant tracking;
- posting notices of vacancies;
- processing new employees;

- monitoring licensure for certified positions;
- maintaining personnel records; and
- handling employee relations.

Currently, the WPS organizational structure designates the Assistant Superintendent as assistant to the Superintendent in the general administration of the school division and specific departmental functions and programs. The Assistant Superintendent serves as the personnel manager, providing human resource management of all professional and support staff, which includes recruiting, screening, interviewing, allocating, forecasting, transferring, and recommending candidates to the Superintendent. (The recommendation for revising Winchester Public Schools' organizational structure to better align the Assistant Superintendent's responsibilities is presented under Division Administration in Chapter 2.)

Usually human resource departments include managing the organization's benefits and compensation. WPS, like many organizations consider the human resource function as one for staffing, training, and managing employees and that the finance department more efficiently manages the payroll functions. Today, compensation is more complicated than just deciding how much to pay employees. In addition to the payroll function, 401 (k) plans, vacation and sick leave, bonuses and stipends are a part of compensation packages. In WPS, the Finance Department administers and delivers employee benefits and compensation; however, we review the payroll and benefit clerks in this chapter from a human resources perspective. Although the secretary/receptionist reports to the Human Resources Department, she provides support to the WPS central office staff along with Human Resources.

The following summaries describe primary functions and responsibilities of support staff in the Human Resources Department, as well as functions of the benefits and payroll clerks.

- ***Executive Secretary*** - Provide administrative and clerical support for the Assistant Superintendent and personnel department, maintain the budget assigned to the Assistant Superintendent, assist with recruiting and new professional staff orientation, notify employees of Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) eligibility, forward Consolidated Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act (COBRA) information to employees who have resigned, maintain and track the tuition assistance program, process Employee Actions Request (EAR), and serve as deputy clerk of the School Board.

- ***Secretary/Receptionist*** - Answer and route incoming calls, assist visitors, input bus routes and changes, order office supplies for central office personnel, input job applicant information, and provide direction and copies to walk-ins.

- ***Personnel Coordinator*** - Provide oversight for all Employee Action Requests (EAR), maintain personnel records, coordinate and oversee background checks for prospective employees and volunteers, assist with the intake and completion of benefits forms and present an overview during orientation, analyze credentials to determine licensure eligibility of personnel, manage licensure

renewal programs, assist with staff recruitment, and provide supervision for support staff.

- ■ **Benefits Clerk** *(reports to Director of Finance)* **-** Provide administrative support for employees' benefits, coordinate teacher licensure and licensure renewal, process workers' compensation claims, generate employment contracts based on information on EARs, input data on new employees into the payroll system, prepare information and packages for new professional staff orientation, and perform orientation in the absence of the Personnel Coordinator, serve as employee liaison with insurance companies, maintain Virginia Retirement System (VRS) documents, and enter information on employee stipends and extra duty into budget files.

- ■ **Payroll Clerk** - Prepare monthly and semi-monthly payroll for employees in the school division, enter all payroll deductions and annuities, edit and mail vendor checks, maintain VRS report, address payroll discrepancies presented by employees, distribute EBS (third-party administrator for flex plan) and Virginia Employment Commission, and serve as back-up to Senior Accountant for preparing manual checks and quarterly reports.

Exhibit 3-2 illustrates the current organizational chart for the Winchester Public Schools Human Resources Department.

EXHIBIT 3-2
WINCHESTER PUBLIC SCHOOLS
HUMAN RESOURCES DEPARTMENT
ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE
2005-06 SCHOOL YEAR

```
                    ┌─────────────────────────┐
                    │ Assistant Superintendent │
                    └─────────────────────────┘
                                │         ┌──────────────────────┐
                                │─────────│  Executive Secretary  │
                                │         └──────────────────────┘
        ┌───────────────────────┼───────────────────────┐
┌─────────────────────┐ ┌─────────────────────┐ ┌─────────────────────┐
│ Coordinator of      │ │ Secretary/          │ │ Benefits Clerk II ** │
│ Personnel           │ │ Receptionist        │ │                      │
└─────────────────────┘ └─────────────────────┘ └─────────────────────┘
```
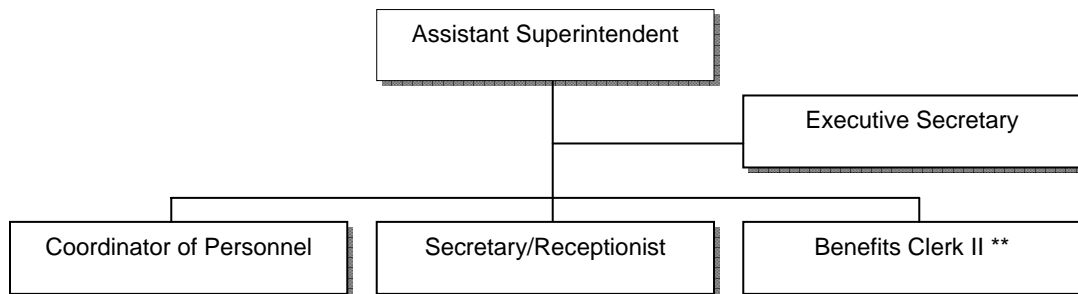
Source: WPS Human Resources Department, 2005.
** Shares position with the Finance Department.

FINDING

WPS does not consolidate employee personnel files, nor does it have a process to maintain and secure these files in one place. Employee records management is a workplace must. Thorough documentation can serve as legal defense in a court of law should a dispute arise. The WPS Human Resources Department maintains two separate files for each employee. Personnel files containing documents such as applicant flow and screening information, education, I-9 form (Employment Eligibility Verification),

personal data, and EARs (Employee Action Requests) are kept separate from files that contain medical information. Documents kept in an employee's personnel file include:

- employee's application;
- copy of drivers license and Social Security card;
- I-9 form;
- criminal check clearance;
- contract;
- personnel change forms;
- personal data; and
- transcripts/certificates.

The employee personnel file cabinets are located within the Human Resources Department in an area referred to as the Records Room. Entry into the Records Room and personnel files are locked at night, but remain open during work hours. There are three sets of keys, which are kept in the Human Resources Department. Although the personnel file cabinets are located adjacent to the Personnel Coordinator's office, anyone in the area can easily access them. In fact, MGT consultants were able to open and view an employee's personnel file while waiting for an interview.

In reviewing a sample of the personnel files, MGT coordinators found the documents were not filed systematically, nor were there procedures for reviewing and maintaining them. In addition to the files kept in the Records Room, other personnel documents are maintained by the benefits and payroll coordinators. The Benefits Clerk is located in a cubicle along the rear hallway in Human Resources, while the Payroll Clerk resides in the Finance Department, also separated by cubicle walls. The cubicles are limited in space and provide little privacy. The Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (HIPAA) protects the confidentiality and security of health-related data. However, the files are not properly secured in the benefits area, and the lack of privacy and limited working space is a major concern. In many instances, when conferring with employees about medical benefits or payroll issues, clerks have disrupted and re-directed their clients to alternate office locations in an attempt to maintain privacy. When conference rooms are not available, such discussions have taken place in the Records Room.

RECOMMENDATION

Recommendation 3-1:

Consolidate all employee personnel files within the Human Resources Department and establish procedures for their maintenance and security.

The Human Resources Department should develop procedures to ensure that all personnel paperwork is systematically filed and secured during the day. Only authorized personnel should have access to the files. Various laws mandate the actions employers must take when handling the personnel, employment, and medical records of employees, and noncompliance could mean heavy fines. The Human Resources Department should take inventory of the files currently kept in the benefits and payroll offices, and remove documents that should be stored in employee personnel files. This will provide a central place to store all employee-related information. This will also

contribute to additional storage for the confidential documents and working papers the benefits and payroll coordinators maintain on a daily basis.

This recommendation should be accomplished immediately.

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

3.2   *Policies and Procedures*

Effective school management is built on sound, clearly written, and legally valid policies. A big part of human resources management is creating and enforcing policies and procedures. WPS operates according to policies established by the Winchester Public School Board. The School Board, which represents the state and local community, develops policies after careful deliberation, and the school administration implements these policies through specific regulations and procedures. The School Board then evaluates the effects of its policies and makes revisions as necessary.

FINDING

While the policies adopted by the Winchester Public Schools are available on the WPS Web site, there is no procedural manual to guide and direct the Human Resources Department and its staff. Currently, an expandable file folder kept in the Records Room serves as the human resources procedures manual. WPS provided MGT consultants with copies of the policies and procedures, which are available on the Winchester Public Schools Web site in the Personnel section, in principals' offices, in schools, and in public libraries. MGT consultants did not find procedures and guidelines novel to human resource functions. Because there are so many tasks that must be performed to keep the school division running smoothly, it is vital for the Human Resources Department to create and maintain an internal procedural manual. Every organization needs a set of rules to govern its staff. This manual will help the Human Resources Department perform routine tasks consistently and adhere to the rules and standards of the school division. Additionally, the manual will aid staff members when an employee is out ill or vacates a position.

The Finance Department developed a procedural guidebook to cover payroll, personnel, purchasing, and miscellaneous procedures. The guidebook comprises forms, fiscal cut-off dates, and a few policies. The payroll and purchasing chapters feature general information and samples, as well as clear guidelines for completing required forms and detailed steps for processing payroll for division-wide personnel and employees in Voluntary Semi-Retirement Program (VSRP). Purchasing procedures include descriptions of each function to be performed. These guidelines can readily be used by staff members when they cover for an absent co-worker that holds primary responsibility for that function. The guidebook can also be used in the cross-training efforts of the department.

RECOMMENDATION

Recommendation 3-2:

Develop a comprehensive personnel policy and procedures manual for the Human Resources Department.

The manual should describe in detail the procedures and processes to follow for hiring staff, maintaining personnel file folders, monitoring security clearance, maintaining the substitute system, guiding employees, and the many other tasks undertaken by Human Resources Department. The Human Resources Director and staff members should set precedent in developing processes for maintaining the employee personnel files. The guidelines must be clear on what is or is not acceptable in employee personnel files. Procedures should comply with state and federal employment laws, including guidelines for document retention, HIPAA laws, and the new Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) guidelines for overtime and exempt employees. In addition, the manual should consider procedures for addressing harassment or discrimination suits. An indexed manual allows staff members to quickly find a procedure or process that needs clarification. The Human Resources Department staff should develop a system for regular updates and distribution of the manual. Outdated policies and processes should be removed. This recommendation should be implemented by July 2006.

Exhibit 3-3 provides a sample list of items usually included in a human resources procedural manual.

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

**EXHIBIT 3-3
HUMAN RESOURCES DEPARTMENT
PROCEDURAL GUIDEBOOK
SAMPLE CONTENTS**

1.	Hiring Staff
2.	Hiring Substitutes
3.	Security Clearance
4.	Severe Weather
5.	Exit Surveys
6.	Confidential Human Resources Information
7.	Citizenship Eligibility (I-9)
8.	Affirmative Action
9.	Termination Of Employment
10.	Bilingual Customer Service
11.	Staff Development
12.	Employment Assistance Program
13.	Medical Exams and Immunization
14.	Complaint Resolution
15.	Personnel Files and Confidential Information
16.	Award Programs
17.	Discipline and or Termination
18.	Business Travel
19.	Personnel Records
20.	Leaves of Absence
21.	Return to Work After Disability
22.	Classification Compensation or Pay
23.	Unemployment Insurance
24.	Temporary Positions
25.	Reporting Suspected Child Abuse

Source: Absolute Human Resource Solutions Web site, 2005.

FINDING

New employees are scheduled for orientation once all forms, background checks, and legal requirements have been fulfilled. Newly hired employees in the Winchester Public Schools begin orientation by getting acquainted over a continental breakfast, followed by greetings and introductions from the Assistant Superintendent. Additionally, the Department of Instruction provides teachers with training regarding procedures, programs, professional development and data analysis, along with materials and books vital to new teachers. During orientation, employees receive an orientation package developed by the WPS Human Resources Department. The orientation package is assembled in an orderly and easy to read format and indexed for easy reference to forms, pamphlets, and policy. The orientation package contains virtually every document and procedure needed for new employees in the division. Examples of documentation provided include:

- a letter of welcome from the Superintendent;
- a copy of the school division's credo;
- a checklist for new teachers;
- information on the Tuition Assistance Program;
- 2005-2006 teacher salary scale and payroll cut-off dates;
- information on the Winchester Wellness Program;

- a WPS information sheet and list of administrators; and
- the new employee orientation signoff sheet.

The employee signoff sheet helps the Human Resources Department ensure that newly hired employees have read and understand information presented to them regarding local, state, and federal laws. Employee acknowledgements include:

- state and federal tax forms;
- child support certificate;
- immigration and naturalization service form (I-9);
- child abuse/neglect form (central registry);
- fingerprint card (FBI background check);
- alcohol, drug, and tobacco policy;
- harassment policy;
- workers' compensation;
- tuberculosis screening; and
- COBRA and HIPPA privacy notice.

COMMENDATION

Winchester Public Schools is commended for providing an efficient, well-organized orientation program.

FINDING

All school personnel having direct contact with students must receive appropriate training in the etiology, prevention, transmission modes, and effects of blood borne pathogens, specifically, hepatitis B and human immunodeficiency viruses or any other infections that are the subject of regulations promulgated by the Safety and Health Codes Board of the Virginia Occupational Safety and Health Program. Training is designed to help employees comply with the OSHA Bloodborne Pathogens standard, including cleanup procedures and exposure control.

WPS provides training in the schools for regular full-time staff; however, substitute teachers hired in the division are required to complete Bloodborne Pathogen Awareness training during orientation. Training in many instances is contingent on the availability of the medical professional providing the services. With the growing demand for substitute teachers, timely completion of both the hiring and orientation processes is crucial in filling teacher absences and leaves.

COMMENDATION

The Winchester Public Schools Human Resources Department is commended for adopting a video training program on Bloodborne Pathogen Awareness, thus standardizing training delivered to Winchester Public Schools staff members and ensuring timeliness in hiring substitute teachers.

FINDING

Currently, WPS does not have standard processes in place to survey division employees regarding the nature and quality of services provided by the Human Resources Department and Central Office. Employee communication is an essential element for significant improvements in any school division. As customers or clients of the Central Office, WPS employees should remain informed, and have an opportunity to communicate their thoughts and ideas to school division administrators. Research suggests that communication is one of the most critical factors for improving employee commitment, performance and retention. Most school division administrators know that collecting employee opinions through surveys can provide valuable information for making business decisions, yet few school divisions conduct routine feedback surveys. Prior to on-site visits, WPS employees participated in comparison surveys provided by MGT of America, Inc. Exhibit 3-4 displays the responses of WPS employees to questions regarding administrative structures and practices, job satisfaction and school division/program function.

Results indicate that 100 percent of the administrators, 54 percent of the principals and only 30 percent of the teachers agree or strongly agree that Central office administrators are responsiveness to school needs. One-hundred percent of the administrators, 54 percent of the principals, and 32 percent of the teachers agree or strongly agree that Central office administrators provide quality service to schools. An average 74 percent of the administrators, principals and teachers agree or strongly agree that most of WPS administrative processes are highly efficient and responsive.

RECOMMENDATION

Recommendation 3-3:

Develop and implement an on-line staff feedback survey to assist the Human Resources Department in evaluating the nature and quality of services provided by the Central Office.

EXHIBIT 3-4
SURVEY RESPONSES
WITHIN WINCHESTER PUBLIC SCHOOLS

ADMINISTRATIVE STRUCTURE/PRACTICES, JOB SATISFACTION, AND SCHOOL DIVISION/PROGRAM FUNCTION	(% A + SA) / (% D + SD)[1]		
	ADMINISTRATORS	**PRINCIPALS**	**TEACHERS**
1. Central office administrators are responsive to school needs.	100/0	54/36	30/41
2. The school division requests input on the long-range technology plan.	83/0	45/18	27/28
3. Funds are managed wisely to support education in this school division.	84/17	91/0	49/18
4. Salary levels in Winchester Public Schools are competitive	80/0	45/36	36/43
5. I feel that I am an integral part of Winchester Public Schools team.	100/0	72/9	53/23
6. I feel that my work is appreciated by my supervisor(s).	60/0	63/0	59/30
7. Our schools have sufficient space and facilities to support the instructional programs.	100/0	45/45	41/41
8. Central office administrators provide quality service to schools.	100/0	54/27	32/39
9. Most of Winchester Public Schools administrative processes (e.g., purchasing, travel requests, leave applications, personnel, etc.) are highly efficient and responsive.	100/0	63/18	60/11
% NEEDS SOME IMPROVEMENT + NEEDS MAJOR IMPROVEMENT / % ADEQUATE + OUTSTANDING	**ADMINISTRATORS**	**PRINCIPALS**	**TEACHERS**
10. Budgeting	0/100	9/82	28/45
11. Personnel recruitment	0/100	27/72	32/36
12. Staff development	20/80	0/100	49/46
13. Curriculum planning	40/60	18/82	55/40

Source: Created by MGT of America, WPS Survey Results, 2005
[1] Percent responding *Agree* or *Strongly Agree* / Percent responding *Disagree* or *Strongly Disagree.* The *Neutral* and *Don't Know* responses are omitted.

WPS must provide quality services to internal customers (staff members), before it can expect quality services to be delivered to external customers (the students). The Winchester Public School credo, "Learning For All, Whatever It Takes," challenges all WPS staff members to deliver quality services. It is crucial for WPS employees to understand that the quality of education provided to students is linked directly to the quality of support activities in the division. Routine evaluation and feedback from staff members, students, parents, administrators, and community leaders will guide the school division in setting priorities or major goals.

Everyone needs recognition when they are doing well and guidance when they could be doing better. By designing a carefully constructed employee feedback survey, asking the right questions, analyzing the results and acting on the information received, the WPS Central Office will be able to develop goals and strategies for improvement in the school division. The survey should be implemented at the end of the 2006-07 school year, as a best practice for continued improvement in WPS.

3.3   *Recruitment, Hiring, and Retention*

Nationally, school divisions are facing a critical teacher shortage, primarily due to the provisions in *No Child Left Behind* (NCLB) regarding the recruitment and retention of highly qualified teachers. Competition among school divisions to recruit and retain teachers is intense. Thus, the recruitment and retention of highly qualified professional staff is a major issue for the WPS Human Resource Department.

FINDING

Although staff of the Human Resources Department attend recruiting events regularly, numbers of minority administrators and professionals are rather low. The Human Resources Department is responsible for ensuring that all positions in the division are filled. And, in filling these positions, it is the intent of WPS to ensure that competent and qualified people are hired to carry out the mission of the division, regardless of those individuals' race, religion, age, gender, ethnic background, or disability. This non-discrimination policy is found on the WPS Web site under the Foundations and Basic Commitments section *AC*, and under Personnel section *GB*. Approximately 3,678 students attend Winchester Public Schools, along with several hundred administrators, teachers, and support personnel.

Like many school divisions, WPS faces limited supply and competition with other divisions while trying to ensure that every classroom has a qualified teacher. Innovative long-term and short-term strategies combined can help solve these problems.

The Human Resources Department aims to fill all vacancies in a timely manner without sacrificing quality of potential or placed employees. Recruitment activities include advertising on the WPS Web site, in local newspapers, and at career centers of selected colleges and universities, as well as at Virginia's "A Call to Teach." The Great Virginia Teach-In: A Call to Teach is a recruiting and information fair designed for teachers considering a career move to Virginia, students enrolled in teacher preparation programs, liberal arts students considering teaching as a career, and professionals in other fields who dream of shaping the future as a classroom teacher. The program

connects prospective teachers with representatives of Virginia school divisions, teacher preparation programs, innovative career switcher programs, and specialists from the Virginia Department of Education.

Over the past four years, WPS has allocated an average of 23 days per school year for recruiting. The division participates in an average of 18 job fairs or university site visits per year. Of these 18 site visits, 80 percent are repeat locations from previous school years. The 2006 recruitment schedule for WPS proposes 19 events from the end of January through April. The scheduled recruiting events include the same percentage of job fairs and universities visited over the past three years.

Exhibit 3-5 displays an overview of WPS recruiting efforts over the past two school years.

EXHIBIT 3-5
WINCHESTER PUBLIC SCHOOLS
ONSITE RECRUITING
2004-05 and 2005-06 SCHOOL YEARS

2004 -2005	2005-2006	JOB FAIR	LOCATION
X	X	Radford & VA Tech	Christiansburg, VA
X	X	UVA Education Expo	Charlottesville, VA
X	X	ODU	Norfolk, VA
X		James Madison University	Harrisonburg, VA
X	X	A Call to Teach	Richmond, VA
X	X	West VA University	Morgantown, WV
X	X	Kutztown University	Kutztown, PA
X	X	Buffalo Area Recruitment Days	Buffalo, NY
X	X	Millersville University	Millersville, PA
X	X	Rochester Teacher Recruitment	Rochester, NY
X	X	SUNY	Cortland, NY
X		Shippensburg University	Shippensburg, PA
	X	Longwood Education Recruitment Days	Farmville, VA
X	X	Indiana University	Indiana, PA
X	X	Clarion University	Clarion, PA
X	X	Slippery Rock University	Slippery Rock, PA
X	X	Bloomsburg University	Bloomsburg, PA
X	X	Penn State Ed. Career Days	State College, PA
X	X	PERC	Pittsburgh, PA
	X	Edinboro University	Edinboro, PA
X		California University	California, PA

Source: WPS On-Campus Recruiting 2004-2005, 2005-2006.

There is increasing cultural, ethnic, and linguistic diversity in the WPS student population. In 2000, Winchester's population was 82 percent White, 10.5 percent African American, and only 4.7 percent other races. Today, the WPS student population is 60 percent White, with almost 40 percent minorities (Asian, African American, Hispanic, Hawaiian and American Indian). The WPS combined staff ratio is 91 percent White and less than 10 percent minority positions. WPS has been somewhat successful in employing minority teachers to meet the personnel needs of its minority students. Eight of the 10 Hispanic teachers employed with WPS teach ESL students, which is crucial in meeting SOL requirements. Employment numbers for minority administrators and

professionals/paraprofessionals are low. Exhibit 3-6 displays Winchester Public Schools' 2005-2006 student/staffing ratios by ethnicity.

EXHIBIT 3-6
WINCHESTER PUBLIC SCHOOLS
STUDENT AND STAFF MEMBERSHIP
BY ETHNICITY AND JOB CLASSIFICATION
2005-06 SCHOOL YEAR

ETHNICITY	AMERICAN INDIAN	ASIAN	AFRICAN AMERICAN	HISPANIC	HAWAIIAN	WHITE	UNSPECIFIED
Students	14	93	709	576	2	2,342	9
Administrators	0	0	2	0	0	23	N/A
Teachers	1	1	14	10	0	298	N/A
Professionals/ Paraprofessionals	0	0	4	0	0	43	N/A
Other	1	0	25	7	0	287	N/A

Sources: WPS 2005-06 Fall Student Report, WPS EEOC 2005 Staff Report.

RECOMMENDATION

Recommendation 3-4:

Intensify efforts to recruit qualified minority applicants for job openings.

Intensifying the recruitment of qualified minority populations for job openings in WPS will result in a staff make-up that more accurately reflects the ethnic mix of the community it serves.   Minority teachers are important role models to both minority and majority students growing up in an environment of diverse cultures and ethnicity. According to academic research, minority students perform better academically when they are taught by teachers who look like them.   The absence or lack of role models for minority students could result in educational deficiencies. The National Education Association (NEA) believes multiracial teaching staffs are essential and supports efforts to increase the proportion of minority educators in public schools. One initiative would be the inclusion of historically black colleges and universities in on-campus recruiting schedules. With respect to the growing number of Hispanic students, the school division should continue efforts in recruiting and retaining teachers and administrators to address the needs of LEP (Limited English Proficient) students.

While the division has had minimal problems in the recruiting of teachers over the past few years, the Human Resources Department should develop a plan to guide the efforts of staff in its recruitment activities. The plan should provide the necessary framework for recruitment efforts and an evaluation of yearly activities.

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation will require a greater recruitment effort. Additional advertising in a wider geographic area will be necessary, and more time will need to be spent cultivating new contacts and sources of referral. The fiscal impact of such an expanded search effort is estimated at $3,000 per year, which is a five-year cost to the school division of

$15,000. These estimates include additional expenses related to regional travel, brochures and hand-outs.

Recommendation	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11
Intensify Efforts to Recruit Qualified Minority Applicants for Job Openings	($3,000)	($3,000)	(3,000)	($3,000)	($3,000)

FINDING

The Human Resources Department currently handles the fingerprinting and background check process for new employees manually. The Human Resources Department is responsible for maintaining an efficient employment process for Winchester Public Schools. Notices of vacancies are posted on the WPS Web site and in local newspapers. The Personnel Coordinator screens applications and then forwards those approved to the appropriate department head or principal. After reviewing the applications, the supervisor or administrator requests interviews with the applicants. Once a decision is made for the position, the administrator advises the Human Resources Department, and a formal offer of employment is mailed to the prospective employee. After hiring, the Human Resource Department is responsible for new employee orientation.

All potential employees of the Commonwealth of Virginia must submit to fingerprinting. Currently, WPS Human Resources staff handles this process manually, consuming valuable time. According to staff interviews, it can take up to four weeks to receive the results after the fingerprints and paperwork are submitted. If the fingerprints are not readable, the fingerprint process must be repeated. This situation consumes significant staff time and causes lengthy delays in completing the hiring process. In March 2005, the Human Resources Department expended $12,173.34 of its budget, in purchasing the Cross Match Live Scan system, which will take the fingerprints automatically.

According to staff, this process has been implemented subsequent to the on-site review.

RECOMMENDATION

Recommendation 3-5:

Complete installation of the Cross Match fingerprint live scan system.

Used for Employee Background Checks, the Cross Match fingerprint live scan enables WPS to fingerprint employees and submit records electronically to FBI-approved channeling agencies for determining wants, warrants, and previous arrest records. Cross Match also offers outsourced fingerprinting services at hundreds of locations in the US. Fingerprint results can sometimes be processed in as little as a few hours. The Cross Match system should be installed and operational, enhancing the recruiting initiative of the 2006 school year. The scan system will improve efficiency and timeliness in receiving data for potential new hires in the division. The personnel proposed to operate and maintain the fingerprint scan are the Benefits Clerk, Executive Secretary, and

Personnel Coordinator. The implementation of this recommendation should be completed by April of 2006.

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING

WPS does not use an on-line exit survey to determine the reasons that staff leave the division. Within the current school year, there have been 50 resignations, all of which were voluntary. The resignations include 25 teachers, five teacher's assistants, three speech pathologists, four coaching staff members, four custodial workers, four cafeteria workers, a computer technician, a site director, a librarian, and one director of instruction. Currently there are only six positions remaining open, and two of the positions will not be filled.

In WPS, the Human Resources Department uses internal reports to track trends in staff turnover and reasons for leaving the division. Data are collected from the following reports: termination, professional staff vacancies, and termination reports, along with the employment action log. The primary reasons noted were voluntary resignation, termination, retirement, and filled another position within WPS. This does not provide the division with sufficient information for developing its strategy for hiring and retaining valuable teachers. The Human Resources Department must track and understand why employees voluntarily leave their jobs, and identify the root causes of the retention challenges it faces.

Exhibit 3-7 displays the teacher turnover rates over the past four years in WPS. As indicated by this exhibit, WPS did not include information on teacher turnover by ethnicity or gender until the 2003-04 school year.

EXHIBIT 3-7
TEACHER TURNOVER DATA
WINCHESTER PUBLIC SCHOOLS
2001-05 SCHOOL YEARS

YEAR	TOTAL #	RESIGN	RETIRE	GENDER		RACE		TEACHING STAFF	% TURNOVER
				M	F	B	W		
04-05	45	32	13	11	34	0	45	315	14%
03-04	37	24	13	9	28	2	35	304	12%
02-03	30	23	7	*NA*				300	10%
01-02	24	16	8	*NA*				294	8%
00-01	27	19	8	*NA*				293	9%

Source: WPS Human Resources Department, Teacher-turnovers 05 Report, 2005.

Typically, human resources managers and administrators in school divisions propose that rewards and incentives are the answers to improving teacher retention. While the intentions of these officials are good, the ideas are generally based on guesswork, since many good teachers enter the field for reasons other than money.

In an effort to better identify reasons for employee turnover and to improve teacher retention, the WPS Human Resources Department encourages employees to complete an exit interview prior to leaving the school division. The reliability and usefulness of an exit interview is strongly affected by the skills of the interviewer and/or the design of the questionnaire if completed at will. Unfortunately, employees are not always willing to share their thoughts and opinions. Employees may be reluctant to make negative comments about administrators or former supervisors if they fear future job opportunities could be affected by past employers. One solution is to develop an on-line self-service exit interview system.

RECOMMENDATION

Recommendation 3-6:

Develop an internal, on-line exit survey designed to provide Winchester Public Schools with a comprehensive evaluation of all the reasons why teachers and employees are leaving the school division.

One way to solve retention issues is to go directly to the source to find out why employees leave, where they see problems, and where they see successes. The exit survey should identify reasons for employee turnover and measure the success of the school division's retention initiatives. The need for school administrators to support retention initiatives is essential to ensure quality education for all students.

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be completed with existing resources.

3.4   *Classification, Compensation, and Job Descriptions*

To attract and retain competent and highly qualified personnel, a school division must offer competitive salaries and benefits. Effective salary administration ensures fair and equitable treatment for all employees and enables school division employees to understand how their salaries are determined.

Total compensation is a combination of base pay, incentives (bonus program and recognition awards), stock, and benefits. WPS offers a comprehensive benefits package to its employees. The school division pays a portion of the medical and dental coverage options. For example, WPS pays $350 of the $410 premium for medical and dental insurance for employees only.

WPS also offers other benefits. There is a Flexible Benefit Plan in which employees can participate, and there are life insurance options and long-term disability insurance that employees can purchase. A Tuition Assistance Program is offered to any WPS employee who is going to enroll in a course that is directly related to his or her position or will satisfy requirements for certification or recertification of a teacher's assignment or advancement toward a professional degree.

Exhibit 3-8 shows a comparison of peer divisions. WPS rates slightly higher than peer divisions in share costs for health insurance coverage.

EXHIBIT 3-8
HEALTH INSURANCE COVERAGE – SCHOOL DIVISION SHARE COSTS
WINCHESTER PUBLIC SCHOOLS
2004-2005

SCHOOL DIVISION	EMPLOYEE ONLY	EMPLOYEE AND CHILD	EMPLOYEE AND SPOUSE	FAMILY
Winchester	**$4,347**	**$6,219**	**$9,927**	**$9,927**
Fredricksburg	$4,728	$8,748	$8,748	$12,768
Charlottesville	$4,104	$6,156	$8,209	$11,287
Manassas	$5,327	$9,429	$11,187	$15,981
Manassas Park	$4,105	$7,800	$7,800	$12,398
Salem	$4,128	$6,228	$10,020	$10,020
Virginia Averages	$4,251	$6,949	$8,499	$11,204

Source: VEA Research Services, Health Insurance Coverage – School Division Share Costs, 2004-05

When WPS administrators, principals, and teachers were asked about salary levels in the MGT survey, the overall results were not favorable. As shown in Exhibit 3-9, 80 percent of administrators, 45 percent of principals, and 36 percent of teachers *agree* or *strongly agree* that WPS salary levels are competitive. With regard to the salary level being adequate for the level of work and experience, 80 percent of the administrators and 45 percent of the principals *agree* or *strongly agree* that the level is adequate, but only 22 percent of the teachers *agree* or *strongly agree* with this statement.

EXHIBIT 3-9
SURVEY RESPONSES
WITHIN WINCHESTER PUBLIC SCHOOLS

JOB SATISFACTION	(%A + SA) / (% D + SD)		
	ADMINISTRATORS	PRINCIPALS	TEACHERS
1. Salary levels in Winchester Public Schools are competitive.	80/0	45/36	36/43
5. My salary level is adequate for my level of work and experience.	80/20	45/27	22/56

Source: Created by MGT of America, WPS Survey Results, 2005.

Winchester Public Schools is provided with data from the Virginia Education Association (VEA) Research Service annual surveys, which allows the division to determine if WPS salaries are competitive with those of similar school divisions. WPS produces an annual report of salary comparisons with peer and neighboring Virginia school divisions.

Exhibit 3-10 shows a comparison of peer division minimum and maximum base salaries for teachers. Winchester Public Schools salaries are slightly below the other school divisions, with the exception of Salem.

EXHIBIT 3-10
WINCHESTER PUBLIC SCHOOLS
BENCHMARK TEACHER SALARIES BY LOCALITY
2004-05 SCHOOL YEAR

SCHOOL DIVISION	MINIMUM	5 YEARS	10 YEARS	15 YEARS	20 YEARS
Winchester	**$33,500**	**$37,589**	**$39,506**	**$41,479**	**$44,721**
Fredricksburg	$34,500	$36,750	$39,250	$41,250	$47,825
Charlottesville	$35,000	$36,599	$39,427	$42,474	$45,757
Manassas	37,701	43,244	50,829	59,622	69,815
Manassas Park	36,140	42,387	49,139	56,415	64,579
Salem	35,325	35,985	37,800	40,720	45,050

Source: VEA Research Services, 2004-05 Salary Schedules for Teachers: Volume I Benchmarks and Rankings.

A job description needs to clearly describe the employee's current duties and performance expectations. It is important that each position description be specific, clearly defining the job function, required skills, deadlines, and goals, and delineating expectations for the employee's relations with peers and customers.

FINDING

Job descriptions provided by WPS show over 25 inconsistencies. MGT consultants found job titles in the electronic database that did not have supporting hard-copy job descriptions, and job descriptions not associated with employees or job titles in the electronic database.

A job classification system is an essential element in the effective administration of a school division and a fundamental management tool for determining job descriptions, position standards, and equitable compensation plans. A job classification system helps provide a fair, equitable, and accountable appraisal system to improve employees' performance and gives direction for employees' professional growth. It also guides administrative decisions regarding employee retention.

Job descriptions provide WPS with a summary of the qualifications and requirements necessary for over 600 jobs. They also provide employees with information on their specific duties and responsibilities and serve as a basis for annual performance evaluations. Further, job descriptions are increasingly used to defend workers' compensation and civil lawsuits, and commonly used for advertising to fill an open position.

The WPS Human Resources Department undertakes the preparation, revision, and maintenance of job descriptions for all positions within the division. WPS job descriptions are formatted to include:

- job title;
- supervisor;
- FLSA status;
- preparation date;
- summary of job duties;
- essential duties;
- supervisory responsibilities;

- qualifications;
- education and experience;
- work environment; and
- evaluation standards.

A review of the job descriptions and salary schedule revealed that the job description for teachers is generic, and that only one job description is provided for the bus driver and bus driver aide positions. For example, Special Education, ESL, Vocational, and Regular teachers are grouped under one job title, without educational or special requirements for the position. MGT consultants also found inconsistency in the formatting, such as different fonts, headings, and the same job description for multiple titles. Several staff members interviewed had not seen their job description or felt the descriptions were outdated for their current responsibilities.

RECOMMENDATION

Recommendation 3-7:

Develop job descriptions for each position in the school division using a standardized format that is reviewed and updated every three years.

Job descriptions, as a management tool, can greatly simplify an organization's human resource management. The job descriptions should clarify work functions and ensure that employees understand their jobs. A well-written job description can also aid in maintaining a consistent salary structure, as in many cases performance evaluations are based on job descriptions. WPS may consider conducting a job analysis, reviewing the functions and responsibilities each position, and ensuring that job descriptions are worded in such a manner that employees' performance can be measured.

This recommendation should be implemented no later than July 2006.

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

3.5   *Teacher Certification and Professional Development*

To maintain a competent and quality workforce, school divisions must ensure that certain educational components are in place. These components include appropriate licensing of professional staff, a fair and equitable appraisal system for all employees, and a comprehensive professional development program tied to the mission and goals of the school division. Teachers must have sufficient time if they are going to acquire and, in turn, deliver to the classroom the knowledge and skills necessary to effectively and completely integrate technology into their curriculum.

In June 1995, the Virginia School Board adopted the new Standards of Learning (SOL), which set targets and expectations for what teachers should be teaching and what students should be learning. With these new guidelines, it was necessary to institute

personnel licensure regulations aligned with SOL in order to maintain high standards of professional competence.

Teachers in the Commonwealth of Virginia are licensed with the Virginia Department of Education (VDOE). The department issues seven types of licenses for school personnel, as follows:

- Collegiate Professional;
- Postgraduate Professional;
- Technical Professional;
- Provisional License;
- Special Educational Conditional;
- Pupil Personnel Services License; and
- Divisional Superintendent.

Licenses are effective from July 1 of the school year in which the application for a license is made. The Collegiate Professional License, Postgraduate Professional License, Technical Professional License, Pupil Personnel Services License, and Divisional Superintendent License are valid for five years and may be renewed prior to the end of the fifth school year. To renew a license, 180 professional development points must be completed; they may be earned from any of a variety of activities outlined in 8 VAC 20-21-100 (e.g., college credit, professional conference, peer observations, educational travel, curriculum development, or publication of an article or book).

In WPS, the Assistant Superintendent, supported by the Personnel Coordinator and Benefits Clerk manage teacher licensure and renewal. The coordinators share responsibility for ensuring all newly hired teachers are licensed or are taking the necessary steps toward licensure, keeping the Assistant Superintendent and Director of Instruction informed. The coordinators also act as advisors to teachers in choosing courses to satisfy the licensure renewal or add-on requirements and disseminate information to teachers from VDOE regarding licensure changes. Data are recorded and maintained in an Excel spreadsheet.

FINDING

While staff development is part of WPS focus, staff did not feel that there were sufficient staff development opportunities for all classifications of staff. Steps should be taken to challenge traditional beliefs about staff development and what it should be and do. Staff development should be coordinated throughout WPS, aligned to the goals of the division, and periodically assessed to measure outcomes.

One key factor in employee motivation and retention is the opportunity to continue to grow and expand job and career development skills. In WPS, a staff development team of lead teachers, administrators and department heads was established to focus and guide continuing educational development in the school division. The team meets twice a year, evaluating staff development goals, and making revisions as needed. School based teams at the elementary and secondary level meet throughout the school year, informing the Director of Instruction of staff development needs specific to their individual schools.

WPS staff development opportunities during the 2004-2005 and 2005-2006 school years appear to meet the needs of its teachers and administrators. The course offerings were tailored to instruction, technology, and special education professionals, with few courses for classified and paraprofessional staff. One group of classified employees stated that annual health and safety training were the only staff development opportunities available to them, and a group of paraprofessionals indicated staff development opportunities were limited.

As shown in Exhibit 3-11, WPS administrators and principals are generally more positive regarding the staff development opportunities in the division than are teachers.

EXHIBIT 3-11
SURVEY RESPONSES
WITHIN WINCHESTER PUBLIC SCHOOLS

	WPS ADMINISTRATORS	WPS PRINCIPALS	WPS TEACHERS
The school division provides adequate technology-related staff development.	84/17	63/18	71/16
Staff development opportunities provided by Winchester Public Schools for teachers.	100/0	100/0	61/38
Staff development opportunities provided by Winchester Public Schools for school administrators.	80/20	72/27	21/10

Source: Created by MGT of America, WPS Survey Results, 2005.
[1]Percent responding *Good* or *Excellent* / Percent responding *Fair* or *Poor.*

RECOMMENDATION

Recommendation 3-8:

Direct a wider range of training activities to increase staff development for classified, administrative, and paraprofessional staff.

- The Staff Development Team should continue to encourage and support staff members in all classifications, to participate in training opportunities specific to their current jobs, along with courses to improve or secure overall skills and knowledge. By encouraging staff members to submit their own staff development goals to school administrators and department heads provides the team with additional planning objectives. The team should develop procedures for tracking staff development activities and monitoring evidence of improvement as result of training. Career development courses might include:

Playground Safety Training – Provides training and awareness for individuals involved with children during recess and school breaks. Such courses give insight on examining the playground for possible safety hazards. Knowledgeable supervision on the playground can help ensure safety and reduce accidents. According to the National Program for Playground Safety, the majority of injuries to children ages 5-14 years happening in school environments occur on playgrounds, and more than 40 percent of

these injuries are related to inadequate supervision. Approximately nine to 17 children die each year in playground equipment-related accidents–47 percent by strangulation and 31 percent by falls. Public playground injuries account for approximately 70 percent of all injuries. The leading contributing factor in injuries is falls to surface.

School Nutrition Training – Provides training for school nutrition professionals to build accountable, healthy school nutrition environments that promote students' nutritional well-being and academic achievement.

Forklift Training - Provides a wide range of techniques for training forklift operators and, once implemented, will assure that WPS is in compliance with Federal and State OSHA requirements.

Additional professional development subject matter should include:

- child abuse prevention;
- conflict resolution techniques;
- working with difficult people;
- diversity training; and
- negotiation skills for recruiting.

The staff development team should be established immediately to implement this recommendation by the beginning of the 2006-07 school year.

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

4.0 FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

This chapter provides a summary of financial management functions in Winchester Public Schools (WPS). The four sections of this chapter are:

4.1   Financial Operations
4.2   Budgeting
4.3   Capital Construction
4.4   Student Activity Funds

Effective financial planning and management are necessary to make the most of the limited resources to support student achievement. Maximizing resources requires that WPS accurately report all revenues and disbursements to local taxpayers and state and federal agencies. The ability to perform these tasks affects WPS relationships with employees, vendors, funding agencies, and the local community.

Effective financial management involves allocating resources based on a division's established priorities, controlling the use of resources for intended purposes, and providing timely information accounting for its resources. WPS is responsible for elementary and secondary education within the City of Winchester.

The voters of the city elect council members who appoint a school board to govern the school division. The City Council approves an annual budget for the division. An annual independent audit is performed on the division's accounting records as part of the audit of the City of Winchester's Comprehensive Annual Financial Report. The division's financial activity is shown as a discrete component unit in the city's annual report.

The city issues and pays all long-term debt obligations of the division. The city also provides an integrated financial system for use by WPS that has components for accounting, purchasing, accounts payable, payroll, and human resource management.

Financial reporting of the division's student activity funds is separate from those reported in the City of Winchester's Comprehensive Annual Financial Report. A separate independent audit is performed on the activity funds.

CHAPTER SUMMARY

A review of audit reports for fiscal years 2001 through 2004 show that the City of Winchester's accounting records, which include operations for Winchester City Schools, were fairly presented and free of material misstatement. However, throughout this period, the auditors made recommendations for improving internal controls for both the city and the school division. Exhibit 4-1 below presents a summary of the comments and recommendations the auditors made in regards to accounting for school division operations, and whether these issues were resolved by the next fiscal year.

**EXHIBIT 4-1
WINCHESTER CITY SCHOOLS
AUDIT COMMENTS 2001 THROUGH 2004**

FISCAL YEAR ENDING:	AUDITOR COMMENT/RECOMMENDATION	STATUS
2001	None	N/A
2002	Payroll accounts should be reconciled to W-2 and Federal 941 tax reports	Corrected
2003	None	N/A
2004	Fixed asset should be reconciled to general ledger accounts	Corrected

Source: External audit reports for the years noted.

Although the City of Winchester had issues that remained unresolved from year to year, including unrecognized arbitrage rebate liability related to unexpended bond proceeds and reconciliation problems with its utility billing system, the two issues and audit recommendations made for the school division in fiscal years 2002 and 2004 were both correct in a timely manner.

The WPS Finance Department collects and analyzes the information, then provides the data to division decision makers in a timely manner. The Director and the department's three full-time and two part-time employees are qualified and understand the division's policies and procedures. Adequate separation of duties exists to provide internal controls.

Per pupil operating expenditures for a regular day school is $264 above the peer school division average. WPS has more teachers, technology instructors, teacher aides, and guidance counselors/librarians per 1,000 students than the peer school division average. Data provided by the Virginia Department of Education and from staff surveys indicate that salaries are below the peer school division average.

Student activity funds management is adequate. Each school maintains accounting records that are audited annually by an independent auditor who issues management letters to principals about any questionable transactions. Oversight by the division is adequate but principals need to consistently apply WPS policies and procedures to student activity funds.

Providing insurance to employees through the division's self-insurance program is becoming more and more costly, with employees electing out of the program. An analysis to determine if a more cost-effective system can be provided would benefit both the division and its employees.

4.1 *Financial Operations*

WPS financial managers collect and analyze information, then provide the data to division decision makers, including school board members, central office administrators, department supervisors, and school administrators. Successful financial operations require qualified personnel with an adequate separation of duties; an accounting system

that provides timely and useful information on which to base operating decisions; and comprehensive policies and procedures that ensure proper management of the division's fiscal resources

School divisions require accurate and detailed payroll accounting to ensure that employees receive correct and timely payment for their services. Vendors providing goods and services expect payments on time and for the correct amount.

An organization chart for the WPS Finance Department is presented in Exhibit 4-2. A director, three full-time staff, and two part-time staff comprise the department.

The Finance Department of Winchester Public Schools provides internal controls and accounting operations backup. Completion of accounting transactions requires at least two staff members. Staff assignments of primary responsibility for an accounting activity are clear, and each individual has secondary responsibilities for backup. The staff is knowledgeable and well trained to provide an efficient and effective financial operation.

The school division processes financial transactions and maintains financial records on the same financial system as the City of Winchester. WPS cost for use of the system during the 2004 fiscal year was $40,000. The system provides the school division with adequate financial information at a very affordable cost. Use of the same system as the city minimizes the cost of the independent audit.

EXHIBIT 4-2
WINCHESTER PUBLIC SCHOOLS
FINANCE DEPARTMENT ORGANIZATIONAL CHART
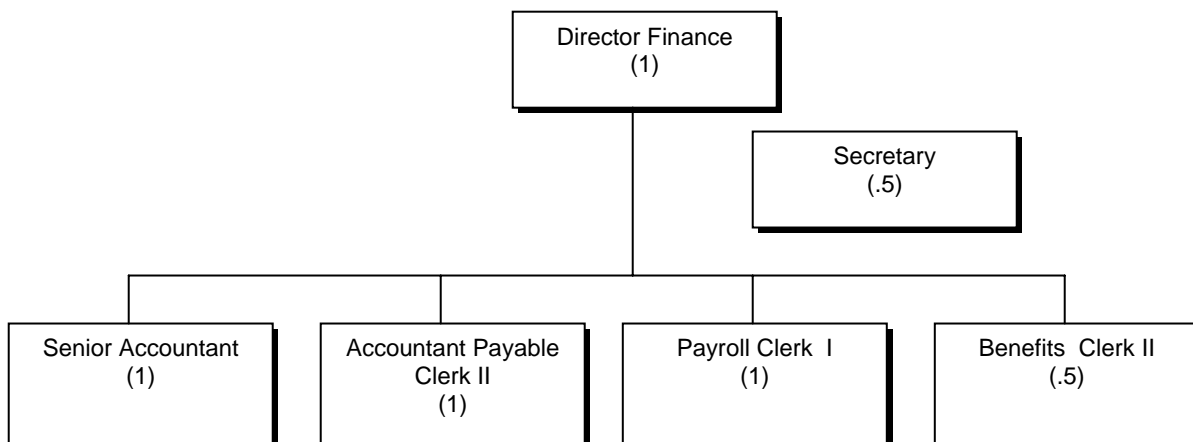
Source: Winchester Public Schools, Finance Department, 2005.

The financial system for Winchester Public Schools provides an encumbrance accounting general ledger system with integrated purchasing and an interface to the payroll module. Budget to actual comparison reports are available with supporting detail. The ability to download accounting information into spreadsheets for additional analysis exists. Ad hoc query capabilities are also available, with the ability to download into spreadsheet software.

WPS also uses modules of its financial management system to process accounts receivable transactions and to maintain fixed assets records. The district uses an Excel

spreadsheet process to reconcile the fixed asset files to the General Ledger. This approach provides a cost-effective solution given the limited volume of data.

Peer division comparisons to assess financial operations are a valuable approach to gaining an understanding of a division's financial operations. The Virginia Department of Education collects information from all school divisions in the state. Peer divisions selected for comparison to WPS are Fredericksburg City, Charlottesville City, Manassas Park City, Manassas City, and Salem City. Exhibit 4-3 presents pertinent data for WPS and the peer divisions as reported by the Virginia Department of Education.

Exhibit 4-4 provides a comparison of student enrollment and the number of schools for WPS and the peer school divisions as reported by the Virginia Department of Education.

This chart provides a reference indexes to aid in comparing peer school divisions. Two indexes have been added to the basic information provided for the divisions selected as peers. A student population index based on the average student population of the peer division and a school site index based on the average number of school buildings in each peer division. The WPS student population is about the peer school division average and the number of schools is at the average. The peer school division of Manassas Park City has about a third the number of students as WPS, while Manassas City is about twice as large. Manassas, with the largest student population, has one more school than WPS.

EXHIBIT 4-3
WINCHESTER PUBLIC SCHOOLS
PEER DIVISION COMPARISONS
2004 FISCAL YEAR

SCHOOL DIVISION	CLUSTER IDENTIFICATION	TOTAL STUDENT POPULATION	STUDENT POPULATION PER 1,000 GENERAL POPULATION	PERCENT ECONOMICALLY DISADVANTAGED	TOTAL NUMBER OF SCHOOLS
Winchester	**6**	**3,564**	**156**	**42.00%**	**6**
Manassas Park	6	2,374	232	31.30%	4
Manassas	6	6,761	192	23.30%	7
Salem	6	3,944	159	20.30%	6
Fredericksburg	6	2,473	128	48.20%	4
Charlottesville	6	4,388	97	48.10%	10
Peer Division Average	**6**	**3,894**	**162**	**35.53%**	**6**

Sources: Virginia Department of Education Website, 2005 and United States Census Bureau, 2000 Census Data.

EXHIBIT 4-4
WINCHESTER PUBLIC SCHOOLS
PEER DIVISIONS SCHOOL INDEX COMPARISONS
2004 FISCAL YEAR

SCHOOL DIVISION	TOTAL STUDENT POPULATION	TOTAL NUMBER OF SCHOOLS	SCHOOL INDEX
Winchester	**3,564**	**6**	**103.33%**
Manassas Park	2,374	4	64.52%
Manassas	6,761	7	112.90%
Salem	3,944	6	96.77%
Fredericksburg	2,473	4	64.52%
Charlottesville	4,388	10	161.29%
Peer Division Average	**3,894**	**6**	**100.00%**

Source: Virginia Department of Education Website, 2005.

The Commonwealth of Virginia uses a local composite index to distribute state aid. The local composite index is an indicator or a locality's ability to pay for public education. It is derived from local true values of real estate and public service corporation property values, adjusted gross income, and local retail sales per local average daily membership and population, weighted against the same values on a statewide basis. The higher a locality's local composite index is, the more able it is to fund public education. Exhibit 4-5 shows a comparison of the WPS local composite index to that of the peer divisions.

EXHIBIT 4-5
WINCHESTER PUBLIC SCHOOLS PEER DIVISIONS COMPARISON
LOCAL COMPOSITE INDEX

SCHOOL DIVISIONS	2002-04	2004-06
Winchester	**.5587**	**.5473**
Fredericksburg	.7011	.7005
Charlottesville	.5710	.6111
Manassas Park	.4109	.4254
Salem	.4166	.3905
Manassas	.3200	.3661
Peer Division Average	**.4839**	**.4987**

Source: Virginia Department of Education Web site, 2005.

The division's expenditures for the 2004 fiscal year are compared to the peer school division average in Exhibit 4-6.

EXHIBIT 4-6
WINCHESTER PUBLIC SCHOOLS PEER DIVISION AVERAGES
DISBURSEMENTS BY CATEGORY
2004 FISCAL YEAR

	WPS		PEER SCHOOL DIVISIONS AVERAGE	
End-of-Year ADM for Determining Cost Per Pupil	$3,564		$3,894	
DISBURSEMENT CATEGORY	Disbursement	**Percent of Total Disbursements**	Disbursement	**Percent of Total Disbursements**
Administration	$1,146,521	2.76%	$1,566,927	3.55%
Instruction	$26,263,067	63.33%	$27,490,138	62.27%
Attendance and Health Services	$571,988	1.38%	$582,880	1.32%
Pupil Transportation Services	$1,074,338	2.59%	$1,414,143	3.20%
Operation and Maintenance Services	$3,467,411	8.36%	$3,449,551	7.81%
Total Cost of Operation Regular School Day	**$32,523,325**	**78.43%**	**$34,503,639**	**78.16%**
Per Pupil Expenditure	$9,125		$8,861	
School Food Services	$1,295,705	3.12%	$1,227,003	2.78%
Summer School	$229,445	0.55%	$178,379	0.40%
Adult Education	$19,810	0.05%	$88,616	0.20%
Other Educational Programs	$743,293	1.79%	$886,146	2.01%
Facilities	$4,917,324	11.86%	$4,142,209	9.38%
Debt Service and Transfers	$113,091	0.27%	$1,804,630	4.09%
Technology	$1,627,522	3.92%	$1,285,515	2.91%
Contigency Reserve	$0	0.00%	$29,197	0.07%
Total Disbursements	**$41,469,515**	**100.00%**	**$44,145,334**	**100.00%**
Total Year End Balances	**$4,770,668**	**11.50%**	**$13,320,951**	**30.18%**
Total Disbursements and Balances	**$46,240,183**	**111.50%**	**$57,466,285**	**130.18%**

Sources: *2004 Superintendent's Annual Report for Virginia*; Virginia Department of Education Web site, 2005.

The total disbursements for Winchester Public Schools are approximately $2.6 million less than the peer school division average. Debt service and transfers account for $1.6 million of this difference. The City of Winchester records WPS debt service on the city's books and reduces the funds the city transfers to the division. In Fiscal Year 2004, the city paid $2.2 million in principal and interest on behalf of the division. If WPS's debt service costs were included, total disbursements for WPS and the peer school division average would be within approximately $500,000, or 1 percent.

Exhibit 4-7 compares the number of WPS and peer division administrative, attendance, and health staff for the 2004 fiscal year.

EXHIBIT 4-7
WINCHESTER PUBLIC SCHOOLS PEER DIVISION COMPARISON
ADMINISTRATIVE, ATTENDANCE, AND HEALTH STAFF
2004 FISCAL YEAR

SCHOOL DIVISIONS	ADMINISTRATION, ATTENDANCE AND HEALTH		
	ADMINISTRATIVE	TECHNICAL AND CLERICAL	OTHER PROFESSIONAL
Winchester	**12.50**	**6.70**	**11.20**
Fredericksburg	7.00	11.50	12.00
Charlottesville	13.00	11.20	17.40
Manassas Park	8.00	8.30	2.00
Manassas	11.90	14.70	13.50
Salem	9.00	4.00	10.10
Peer Division Average	**9.78**	**9.94**	**11.00**

Source: Virginia Department of Education Web site, 2005.

WPS total administrative, attendance, and health cost are $431,298 less than the peer school division average. Staff of 30.4 for WPS is below the peer school division average of 30.72. WPS has more administrators and fewer technical and clerical staff than the peer school division average.

A comparison of WPS and peer division instructional staff per 1,000 students for 2003-2004 is shown in Exhibit 4-8.

Total instructional staff per 1,000 students for WPS exceeds the peer school division average by 12. The higher ratio per 1,000 students translates to an additional 14 teachers, one technology instructor, 21 teacher aides, and two counselors/librarians overall. Even with additional staff, the WPS cost is $1,227,071 less than the peer school division average. Lower salaries paid by WPS result in lower cost.

Source of funding comparisons for WPS and the peer school divisions are presented in Exhibit 4-9.

EXHIBIT 4-8
WINCHESTER PUBLIC SCHOOLS PEER SCHOOL DIVISION COMPARISON
INSTRUCTIONAL STAFF PER 1,000 STUDENTS
2004 FISCAL YEAR

SCHOOL DIVISIONS	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
Winchester	**3,529**	**3.31**	**86.37**	**1.13**	**22.78**	**5.47**
Fredericksburg	2,370	3.48	88.38	0	18.77	4.32
Charlottesville	4,180	4.33	98.00	0	27.73	6.22
Manassas Park	2,180	3.67	79.39	2.29	5.89	5.05
Manassas	6,591	2.88	73.24	0.15	10.54	4.02
Salem	3,886	3.35	72.48	1.39	15.63	4.76
Peer Division Average	**3,841**	**3.54**	**82.30**	**0.77**	**15.71**	**4.87**

Source: Virginia Department of Education Web site, 2005.

EXHIBIT 4-9
WINCHESTER PUBLIC SCHOOLS PEER DIVISION COMPARISON
REVENUES BY FUND SOURCE
2004 FISCAL YEAR

SCHOOL DIVISIONS	SALES AND USE TAX	STATE FUNDS	FEDERAL FUNDS	LOCAL FUNDS	OTHER FUNDS	LOANS, BONDS, ETC.
Winchester	**5.87%**	**21.14%**	**5.99%**	**50.49%**	**3.21%**	**13.30%**
Charlottesville	7.47%	23.18%	9.35%	55.70%	4.29%	0.01%
Manassas	7.02%	29.38%	3.63%	54.96%	2.45%	2.56%
Salem	5.93%	23.08%	3.72%	39.19%	3.10%	24.99%
Manassas Park	5.21%	31.21%	3.79%	38.21%	2.04%	19.54%
Fredericksburg	2.07%	5.69%	6.04%	19.56%	0.76%	65.89%
Peer Division Average	**5.54%**	**22.51%**	**5.31%**	**41.52%**	**2.53%**	**22.60%**

Source: Virginia Department of Education Web site, 2005.

Exhibit 4-10 presents a comparison of WPS's source of funds to the peer school division average for the 2004 fiscal year.

WPS maintains a number of funds to account for transactions of various operations of the school division. Exhibit 4-11 presents a summary of WPS fund balances at the beginning and end of the 2004 fiscal year.

EXHIBIT 4-10
WINCHESTER PUBLIC SCHOOLS PEER DIVISION COMPARISON
RECEIPTS BY FUND SOURCE
2004 FISCAL YEAR

SOURCE OF FUNDS	WPS		PEER SCHOOL DIVISIONS AVERAGE	
	$	% of Total Receipts	$	% of Total Receipts
Sales and Use Tax	2,497,483	5.87%	1,623,481	5.54%
State Funds	8,995,179	21.14%	6,276,843	22.51%
Federal Funds	2,548,323	5.99%	1,649,565	5.30%
Local Funds	21,485,334	50.49%	12,382,535	41.53%
Other Funds	1,365,842	3.21%	728,495	2.53%
Loans, Bonds, etc.	5,659,009	13.30%	7,656,164	22.60%
Total Receipts	42,551,170	100.00%	30,317,084	100.00%
Balances at Beginning of Year	3,689,012	8.67%	1,608,631	5.02%
Total Receipts and Balances	**46,240,182**	**108.67%**	**31,925,715**	**105.02%**

Sources: *2004 Superintendent's Annual Report for Virginia*; Virginia Department of Education Web site, 2005.

EXHIBIT 4-11
WPS FUND BALANCE SUMMARY
2004 FISCAL YEAR

FUND CATEGORY	2004 BEGINNING FUND BALANCE	2004 ENDING FUND BALANCE
School Operating	-	-
Federal Grants	-	-
Food Services	$219,272	$180,543
Textbook Fund	$280,695	$362,898
Insurance	$496,881	$728,217
Facilities Management	$99,450	$139,450
Trust	$596,411	$867,667
Capital Improvement Fund	$2,089,938	$2,042,019
Capital Construction	$1,517,504	$2,626,304

Source: WPS 2004 Annual Financial Report.

The balance in the Textbook Fund is already committed for the purchase of Math, Foreign Language, and English/Language Arts textbooks.

An appropriation to the Capital Construction and Capital Improvement Fund Balances occurred in fiscal 2005.

Winchester Public Schools does not have a board policy for its Insurance Fund Reserve. An adequate reserve is necessary to ensure that the division has the funds available to

pay costs associated with its self-insured employee health insurance program in a timely manner without adversely affecting educational processes.

The Insurance Fund Reserve Balance as of June 30, 2004 was $728,217. One funding requirement of this balance is a budget appropriation of the current year risk exposure of $300,000. After reducing the fund balance for this appropriation in order to fund the maximum health insurance costs, a reserve for unanticipated costs of $428,217 or 12 percent of current year maximum exposure remains.

School divisions that operate a self-insurance program in an effective manner establish a fund balance policy. A program's fund balance policy provides guidance when making operating decisions concerning contribution rates from employees and the division's participation in the program. The policy establishes appropriate uses of the fund balance and a minimum undesignated fund balance that must be maintained.

RECOMMENDATION

Recommendation 4-1:

Review the adequacy of the Insurance Fund reserve and establish a Board policy.

Managing self-funded health insurance is like running an insurance company. Adequate reserves are required for solvency and to ensure that expenses can be paid in a timely manner with adversely impacting the education process. A fund balance policy should provide guidance on the uses of available reserves and a minimum undesignated fund balance to buffer the program against unanticipated cost defined.

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING

Average teacher and principal salaries at WPS are lower than salaries for similar positions at peer school divisions. The school division has not conducted a labor market survey to determine if salaries paid to WPS teachers and principals are competitive with surrounding or peer divisions.

A comparison of WPS instructional salaries to the peer school division average is presented in Exhibit 4-12.

A teachers survey conducted by MGT indicates that over 36 percent of teachers agree that salaries paid by WPS are not competitive. Also, 56 percent of teachers and 27 percent of principals agree that salaries paid by WPS are not competitive for work and level of experience.

EXHIBIT 4-12
WINCHESTER PUBLIC SCHOOLS PEER DIVISION COMPARISON
INSTRUCTIONAL SALARIES
FISCAL YEAR 2004

	WPS	PEER SCHOOL DIVISIONS AVERAGE	DIFFERENCE (WPS minus PSDA)	PERCENTAGE (WPS divided by PSDA)
Principal Positions Elementary	5.67	4.27	1.40	133%
Average Annual Salary	$70,784	$79,780	($8,996)	89%
Principal Positions Secondary	2.33	1.53	0.80	152%
Average Annual Salary	$74,391	$91,162	($16,771)	82%
Total Principal Positions	8.00	5.80	2.20	138%
Average Annual Salary	$71,834	$82,959	($11,125)	87%
Assistant Principal Positions Elementary	1.11	3.51	(2.40)	32%
Average Annual Salary	$63,530	$63,239	$291	100%
Assistant Principal Positions Secondary	3.00	3.87	(0.87)	78%
Average Annual Salary	$65,010	$71,635	($6,625)	91%
Total Assistant Principal Positions	4.11	7.38	(3.27)	56%
Average Annual Salary	$64,610	$67,209	($2,599)	96%
Elementary Teaching Positions	188.67	195.48	(6.81)	97%
Average Annual Salary	$41,018	$43,608	($2,590)	94%
Secondary Teaching Positions	129.78	133.48	(3.70)	97%
Average Annual Salary	$44,318	$44,666	($348)	99%
All Teaching Positions	318.45	328.96	(10.51)	97%
Average Annual Salary	$42,363	$44,065	($1,702)	96%
All Instructional Positions	330.56	342.14	(11.58)	97%
Average Annual Salary	$43,353	$45,220	($1,867)	96%
Teacher Aides Positions	80.50	63.10	17.40	128%
Average Annual Salary	$12,713	$16,697	($3,984)	76%
District Wide Instructional Positions	18.55	9.15	9.40	203%
Average Annual Salary	$30,178	$42,068	($11,890)	72%

Source: Virginia Department of Education Web site, 2005.

School divisions effectively recruit, retain, and reward high-performing employees based on salaries. Competitive salaries attract the best and brightest individuals. Efficient school divisions define a geographic labor market and survey the market to determine the prevailing wage.

RECOMMENDATION

Recommendation 4-2:

Conduct a labor market survey with assistance from Human Resources to determine competitive salaries and benefits for Winchester Public School teachers and principals.

A labor market survey for school division instructional staff will provide Winchester Public Schools with the information needed to ensure that compensation paid is competitive with surrounding school divisions. Compensating instructional staff at competitive rates

will help ensure that quality staff are retained by Winchester Public Schools and not lost to competing school divisions.

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation requires that a consultant be retained by the division to perform a labor market survey and identify any needed changes in compensation to ensure that instructional staff are compensated at a competitive rate. The cost to retain a consultant is approximately $25,000.

Recommendation	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10
Conduct a Labor Market Survey	($25,000)	$0	$0	$0	$0

FINDING

Surveys of customers of WPS's financial operations are not conducted to determine which processes are being performed adequately and which may need to be improved. Assessing the quality and support provided by financial operations requires more information than that provided by the annual financial audit, which focuses primarily on the accuracy of financial data.

Although the majority of respondents to surveys conducted by MGT say most financial functions are adequate or outstanding, a high percentage reports that *improvements or major improvements* are needed. Survey results for financial business processes are shown in Exhibit 4-13.

EXHIBIT 4-13
WINCHESTER PUBLIC SCHOOLS FINANCIAL BUSINESS PROCESSES
SURVEY RESPONSES

PROGRAM FUNCTION	(PERCENT NEEDS SOME IMPROVEMENT + NEEDS MAJOR IMPROVEMENT) / (PERCENT ADEQUATE + OUTSTANDING)		
	ADMINISTRATORS	PRINCIPALS	TEACHERS
Budgeting	0/100	9/82	28/45
Strategic planning	60/40	55/45	37/34
Financial management and accounting	0/100	18/82	11/45
Purchasing	40/60	18/73	13/43
Risk management	40/20	18/45	10/41
Administrative technology	20/80	18/82	8/35

Source: MGT, 2005.

Before improvements can be made in an efficient and effective manner, those areas that need improvement must be identified by the people that are impacted by the processes. Many school divisions use customer surveys to identify areas needing improvement.

RECOMMENDATION

Recommendation 4-3:

Survey a representative number of Winchester Public School administrators, teachers, employees, and vendors annually to collect feedback concerning the effectiveness of financial operations.

Administrative practices tend to improve when surveys are provided to customers. Surveys should be evaluated and analyzed by school division administrators to determine where changes are needed to improve services.

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources using technology and financial staff.

4.2   *Budgeting*

A school division's budget is the management tool that controls its financial resources. The budget includes forecasts for anticipated revenues and expenditures for a particular fiscal year. A comparison of budgeted and actual revenues and expenditures is normally prepared monthly to determine if activities are proceeding as planned or if corrective actions are required.

Winchester Public Schools prepares a two-year budget every year that the School Board presents to the City of Winchester for approval. Year one of the budget is for the next fiscal year, while year two contains estimates that will change as additional information becomes available. Exhibit 4-14 shows the division budget calendar for the 2006-2007 budget.

Exhibit 4-15 presents a summary of WPS revenues that includes actual amounts received for the 2004 fiscal year, those budgeted for the 2005 fiscal year, those budgeted for the 2006 fiscal year, and those to be budgeted for the 2007 fiscal year.

WPS recorded $1,694,980 of federal grants received during fiscal 2004 in the School Operating Fund. A decrease in federal grants in the 2006 fiscal year is due to carry-over amounts from the 2005 budget.

A general appropriation increase of $890,000, or 4-percent, and a one-time appropriation increase of $325,000 for the new Daniel Morgan Building in the fall of 2005 occurred in the 2006 fiscal year. Fiscal year 2006 state revenue increased over the prior year by $941,265.

An estimated general appropriation increase of $929,200, or 4 percent as shown in 2007, the one-time appropriation increase of $600,000 for Daniel Morgan Middle School to offset the costs of opening both buildings was removed by the City Council prior to approving the budget. A projected state revenue increase of $1,061,594 and a federal revenue decrease of $93,420 are shown for fiscal 2007.

EXHIBIT 4-14
WINCHESTER PUBLIC SCHOOLS BUDGET CALENDAR
2006-2007 BUDGET

MONTH	ACTIVITY
October	Budget packet prepared for review meeting with budget authorities. Packets include the following: • Calendar • Personnel staffing – contract pay • Prior year's non-contract pay expenditures • Current year's non-salary budgets • New position or stipend form • Staff development request form • Non-capital additions or replacement request form (under $5,000) • Capital additions or replacement request form (over $5,000) Budget authorities are given a month to complete and return packet.
November	Budget meetings scheduled with Superintendent, Assistant Superintendent, Finance Director, and budget authority to review budget requests. All personnel requests summarized for presentation to BOE by Assistant Superintendent. Non-capital additions or replacement requests summarized for presentation to School Board. Staff development requests summarized for presentation to School Board All capital requests forwarded to Director of Operations for inclusion in five-year capital improvement plan. Salary increase scenarios developed at the request of the Superintendent.
December	Finance committee meets to review budget authority requests, salary increase scenarios, and other fixed cost increases. School Board and finance committee meet to review budget authority requests, salary increase scenarios, and other fixed cost increase. Governor releases proposed budget and revenue starting point established.
January	Communication with City of Winchester finance committee on funds requested from city. Estimate for health and dental insurance coverage costs received. Make decision to bid health & dental insurance coverage. Issue request for proposal for health and dental insurance every three years regardless of increase. Salary increase determined. Present proposed budget to School Board. Publish Notice of Public Hearing in newspaper.
February	Public Hearing on Budget. School Board adopts budget.
March	Budget presented to City Council for approval. Commonwealth of Virginia adopts state budget and final revenue amounts are determined. Compare budget revenue estimates and final revenue to determine if adjustments are required.
April	City Council approves funding and adopts division budget.
May	Salary contracts for next school year sent out.

Source: WPS Finance Department, 2005.

EXHIBIT 4-15
WINCHESTER PUBLIC SCHOOLS REVENUES
FISCAL YEARS 2004 TO 2007

FUND CATEGORY	ACTUAL 2004		FY 2005 AMENDED		FY 2006 BUDGET		FY 2007 BUDGET	
	Amount	Percentage of Total Revenue	Amount	Percentage of Total Revenue	Amount	Percentage of Total Revenue	Amount	Percentage of Total Revenue
School Operating	$35,186,667	74.24%	$36,049,886	53.24%	$37,439,893	80.75%	$4,030,687	81.37%
Federal Grants	$297,129	0.63%	$2,528,005	3.73%	$2,170,614	4.68%	$2,077,194	4.22%
Food Services	$1,256,500	2.65%	$1,341,053	1.98%	$1,388,085	2.99%	$1,452,361	2.95%
Textbook Fund	$451,241	0.95%	$517,898	0.76%	$405,000	0.87%	$400,000	0.81%
Insurance	$3,003,981	6.34%	$3,277,523	4.84%	$3,622,500	7.84%	$3,872,500	7.87%
Facilities Management	$880,422	1.86%	$913,068	1.35%	$1,016,940	2.19%	$1,164,398	2.37%
Trust	$60,910	0.13%	$100,200	0.15%	$100,800	0.22%	$100,800	0.20%
Capital Improvement Fund	$6,256,457	13.20%	$22,985,811	33.95%	$222,643	0.48%	$100,000	0.20%
Total Expenditures	$47,393,307	100.00%	$67,713,444	100.00%	$46,366,475	100.00%	$49,197,940	100.00%

Source: WPS 2006/2007 Budget Book.

Exhibit 4-16 presents a summary of WPS expenditures that includes actual amounts expended for the 2004 fiscal year, those budgeted for the 2005 fiscal year, those budgeted for the 2006 fiscal year, and those to be budgeted for the 2007 fiscal year.

EXHIBIT 4-16
WPS EXPENDITURES
FISCAL YEARS 2004-2007

FUND CATEGORY	ACTUAL 2004		FY 2005 AMENDED		FY 2006 BUDGET		FY 2007 BUDGET	
	Amount	Percentage of Total Revenue	Amount	Percentage of Total Revenue	Amount	Percentage of Total Revenue	Amount	Percentage of Total Revenue
School Operating	$35,355,179	76.15%	$36,049,886	53.24%	$37,439,893	80.75%	$4,030,687	81.37%
Federal Grants	$297,127	0.64%	$2,528,005	3.73%	$2,170,614	4.68%	$2,077,194	4.22%
Food Services	$1,295,229	2.79%	$1,341,053	1.98%	$1,388,085	2.99%	$1,452,361	2.95%
Textbook Fund	$369,039	0.79%	$517,898	0.76%	$405,000	0.87%	$400,000	0.81%
Insurance	$3,003,981	6.47%	$3,277,523	4.84%	$3,622,500	7.84%	$3,872,500	7.87%
Facilities Management	$890,780	1.92%	$913,068	1.35%	$1,016,940	2.19%	$1,164,398	2.37%
Trust	$73,025	0.16%	$100,200	0.15%	$100,800	0.22%	$100,800	0.20%
Capital Improvement Fund	$514,301	11.08%	$22,985,811	33.95%	$222,643	0.48%	$100,000	0.20%
Total Expenditures	$46,429,661	100.00%	$67,713,444	100.00%	$46,366,475	100.00%	$49,197,940	100.00%

Source: WPS 2006/2007 Budget Book.

Salary and fringe benefits comprise 81 percent of the fiscal 2006 budget. Included for fiscal 2006 is a 3.5 percent increase for all personnel and a .59 percent increase for the Virginia Retirement System (VRS) at a cost of $994,000. Six new instructional positions, a network technician, and two bus drivers are included at a cost of $374,388. Also, custodian II and III salary schedules were combined, costing $4,600. A bus driver salary schedule adjustment cost of $19,800 and an additional increase for degree supplements of $26,700 are also included.

The 2006 budget included a projected health insurance cost increase of $600,000. To pay for this, employee contributions are increasing $20 per month; $300,000 is allocated from the Insurance Fund reserve; and $73,000 has been added to the operating budget.

The Northwestern Regional Education Program (NREP) has an increase in expenditures for fiscal 2006 of $226,868.

Increases for utilities of $86,390 and liability insurance of $9,927 are included in the fiscal 2006 budget. A transfer from the School Operating Fund of $155,000 and $250,000 from the 2005 fiscal year funds the expenditures budgeted for the purchase new Math textbooks.

Departments reduced non-salary budget items to help fund salary and fringe benefit increases for fiscal 2006.

A projected 3 percent salary increase at a cost of $795,300 and a 1 percent increase of VRS at a cost $195,175 are included for fiscal 2007. A 10 percent health insurance cost increase estimated at $200,000 is included. Utility cost increases of $190,637 are projected for the 2007 fiscal year, with $141,920 due to Daniel Morgan Middle School buildings opening in the fall of 2006. A transfer of $350,175 to the Textbook Fund provides funding to Foreign Language and English/Language Arts textbooks.

FINDING

WPS's budget process produces a proposed budget for the School Board's and City of Winchester's approval in a timely manner. WPS staff involved in developing data for the budget understand the process and how to complete the necessary forms. The budget document produced provides sufficient information to support the budgets and the inclusion of comparison data is very beneficial.

The division's budget development process collects and evaluates information in a systematic method. Budget authorities have ample opportunities to present requests for needed items. The WPS School Board reviews preliminary budget requests before an official proposed budget is prepared for presentation and consideration.

School divisions that budget effectively have a defined budgeting process. The process includes a published timeline for completion of each step in budget development. Participants understand the format for presenting budget requests and have the opportunity to present the requests for review. Before adoption, the proposed budget is published and a public hearing is advertised so public comment may be considered.

COMMENDATION

WPS has a participative budget process that is understood by all stakeholders.

FINDING

The Director of Operations developed a Capital Improvement Plan for the 2006 through 2010 fiscal years which was approved by the School Board on June 20, 2005. This approved plan will be placed in the FY 2007 budget for recommended funding approval.

This process is used each year for funding needed repairs. The Director of Operations develops the plans based on recommendations from a variety of school division staff members.

WPS's budget process produces a proposed operating budget in a timely manner. Budget authorities understand the process and the information contained in the operating budget documents. The operating budget documents provide information to support the operating budgets and the use of comparison data is also beneficial to understand the division's budget needs; however, without a companion document that presents the capital improvement needs of the division, all information needed to ensure that financial resources are allocated in the most effective manner is not available.

School divisions with efficient and effective financial management programs submit budgets and financial plans for both operating and capital improvement needs to the School Board for consideration and adoption. Sound financial management of a division requires complete and accurate information concerning all activities of the division. Submission and consideration of operating budgets and capital improvement plans should occur simultaneously.

COMMENDATION

Winchester Public Schools' Capital Improvement Plan and budget process documents the improvements needed to district facilities and the funding necessary to fund the projects.

FINDING

Cost of the division's self-funded health insurance is increasing, and employees are opting out of the program. Two years ago the division bid out its health insurance and last year considered combining the School and City health insurances, but it was concluded the division's cost would increase. Although the division has made some attempts to identify affordable alternatives, health insurance costs are increasing faster than the division and employees' ability to pay.

Twenty-six WPS employees have elected not to participate in the health insurance program provided by the school division due to increased costs. The employees opted out in a year when the school division did not pass the entire cost of insurance on to the employees. The resulting loss of revenue from fewer employees participating has an ongoing impact on the self-insurance fund.

WPS provides health insurance benefits for employees through a self-funded program with Anthem Blue Cross and Blue Shield. Anthem provides consulting, catastrophic loss re-insurance, and claims processing service to the division. Anthem provides specific stop loss reinsurance for individual claims exceeding $90,000 and aggregate claims exceeding 110% of projected expected liability of $3,265,091.

The division's maximum cost for any single claim file during the 2006 fiscal year is $90,000, with Anthem paying any cost over $90,000. The division's maximum cost for the 2006 fiscal year is $3,574,352, with Anthem paying any claim cost above that.

Anthem projects a self-funded health insurance cost for 2005-06 of $3,265,091 and fully insured vision premiums of $36,726, a total insurance cost of $3,301,817. WPS department budgets for the division's share of the insurance cost, and 530 plan participants contribute through payroll deductions. The projected contribution for 2006 fiscal year is $3,229,507. The 2006 adopted budget includes funding for the difference of $72,310.

The maximum liability to the division for fiscal 2006 is $3,574,352. The difference between expected and maximum liability is the division's risk. The division risk exposure for fiscal 2006 is thus $309,261. WPS's 2005-06 budget appropriated $300,000 to the Insurance Fund reserve to cover this risk exposure. The final costs for the 2004-05 year claims exceeded the estimated costs by .3 percent.

The insurance fund undesignated reserve as of June 30, 2005 was $870,685. The amended budget for fiscal 2006 appropriated $300,000 of the reserve to ensure that spending authority equals or exceeds expenditures. After reducing the fund balance for this appropriation, a reserve for unanticipated costs of $570,685 or 16 percent of current year maximum exposure remains.

The 2005-06 school year budget increased appropriation for maximum risk exposure to $300,000, an increase of $100,000. Anthem's projected increase for IBNR is $40,710. Anthem further predicts an annual trend increase of 14 percent a year.

School divisions fund insurance benefits to employees from current resources provided by the division or employee payroll deductions. An analysis of benefit levels, amounts charged to employees, and division contributions should occur annually. A division must either implement the necessary adjustments to contributions from employees and the division, modify benefits provided, or switch to a more advantageous system.

RECOMMENDATION

Recommendation 4-4:

Increase effort to identify alternative solutions to control the cost of providing adequate health insurance and recommend alternatives.

The division may have explored alternatives and solicited bids from vendors; however, twenty-six employees opted out of the division provided insurance program due to cost. Analyzing the division's employee health insurance needs and recommending alternatives will provide the necessary data needed to make decisions. By identifying alternatives to the self-insurance program or changes to the program, the division will be able to provide the best possible health insurance that all employees and the division can afford.

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources and should result in a cost savings to the school division depending on the outcome.

FINDING

Winchester Public Schools expends $1.3 million annually for services provided by the Northwest Regional Education Programs (NREP) but has not performed a cost benefit analysis to determine if the arrangement is the best solution for the division. The division has participated in the program as currently designed for three years. Prior to this, WPS acted as the fiscal agent.

Frederick County Public Schools is the current fiscal agent for the NREP and receives an administrative fee for performing their required duties. NREP provides services to preschoolers from Frederick County and WPS. Each division pays a fee based upon the number of preschoolers participating in the program. WPS leases space at Douglas Community Learning Center (DCLC) to NREP for $50,400 per year. The estimated cost to WPS for 2006 is $1,347,520. WPS's share of the administrative cost of $14,034, and its share of the lease of DCLC $16,284 is included in the total cost of $1,347,520.

Divisions are required to provide services to preschoolers. They either provide the services with their own staff, contract with third parties, or participate in cooperative service joint ventures. Divisions base their decision on providing the best educational services to preschoolers at the lowest cost.

To determine if tax dollars for major services are being expended effectively, divisions normally perform a cost benefit analysis. Cost benefit analyses that are prepared using comprehensive data that compare the total costs from different providers, including providing the services with division staff, ensure that information is available to enable the best decisions to be made for the division and its students.

RECOMMENDATION

Recommendation 4-5:

Identify alternative solutions and prepare a cost benefit analysis for services currently obtained from the Northwest Regional Education Programs.

By analyzing the services provided by the NREP, identifying other providers, and conducting a cost benefit analysis, the division will have the comprehensive information needed to determine the most advantageous method of providing services to its preschool students. Including data for services to be provided by division staff will offer the division another alternative to providing the services and one where the division will have control over cost increases.

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources and may provide a cost savings to the school division.

4.3   *Capital Construction*

Bonds issued in 2004 provide capital construction funding for the renovation and remodeling of the John Handley High School and Daniel Morgan Middle School. Both

projects are multi-year and have multi-phases that run through the 2008 fiscal year. Prior to issuance of debt in 2004, the division incurred long-term obligations for the following projects:

- 2003 Daniel Morgan Middle School
- 2002 School Design
- 1995 Daniel Morgan Middle School
- 1995 Garland R. Quarles Elementary School
- 1994 Virginia Avenue Charlotte Dehart Elementary School
- 1994 Garland R. Quarles Elementary School
- 1994 Douglas Community Learning Center
- 1994 Central Administrative Offices
- 1990 Frederick Douglass Elementary School

The 1987 Long Range Capital Improvements Plan adopted by the School Board identified the need to renovate and expand the John Kerr Elementary School, with an estimated project cost of $10.5 million. The project is currently on hold pending identification of a funding source. The proposed 2006-2010 Capital Improvement Plan targets the project for consideration in 2009-2010.

The City Council allows unspent operating funds at the end of a budget year to be transferred to the Capital Improvement Fund for needed repairs. Amounts for the last five years were:

- Fiscal 2005 - $570,059
- Fiscal 2004 - $589,952
- Fiscal 2003 - $257,195
- Fiscal 2002 - $441,686
- Fiscal 2001 - $561,264

Funds made available from operating fund transfers totaled $2,420,156 from fiscal year 2001 through fiscal year 2005. The 2006-2010 proposed Capital Improvement Plan identifies $1,890,000 of projects for recommended funding.

FINDING

WPS provided $50 million of local funding and $5 million of State Historic Tax Credits for a three-year project to renovate and remodel the John Handley High School. When the project is completed in the 2007-08 school year, sufficient space and facilities to support instruction programs at the high school level will exist.

Through commitment of $32 million of funding using the Virginia Public-Private Education Facilities and Infrastructure Act of 2002, was initiated a three-year project to renovate and remodel Daniel Morgan Middle School. When the project is completed in 2006-07, sufficient space and facilities to support instruction programs at the middle and elementary level will exist.

Through an informal agreement with the City of Winchester, Winchester Public Schools established a Capital Improvement Fund. Use of the fund has enabled the division to complete over $3.5 million in the past five years of needed minor repairs and renovation projects to division facilities. About $1.3 million of the expenditures were funded from

proceeds from the sale of Dowell J. Howard and the remaining were from surpluses from the operating fund or from e-rate funds.

COMMENDATION

Winchester Public Schools has demonstrated a commitment to provide necessary funding for school facilities.

4.4   *Student Activity Funds*

The division has a fiduciary responsibility to properly administer student activity funds, which are comprised of school, club, or campus funds. According to the Regulations of the Virginia Board of Education (8VAC20-240-10), student activity funds are defined as, "All funds received from extracurricular school activities, such as entertainment, athletic contests, cafeteria, club dues, etc., and from any and all activities of the school involving personnel, students, or property…"

The School Board is responsible for administering the regulations established by the State Board of Education. Student activity fund revenues may be generated from a number of sources including athletics, concessions, publications, club activities, gifts, fund-raising drives, and other activities. Activity funds for WPS comprise amounts relating to various extracurricular school activities, programs, and groups existing in the schools for the benefit of the schools, the students, and the faculty. The principal of each school has been assigned the responsibility of managing the activity funds on their campuses and for maintaining required records.

Each school uses software from Education Programs and Software, Inc. to maintain the financial records. An independent audit of WPS student activity funds occurs every year. Exhibit 4-17 summarizes the activity funds during the 2005 fiscal year.

EXHIBIT 4-17
WINCHESTER PUBLIC SCHOOLS STUDENT ACTIVITY FUNDS
2005 FISCAL YEAR

SCHOOL	CASH BALANCE JULY 1, 2005	RECEIPTS	DISBURSEMENTS	CASH BALANCE JUNE 30, 2005
John Handley High School	$213,816.07	$652,476.34	$630,030.60	$236,261.81
Daniel Morgan Middle School	$41,710.57	$113,239.77	$113,418.47	$41,531.87
Frederick Douglass Elementary School	$19,966.19	$31,890.56	$33,378.89	$18,477.86
John Kerr Elementary School	$20,069.61	$16,234.17	$14,543.38	$21,760.40
Garland R. Quarles Elementary School	$7,195.10	$22,760.81	$17,904.52	$12,051.39
Virginia Avenue Charlotte Dehart Elementary School	$7,693.74	$29,559.61	$23,428.14	$13,825.21
Douglas Community Learning Center	$1,035.37	$1,130.00	$680.00	$1,485.37
TOTALS	**$311,486.65**	**$867,291.26**	**$833,384.00**	**$345,393.91**

Source: Annual Financial Report, 2005.

FINDING

The Finance Director for Winchester Public Schools requires school principals to respond in writing to comments included in the independent auditor's management letter pertaining to student activity funds. The response requires school principals to describe exactly what they are going to do to address the problems contained in the management letter.

COMMENDATION

Winchester Public Schools is commended for requiring immediate responses from school principals when the independent auditor identifies any questionable transactions in student activity funds.

FINDING

The independent auditor's management letters repeatedly identify problems with student activity funds administered by school principals. The division's accounting manual identifies judiciary responsibilities for student activity funds and all principals have taken classes on fiduciary responsibility and know their responsibilities in regard to student activity funds. The independent auditor's management letters also review any items identified during the prior year and whether the school responded accordingly. Comments concerning the current year activity and suggestions for corrective action are included in the independent auditor's management letters.

Management letter comments for the two previous years contained the following issues pertaining to student activity funds:

- group receipt forms not used or no documentation provided to support deposits;

- internal purchase orders issued after goods purchased;

- purchase order amounts exceeded without prior approval;

- disbursement occurred without documentation;

- receipts not deposited in a timely manner; and

- payments form cash receipts.

While student activity funds are not part of the division's financial records and not included in the city's financial records, the School Board is responsible for the administration of the funds. All division policies and procedures apply to the administration of student activity funds.

The fiduciary responsibility associated with student activity funds creates a need to document transaction with great care. The standard of care in performing the duties of a custodian of funds is higher than the standard of care taken in performing division

business. Principals need to understand their role, responsibilities, and liability when they accept the fiduciary responsibility for student activity funds.

Most school divisions emphasize that the standard of care is high when handling student activity funds. Communications make it clear that all division policies and procedures apply to student activity fund transactions. Effectively managed divisions understand the monetary risk is small compared to the public relations issues associated with mismanagement of student funds.

RECOMMENDATION

Recommendation 4-6:

Increase emphasis of the division's state fiduciary responsibility concerning Student Activity Funds and improve guidance pertaining to documentation of transactions to school principals.

Although most transactions in student activity funds are for small amounts, the fiduciary responsibility for these small amounts places a great responsibility on principals. Ensuring that principals understand the importance of their responsibility and that transactions must be properly documented will reduce the possibility that improper transactions occur. A review of the independent auditor's management letters for the last two years indicated similar compliance issues for both years. Training has been provided and procedures have been documented, however behavior has not changed.

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can implemented with existing resources.

5.0 PURCHASING AND RISK MANAGEMENT

This chapter reviews purchasing and risk management functions in Winchester Public Schools (WPS). The two sections of this chapter are:

5.1   Purchasing
5.2   Risk Management

An effective purchasing program provides divisions with quality materials, supplies, services, and equipment in a timely manner at the lowest price. Purchasing includes those activities associated with the acquisition of supplies, materials, services, and equipment. The purchasing process also includes activities involved in the procurement and evaluation of services.

An effective risk management program identifies, analyzes, and reduces risk through insurance and safety programs to protect the division's assets and employees. The intent of workers' compensation is to protect division employees in the event of work-related accidents or injuries. Property insurance and casualty insurance protect the division from losses arising from property damage, bodily injury, and other situations in which the division may be at risk. A group health plan protects division employees from experiencing a catastrophic loss from an illness by spreading the financial risk of a serious illness across a pool of employees.

CHAPTER SUMMARY

Purchasing policies and operating procedures help ensure that a division complies with state and local board requirements while performing purchasing functions. WPS does not have a purchasing department headed by a purchasing officer. WPS purchasing is decentralized, with budget holders initiating and approving purchase orders through an electronic purchasing system. The Finance Department makes payments to vendors for services, materials, and supplies.

WPS does not have a central warehouse. All deliveries are made directly to a school or department. Each school or department determines inventory levels to meet needs for supplies and materials. Controls to ensure that items are accounted for properly are the responsibility of the schools or departments.

No single individual is assigned the responsibility for risk management. Workers' compensation or property and casualty policies are renewed after the Director of Finance and Director of Operations jointly recommend coverage terms for the next policy year based upon recommendations for vendors. Health insurance is bid once every three years unless the rate increase proposed by the carrier for the next year is too high.

Efficiency and effectiveness would increase if the division hired a Director of Purchasing and Risk Management. This individual could improve division purchasing practices and provide a centralized risk management function. Compliance with the Virginia Public Procurement Act and WPS policies will also be strengthened.

Determining adequate property and casualty insurance coverage, identifying affordable health insurance alternatives, and initiating a safety program based on claims analysis will increase the division's risk management program.

INTRODUCTION

The success of each school and department depends on receiving timely supplies, materials, and services provided by a division's purchasing program. Effective purchasing programs provide divisions with quality materials, supplies, services, and equipment in a timely manner at the lowest price. Purchasing includes those activities associated with the acquisition of supplies, materials, services, and equipment. The purchasing process also includes activities involved in the procurement and evaluation of services.

An effective risk management program:

- identifies, analyzes, and reduces risk through insurance and safety programs to protect the division's assets and employees;

- provides workers' compensation to protect division employees in the event of work-related accidents or injuries;

- provides property insurance and casualty insurance to protect the division from losses arising from property damage, bodily injury, and other situations in which the division may be at risk; and

- provides a group health plan to protect division employees from experiencing a catastrophic loss from an illness by spreading the financial risk of a serious illness across a pool of employees.

5.1 *Purchasing*

Purchasing policies and operating procedures help ensure that a division complies with state laws and local board requirements while performing purchasing functions in an efficient and timely manner. Policies are needed to clearly establish purchasing authority, the methods required for each type of purchase, provisions for conflicts of interest, and penalties for violating purchasing laws and policies. Purchasing procedures implement policies by documenting the steps to be taken by user divisions and purchasing staff when goods or services are procured.

WPS does not have a purchasing department headed by a purchasing officer. Budget holders with approved budgets share purchasing duties. They include principals who purchase supplies and equipment for schools, and administrators, who purchase various services and materials for use by support departments.

WPS purchasing is decentralized. Budget holders initiate and approve purchase orders through the electronic purchasing system. Purchase orders are prepared by budget holders and routed to the Director of Finance. After the Director of Finance approves the purchase order, the purchase order is printed and mailed to the vendor.

Payments of vendor invoices are made by the Finance Department. Receiving reports that document the delivery of goods and services is completed by budget holders. Budget holders match vendor invoices to receiving reports, creating a packet of documentation that is forwarded to the Finance Department for issuing a check to the vendor.

WPS's purchasing policy, which provides guidance to staff who have been delegated the authority to make purchases on behalf of the division, is shown in Exhibit 5-1.

EXHIBIT 5-1
WINCHESTER PUBLIC SCHOOLS PURCHASING POLICY

TYPE OF PURCHASE	REQUIREMENTS
Contract exceeding $50,000	Competitive bids or competitive negotiations will be required for the purchase or lease of goods, or for the purchase of services, insurance, or construction. Must have Board approval.
Commodity procurements between $30,000 and $50,000	Four written informal bids or offers are required and approval of one of the following Director of Finance, Director of Operations or Director of Technology. Budget holder and Finance Department approval.
Commodity procurements between $15,000 and $30,000	Three written, catalog, or documented telephone quotes are required and approval of one of the following: Director of Finance, Director of Operations, or Director of Technology. Budget holder and Finance Department approval.
Commodity procurements between $1,500 and $15,000	Three written, catalog, or documented telephone quotes are required. Budget holder and Finance Department approval.
Commodity procurements between $50 and $1,5000	Budget holder and Finance Department approval.
Commodity procurements under $50	Invoice and budget holder approval.
Emergency contracts	Superintendent with full report concerning contract at the next scheduled School Board meeting.

Source: Winchester Public Schools Purchasing Policy, 2005.

WPS processes checks to vendors every two weeks. The School Board Finance Committee receives a list of all checks for review and approves the issuance of the checks. Exhibit 5-2 summarizes cash disbursements approved by the Finance Committee for the 2005 fiscal year.

EXHIBIT 5-2
WINCHESTER PUBLIC SCHOOLS CASH DISBURSEMENT
FISCAL YEAR 2005

Check Date	Total	Construction	Payroll Related	Net Payroll	Comodities	%	% Total
11/15/2004	4,487,629.19	106,337.00	1,065,848.60	2,026,996.32	1,288,447.27	13.1%	13.1%
9/20/2004	3,850,643.52	186,835.00	861,008.40	2,014,588.96	788,211.16	8.0%	21.1%
2/22/2005	5,352,702.17	1,530,092.80	1,070,899.76	2,035,008.49	716,701.12	7.3%	28.4%
5/23/2005	5,360,430.10	1,550,267.03	1,054,341.16	2,104,756.56	651,065.35	6.6%	35.1%
8/2/2004	813,298.73	252,187.00			561,111.73	5.7%	40.8%
6/20/2005	7,176,906.55	3,483,179.43	1,056,072.52	2,111,423.12	526,231.48	5.4%	46.1%
2/7/2004	3,817,619.41	3,312,223.10			505,396.31	5.1%	51.3%
10/4/2004	491,781.54	14,606.00			477,175.54	4.9%	56.1%
7/12/2004	3,461,409.47		986,764.74	2,024,734.84	449,909.89	4.6%	60.7%
6/6/2005	829,922.56	427,917.63			402,004.93	4.1%	64.8%
12/6/2004	1,469,392.30	1,093,750.00			375,642.30	3.8%	68.6%
4/4/2005	347,277.03				347,277.03	3.5%	72.2%
10/18/2004	3,537,295.35	413,412.85	845,188.11	1,933,252.60	345,441.79	3.5%	75.7%
8/23/2004	3,923,134.12	725,482.60	968,974.58	1,933,241.47	295,435.47	3.0%	78.7%
5/9/2005	270,878.38				270,878.38	2.8%	81.4%
9/7/2004	261,443.54				261,443.54	2.7%	84.1%
3/7/2005	258,290.51				258,290.51	2.6%	86.7%
1/3/2005	1,406,015.98	1,186,894.75			219,121.23	2.2%	89.0%
4/18/2005	5,033,765.79	1,740,249.97	1,035,978.54	2,044,926.84	212,610.44	2.2%	91.1%
12/20/2004	3,350,109.37		1,081,389.28	2,068,822.80	199,897.29	2.0%	93.2%
7/1/2004	1,030,071.21	838,327.50			191,743.71	2.0%	95.1%
3/21/2005	4,356,997.87	1,075,918.50	1,042,064.46	2,059,608.94	179,405.97	1.8%	96.9%
11/1/2004	177,413.11				177,413.11	1.8%	98.7%
1/18/2005	3,190,781.04		1,040,310.95	2,026,673.61	123,796.48	1.3%	100.0%
Total	64,255,208.84	17,937,681.16	12,108,841.10	24,384,034.55	9,824,652.03		

Source: WPS Finance Department, Expenditure Approval Lists, 2005.

The 11/15/2004 check run contained 13.1 percent of all commodities purchased in the 2005 fiscal year, and the 9/20/2004 check run contained 8.0 percent. Together these two check runs comprise 21.1 percent of all commodities purchased during the 2005 fiscal year. The first four check runs in the list comprised 35.1 percent of all commodities purchase during the 2005 fiscal year.

The Finance Department also maintains a listing of payments to vendors that is in descending order based on the commodities field; however, it does not maintain a listing of purchases made from individual vendors during a fiscal year so that cumulative purchases can be monitored. Cumulative purchases from individual vendors are important because many purchasing policies are based on the total purchases made during a fiscal year.

To provide an estimate of cumulative purchases that the division makes with individual vendors, the first four check runs in the 2005 fiscal year were analyzed and a list of the top 50 vendors based on total purchases from those vendors was compiled. Exhibit 5-3 presents the top 50 vendors from those four check runs.

EXHIBIT 5-3
WINCHESTER PUBLIC SCHOOLS TOP 50 VENDORS
2005 FISCAL YEAR

Vendor	11/15/04	9/20/04	2/22/05	5/23/05	Total
Frederick Co Public Schools	279,992.98	287,697.30	293,195.48	293,514.26	1,154,400.02
Disys		8,491.20	253,146.92	14,337.92	275,976.04
NCS Technologies Inc	118,395.00	1,754.00		13,856.00	134,005.00
Kingmor Supply Inc		120,654.00			120,654.00
B W Wilson Paper Co Inc				41,514.44	41,514.44
Sysco Food Services of Virginia LLC	36,680.80				36,680.80
Carpenter & Associates	11,500.50		11,869.50	13,140.50	36,510.50
NCS Pearson Inc		22,869.70	5,436.92	2,894.84	31,201.46
Shenandoah University			3,696.00	25,559.23	29,255.23
Zerox Corporation	124.00	9,197.79	10,277.68	9,296.07	28,895.54
Data Business Systems Inc	99.74		8,109.20	20,670.40	28,879.34
Shenandoah Gas	5,553.55	158.85	12,884.64	9,693.66	28,290.70
Funkhouser & Co	11,079.48		10,694.10		21,773.58
Harcourt School Publishers	504.98	19,422.34			19,927.32
Dell Marketing L.P.		5,272.85	11,410.75	1,447.50	18,131.10
Marcor Remediation Inc		18,000.00			18,000.00
Clean Inc	7,496.00	6,896.00		3,600.00	17,992.00
Harcourt Achieve	3,455.30		3,337.58	10,195.86	16,988.74
Hathaway Paper Co	1,733.20	8,611.45	1,817.10	2,842.11	15,003.86
Ronald A. Williams, Ltd	14,000.00				14,000.00
Treasurer, City of Winchester	3,868.49	5,226.53		3,787.00	12,882.02
Pearson Education	1,875.75	8,915.62		1,759.25	12,550.62
Cool Spring Physical Therapy Inc	4,220.00	60.00	3,300.00	3,880.00	11,460.00
AHA! Process Inc		11,331.66			11,331.66
Arcadian Property Management		10,649.85			10,649.85
Follet	6,209.30	1,936.04		1,427.73	9,573.07
Shenandoah's Pride	8,400.06				8,400.06
Verizon	3,145.34	774.12	2,998.33	1,274.29	8,192.08
NSCI			7,900.00		7,900.00
Quill Corporation	1,810.70	2,106.01	1,944.02	1,565.66	7,426.39
Winchester Physical Therapy	1,575.00	1,575.00	1,575.00	1,575.00	6,300.00
Smith Hamilton Shop Inc			6,140.30		6,140.30
Staples Business Advantage	819.06	1,785.06	1,991.23	1,462.63	6,057.98
School Specialty Inc		5,653.74			5,653.74
Nextel Partners Inc	1,824.85		1,532.21	2,105.23	5,462.29
Winchester Star, The	2,242.76	2,336.76		870.00	5,449.52
B-K Office Supply Inc		2,196.99		3,155.48	5,352.47
McGraw-Hill Companies	4,248.60		781.30		5,029.90
Schenck Foods Co Inc	4,766.21			192.24	4,958.45
Mackin Library Media		4,615.39			4,615.39
Riverside Publishing Co		4,590.79			4,590.79
J W Pepper & Sons Inc	601.99	2,360.30	496.95		3,459.24
CDW Government Inc	293.15	919.00	2,212.00		3,424.15
Classroomdirect.com	27.92		170.09	3,105.22	3,303.23
Winchester Hearing Service				3,250.00	3,250.00
Daniel Morgan Middle School	1,699.92	300.00	274.03	903.53	3,177.48
Domino's Pizza	3,108.00				3,108.00
Peripole-Bergerault Inc		2,903.91			2,903.91
Metropolitan Audio Visual Corp				2,897.00	2,897.00
Solenberger & Co Inc	736.97	1,562.09	338.84	200.97	2,838.87
Schmidt Baking Co Inc	2,734.34				2,734.34

Source: WPS Expenditure Approval Lists.

The top 50 list is based on payments representing approximately one-third of the year's dollar purchases, not purchase orders issued. Knowing a vendor's annual volume in dollars is required to determine compliance with purchasing policy. To estimate a vendor's annual total, the amounts shown in Exhibit 5-3 must be multiplied by three. This estimation technique results in an approximation of annual volume. Care must be taken in using this estimate since not all vendors provide services evenly throughout the year. A review of purchases made from selected vendors on the top 50 list shows:

- Frederick County Public Schools is the fiscal agent for the Northwestern Regional Educational Programs (NREP) and receives an administrative fee. NREP provides services to preschoolers for Frederick County and WPS. Each division pays a fee based upon the number of preschoolers participating in the program. WPS leases space at Douglas Community Learning Center (DCLC) to NREP for $50,400 per year. The estimated cost to WPS for 2005-06 is $1,347,520. An administrative cost of $14,034 is included along with the $16,284 WPS portion of the lease;

- B.W. Wilson Paper Co. Inc. provides paper for copiers and desktop printers. Paper is purchased and delivered once a year; boxes are stacked where space is available at the Central Administrative Office.

- Hathaway Paper Co. provides paper towels, toilet paper, and miscellaneous janitorial supplies. Deliveries made to DCLD are stored in the garage with periodic deliveries to schools. Estimated annual volume is $45,000 for these supplies;

- Arcadian Property Management provides landscape services to the schools.

- Verizon and Nextel Partners, Inc. provide cell phone service, and the estimated annual volume is $41,000; and

- Quill Corporation, Staples Business Advantage, and B-K Office Supply Inc provide office supplies and materials with an estimated annual volume of $57,000.

FINDING

The Virginia Public Procurement Act (VPPA) provides local governments with a significant amount of latitude in purchasing activities. The VPPA states:

A public body may establish purchase procedures, if adopted in writing, not requiring sealed bids or competitive negotiations for single or term contracts for goods and services other than professional services if the aggregate or sum of all phases is not expected to exceed $50,000; however, such small purchase procedures shall provide for competition wherever practicable. Purchases under this subsection that are expected to exceed $30,000 shall require the written informal solicitation of a minimum of four bidders or offers.

Purchases made from selected vendors reviewed present unique purchasing issues, and include the following:

■ Informal bids or quotes in writing plus the approval of the Director of Finance, Director of Operations, or Director of Technology are required if the annual dollar volume is between $30,000 and $50,000. Any vendor on the top 50 list with a total above $10,000 has an estimated annual volume of $30,000.

■ Three written, catalog, or documented telephone quotes plus the approval of the Director of Finance, the Director of Operations, or the Director of Technology are required if the annual dollar volume is between $15,000 and $30,000. Any vendor on the top 50 list with a total above $5,000 has an estimated annual volume of $15,000.

■ The school division in not aggregating purchases to leverage buying power with a single vendor. Quill Corporation, Staples Business Advantage, and B-K Office Supply offer similar products. The sum of the purchases from these three vendors from the four check runs is $18,836.84 or an estimated annual volume of $56,510.52. Competitive bidding is required.

■ Verizon and Nextel Partners, Inc. wireless telephone services estimated annual disbursement is $40,963.11. The school division provided a list of 45 wireless phones. The estimated cost per phone annually is $910. Written informal bids or quotes are required plus approval of the Director of Finance, Director of Operations, or Director of Technology.

■ B.W. Wilson Paper Co. Inc. and Hathaway Paper Co. present the dilemma of bulk purchasing to obtain the best price and not having any place to store the items. Copier and printer paper purchased from B.W. Wilson Paper is stored in any space available at the Central Administrative offices. Custodial supplies purchased from Hathaway Paper Co. are stored in a garage at DCLC.

■ Frederick County Public Schools and Arcadian Property Management have the same issue. Should WPS provide the service with employees or continue to contract for the services. A documented comparison evaluating costs and quality of providing services was not available.

School divisions having purchasing programs that are consistently in compliance with purchasing policies and state purchasing laws are almost always headed by a professional purchasing manager with demonstrated experience and expertise. Purchasing programs that have a strong purchasing manager not only provide assurance that policies and laws are followed but also provide the oversight necessary to ensure that processes are efficient and all purchases are cost effective for the division.

RECOMMENDATION

Recommendation 5-1:

Hire a Director of Purchasing and Risk Management.

Winchester Public Schools will benefit from hiring a director to manage its purchasing and risk management functions. In addition to providing oversight that will enable the division to comply with purchasing policies, this position will also create cost savings by improving purchasing processes. The director will also provide needed management that over time will provide cost savings to the division in procuring commodities and services.

The school division also faces several challenges in the risk management area discussed later in this chapter. Many of the risk management challenges can also be addressed by adding this position, which will serve as a management position responsible for both purchasing and risk management.

FISCAL IMPACT

The net annual savings from hiring a director and from purchasing improvements is $28,000. The cost of hiring a director with benefits is $70,000. A conservative estimate of savings from purchasing improvement is one percent of the total commodity spending, or approximately $98,000. Therefore, a $98,000 less $70,000 in expense equals a cost savings of $28,000 per year or $140,000 over a five-year period.

Recommendation	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	20010-11
Hire a Director of Purchasing and Risk Management	($70,000)	($70,000)	($70,000)	($70,000)	($70,000)
Savings from Purchasing Improvements	$98,000	$98,000	$98,000	$98,000	$98,000
Net Annual Savings	**$28,000**	**$28,000**	**$28,000**	**$28,000**	**$28,000**

FINDING

WPS does not have a process to ensure that bids are always taken when cumulative purchases are made from the same vendor. The Virginia Public Procurement Act requires that bids be taken when aggregate purchases exceed $50,000 during a fiscal year, and WPS purchasing policy requires bids and quotes at specific purchasing levels.

School division purchases made from selected vendors are shown in Exhibit 5-3. Many of the purchases from many of vendors exceed the limits in Virginia state law and WPS

policy. Although no specific purchases were identified that exceeded the limits without proper bids or quotes being taken, the possibility of the limits being inadvertently exceeded exists without monitoring cumulative purchases.

RECOMMENDATION

Recommendation 5-2:

Develop a process to monitor aggregate purchases made from individual vendors.

A process that tracks purchases made from vendors will enable the division to take proper bids or quotes before purchasing limits are inadvertently exceeded.

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING

Winchester Public School employees expressed dissatisfaction with the purchasing system and want improvements to be made. Administrators, principals, and teachers all rely on the school division's purchasing system to provide them with needed materials, supplies, and services in an efficient manner.

Exhibit 5-4 presents the results of a survey of administrators, principals, and teachers concerning the purchasing function.

EXHIBIT 5-4
WINCHESTER PUBLIC SCHOOLS
PURCHASING SURVEY RESPONSES

	(PERCENT NEEDS SOME IMPROVEMENT + NEEDS MAJOR IMPROVEMENT) / (PERCENT ADEQUATE + OUTSTANDING)		
PROGRAM FUNCTION	**ADMINISTRATORS**	**PRINCIPALS**	**TEACHERS**
Purchasing	40/60	18/73	13/43

Source: MGT, 2005.

Forty percent of administrators and 18 percent of principals responded that purchasing *needs improvement* or *needs major improvement*. Thirteen percent of teachers responded that purchasing *needs improvement* or *needs major improvement.*

In order to maintain an effective and efficient purchasing system, school divisions evaluate purchasing practices periodically. Meeting the needs of system users requires periodic reviews including feedback from customers. Customers' input defines the unique requirements that need consideration when making necessary adjustments.

RECOMMENDATION

Recommendation 5-3:

Improve the division's purchasing program based on input from surveys of administrators, principals, and teachers.

Involving administrators, principals, and teachers in identifying specific improvements required in the division's purchasing system will provide the information necessary to address their concerns. Making the needed improvements will provide a more efficient process for the customers to obtain the necessary materials, supplies, and services to complete their assigned responsibilities.

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING

The school division provides cell phones to 45 employees and reimburses 11 other employees for use of their personal cell phones when conducting school division business. WPS does not have a written policy to direct the use of cell phones provided to employees or to guide reimbursement made to employees when using their personal cell phones for division business. Annual expenditure for wireless telephone service is approximately $41,000.

Personal use of cell phones provided to employees routinely occurs in most divisions, and reimbursement should occur for that use. IRS regulations require that if reimbursement for personal use of a business phone does not occur, an amount associated with personal use should be included on an individual W-2 tax form.

A cell phone policy identifies the criteria to use to identify employees who need cell phones and the service levels required to perform job duties. Personal use rules minimize the use of cell phones for personal use and increase reimbursements to a division when such use does occur.

RECOMMENDATION

Recommendation 5-4:

Develop and implement a cell phone policy.

A division-wide policy will assist the newly created Director of Purchasing in providing cell phone service to employees who need that capability to perform job duties at the least cost to the school division. Types of phones that can be provided and service levels required need to be established. The policy provides the basis for the Director of Purchasing to obtain four bids or offers before selecting a vendor to provide the needed services.

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation will produce an estimated annual cost savings of $4,100 or $20,500 over a five-year period. This cost savings is based on a conservative estimate that overall costs will be reduced by 10 percent.

Recommendation	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-2011
Develop and Implement a Cell Phone Policy	$4,100	$4,100	$4,100	$4,100	$4,100

FINDING

Departments and schools purchase materials and supplies without WPS incurring the cost of maintaining a warehouse, but controls are not in place for supplies or materials to be stored at various locations. Space to properly store and safeguard these materials and supplies is not provided. The total annual expenditures for paper, custodial supplies, and other supplies that are ordered in bulk and then stored are not available.

The school division has limited space to store materials and supplies needed on a daily basis. Each school or department determines inventory levels to meet their individual operating needs. No central accounting is made of these items, as accounting for these inventories is the responsibility of the school or department.

The school division buys paper once a year for the Central Administrative Office and stacks boxes in any location that is available. Storage is normally in the facilities maintenance shop, which is in the basement of the Central Administrative Office. Controls assuring proper use and distribution of the paper do not exist.

The school division uses a garage at Douglas Community Learning Center to store janitorial supplies purchased in bulk. A custodial staff member periodically delivers supplies to schools to replenish stock. Controls assuring proper use and distribution of the paper do not exist.

The determination of order quantities and frequency of ordering resides with each department or school. Buying decisions ignore the cost of ordering and materials handling. The ability of vendors to meet delivery requirements to maintain adequate stock of supplies for daily operations is critical.

Supplies and materials purchased in bulk and stored until requested are in need of proper oversight. Efficient school divisions maintain controls over their distribution and use by storing items in secure locations and documenting their distribution and use.

RECOMMENDATION

Recommendation 5-5:

Develop controls for bulk purchases of supplies and materials and identify secure space for their storage.

A system that documents the receipt and distribution of materials and supplies purchased in bulk provides assurance that items are used for school division purposes. Information provided by the system will assist in determining order quantities of items and delivery dates. Knowing quantities and times needed will enable the division to plan delivery dates, which should reduce the amounts that are ordered at any one time.

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources and may provide a cost savings due to a more effective distribution process.

5.2   *Risk Management*

The primary objective of risk management is to establish cost-effective insurance and loss control programs that minimize the financial liability for the division and its employees.

Effective risk management involves:

- analyzing alternatives for health, workers' compensation, and property insurance coverage, such as self-insurance;

- analyzing deductible amounts, co-insurance levels, and types of insurance provided;

- identifying operational areas where hazardous situations may occur or opportunities for physical property loss may exist in order to minimize exposure for potential losses; and

- Identifying operational areas where hazardous situations may occur or opportunities for physical property loss may exist in order to minimize exposure for potential financial loss.

FINDING

WPS does not have centralized oversight or coordination of its risk management functions. The division has made specific assignments to staff for risk management related functions, but does not have a central point to help ensure that the functions are coordinated, processes are reviewed and updated when needed, and all risk management needs are being addressed.

For a risk management program to be most effective, all interrelated processes should be provided with central oversight. Central oversight does not mean that the one

employee has to perform the various functions, but he or she does have the responsibility to direct those functions and ensure they are performed. Central management of a risk management program eliminates redundant processes, and ensures all efforts are coordinated and accomplished according to division policy. It is essential that the interrelated tasks of safety, insurance coverage, and management of loss data be coordinated by a central management staff member. The WPS risk management function is less effective because the division divides management activities among several employees and departments without providing central oversight.

In addition to overseeing insurance coverages, monitoring workers' compensation, and providing for safety and crises management committees, a central risk management function should ensure that the division has addressed issues such as an Asbestos Management Plan, Alcohol/Drug Testing, Hazard Communication Act, Integrated Pest Management, Bloodborne Pathogen Exposure Control Plan, Security Guards, CPR training, Administrators' training, Sexual Harassment Prevention training, Substitute Teacher Safety training, New Teacher Orientation, Bus Driver training, and Safe and Drug Free Schools and Communities.

All school divisions have risk management issues that must be continually addressed to ensure that employees, students, and visitors are protected at all times. Meeting the needs requires identifying any concerns and designing responses to address them.

RECOMMENDATION

Recommendation 5-6:

Centralize coordination of all risk management functions.

Assigning responsibility to provide central coordination of all risk management functions will help ensure that all risks to Winchester Public Schools are centrally managed. Although the individual will not actually perform all the tasks associated with risk management, the position should be the central point for establishing policy and the subsequent monitoring of policy.

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING

A comprehensive analysis of insurance coverage to determine if the division is over- or under-insured in property/casualty or liability coverage has not been performed recently. A periodic risk analysis of property/casualty coverage is important to ensure optimum coverage at a minimum cost.

Winchester Public Schools has not performed a comprehensive analysis of its insurance coverages to determine if adequate protection exists against loss for real and personal property, liability, vehicle loss or damage, and employee crime. WPS insures against loss for real and personal property, liability, vehicle loss or damage, and employee crime through the Virginia School Board Association by participating in a property and casualty

pool. The division's contribution to the pool for coverage for the period of July 1, 2005, through July 1, 2006, is $168,137.

The pool is responsible for the first $100,000 of loss per occurrence for automobile, liability, garage liability, general liability, school leaders' error and omissions liability, and property coverage. Specific excess reinsurance is provided with a limit of $900,000 per occurrence in excess of the pool's retention. Aggregate excess reinsurance is provided with a limit of $2,500,000. The specific and aggregate excess reinsurance is placed with Markel Insurance Company.

The pool is responsible for the first $100,000 of loss per occurrence for property. Property reinsurance is provided in excess of the pool's retention subject to a $100,000,000 per occurrence limit. The property coverage is placed with The Travelers Insurance Companies.

A local government group self-insurance pool is not protected by the Virginia Insurance Guaranty Association against default due to insolvency. In the event of insolvency, members and persons filing claims against members may be unable to collect any amount owed to them by the group regardless of the terms of the member agreement. In the event the group is in a deficit position, a member may be liable for any and all unpaid claims against such member.

Optimal property/casualty coverage requires claims history, deductibles, coverage amount, exposure base, and cost to be in balance. Over time, these factors tend to drift out of balance due to a division's changing circumstance and needs.

The school division is currently involved with two major renovation projects. The replacement cost of the structures and contents are changing. As the projects are completed, the risk of loss to the division increases.

A new direction in providing bus service is under way with acquisition of new buses. Previously the division used city-owned buses to transport students. The value of the bus fleet has increased and potential replacement costs have increased.

To ensure optimum coverage at a minimum cost, school divisions conduct a comprehensive analysis of risks and the insurance coverage needed to protect from those risks. A periodic risk analysis of property/casualty coverage is important to ensure optimum coverage at minimum cost. Optimal property/casualty coverage requires claims history, deductibles, coverage amount, exposure base, and cost to be in balance. On-going analysis of insurance claims assists in determining if the division is over-insured or under-insured in property/casualty or liability coverage.

RECOMMENDATION

Recommendation 5-7:

Analyze current insurance coverage to determine if the division is protected from losses with the proper level of coverage and deductibles and develop a process to annually review coverage and deductibles.

Analysis of the division's current insurance coverage and recent loss history should enable the decision to determine if it is over- or under-insured. Evaluating the impacts of two major renovations, changes of bus service, and other changes provides a basis for determining if insurance coverage and deductibles are cost effective and should protect the division from major losses. An annual review should identify changes from the prior year that are needed to maintain coverage and deductibles at the proper level.

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING

The division does not review workers' compensation claims to identify the causes of accidents to determine what to include in the safety training program to reduce their occurrence. The division does not have a formal process to review each accident as it happens to determine if immediate action is necessary.

WPS obtains workers' compensation coverage pursuant to Section 65.1-104.2 of the Workers' Compensation Act of Virginia from School Systems of Virginia Group Self Insurance Association. The division contribution to the pool for coverage for July 1, 2005, to June 30, 2006 is $110,689.

WPS has employers' liability coverage with the following limits:

- bodily injury/accident: $100,000 each accident; and

- bodily injury/disease: $100,000 each accident, $500,000 coverage limit.

WPS's workers' compensation contributions for fiscal years 2001 through 2006 are shown in Exhibit 5-5, and workers' compensation paid claims for fiscal years 2001 through 2005 are shown in Exhibit 5-6.

EXHIBIT 5-5
WINCHESTER PUBLIC SCHOOLS
WORKERS' COMPENSATION CONTRIBUTIONS
FISCAL YEARS 2001 THROUGH 2006

FISCAL YEAR	AMOUNT
2001	$64,912
2002	$93,552
2003	$97,383
2004	$130,386
2005	$124,375
2006	$110,689

Source: WPS Finance Department, 2005.

EXHIBIT 5-6
WINCHESTER PUBLIC SCHOOLS
WORKERS' COMPENSATION PAID CLAIMS
FISCAL YEARS 2001 THROUGH 2005

FISCAL YEAR	AMOUNT
2001	$132,848
2002	$11,146
2003	$18,593
2004	$57,309
2005	$31,089

Source: CompMangement Incorporated.

A review of claims history provided by CompManagement Incorporated identified two open claims:

- a 2004 claim involved a teacher with claim payments of $39,788.10; and

- a 2005 claim involving a teacher with claim payments of $28,380.07.

School divisions that analyze accidents and workers' compensation claims develop safety training directed specifically at the cause of the accidents and see the number of related accidents decrease. Loss prevention is cost effective. An effective safety program continually monitors accidents and responds with training necessary to reduce future occurrences of similar accidents. Identifying potential hazards or activities before a loss occurs is less expensive than paying medical costs and paying individuals while they are recuperating from injuries.

RECOMMENDATION

Recommendation 5-8:

Develop a safety training program based on an analysis of accidents and a process to monitor accidents as they occur for immediate action that may be needed.

The development of a safety training program directed at the cause of accidents will substantially reduce the number of related accidents. A training program will reduce not only injuries sustained by division employees, but also the number of workdays lost due to work-related injuries. Safety awareness training designed specifically for WPS will reduce costs.

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources and may provide a cost savings by reducing the number of injuries and workers' compensation claims for the school division.

6.0 EDUCATIONAL SERVICE DELIVERY AND MANAGEMENT

This chapter provides a summary of the delivery and evaluation of services to students in the Winchester Public Schools (WPS). The six major sections of this chapter are:

6.1   Organization and Management of Curriculum and Instruction
6.2   Program Evaluation
6.3   Instructional Technology
6.4   Gifted/Accelerated Instruction
6.5   School Improvement
6.6   Instructional Staff Development
6.7   Career and Technical Education
6.8   Alternative Education

CHAPTER SUMMARY

WPS has a small but dedicated staff in the Department of Instruction who work well together on an informal basis to achieve division goals. The division is fortunate to be characterized by a seasoned and stable staff, the majority of whom have been in the system for many years. WPS recognizes the need to focus more strongly on strengthening the curriculum, professional development opportunities for staff, and the use of data as a foundation for many related decisions. While the division has a history of success relative to student achievement, within the past four years, due to increasing demographic changes, actions have become more focused on a continuous examination of data relative to student performance, specifically gaps in achievement, and instruction has become more targeted toward the achievement of individual students at all levels. One impediment to further improvements has been, and to a degree remains, a lack of written processes that ensure consistency among all schools and across the division and that hold people accountable beyond professional trust.

Recommendations contained in this chapter essentially focus on building upon strides that have been taken by reinforcing practices and procedures with accountability measures that will ensure desired outcomes and expenditure of human and fiscal resources in cost-effective ways. Among those recommendations are the following key suggestions, which should enable division administration to create effective processes toward that end:

- Better delineate responsibilities of personnel in the Department of Instruction and re-align responsibilities;

- Embed professional development standards into training;

- Expand efforts to make the Gifted and Talented program more representative of the student body;

- Make additional data more readily available to teachers and administrators to enhance their ability to focus instruction on individual student needs,

- Develop a comprehensive plan for parental engagement;

- Create a comprehensive K-12 plan for dropout prevention; and

- Establish written procedures for curriculum revision, program evaluation, school improvement, and professional development.

INTRODUCTION

Central office staff serve as the support system for the education that is provided in schools of any school division and, depending on factors such as organization, staffing, and processes, can either strengthen or hinder progress towards high achievement for students. A well-orchestrated, balanced relationship between school needs and central office support helps to ensure that financial and human resources are targeted toward increased student achievement for all students. Clearly articulated, measurable, and monitored goals set at the division level inform staff and the public of the division's priorities and guide decisions and actions at all levels of the system. Consequently, effective two-way communications systems, processes that streamline and reinforce division goals, and monitoring of division priorities are essential responsibilities of the central office.

Prior to the on-site visit, surveys were sent to central office administrators, school-level administrators, and teachers for feedback regarding various aspects of division services. The responses of WPS central office administrators and principals were merged for a comparison of their responses with those of similar groups of administrators in other school systems. One hundred percent of WPS administrators noted that the emphasis on learning had increased in recent years, compared to 65 percent in other systems. Within WPS, 66 percent of teachers agreed, while 71 percent in other systems agreed. Similarly, 100 percent of WPS administrators agreed that they had sufficient materials and resources, compared to 65 percent in other systems.

Exhibit 6-1 shows differences in ratings of the division on aspects of division/program functions relating to educational service delivery:

EXHIBIT 6-1
SURVEY RATINGS OF WINCHESTER PERSONNEL
REGARDING CURRICULUM-RELATED SUPPORT
2004-05

DIVISION PROGRAM/ FUNCTION	PERCENT NEEDS SOME IMPROVEMENT + NEEDS MAJOR IMPROVEMENT	/	PERCENT ADEQUATE + OUTSTANDING	
	ADMINISTRATORS	PRINCIPALS	TEACHERS	
Curriculum Planning	40/60	18/82	55/40	
Instructional Coordination	20/80	18/82	45/46	
Instructional Technology	20/80	27/72	36/58	
Staff Development	20/80	0/100	49/46	
Technology Staff Development	84/17	69/18	71/16	
Evaluation	40/40	27/73	39/40	

Source: MGT of America, 2005.

The division has a long history of academic excellence as evidenced by historic student achievement compared to the state on Standards of Learning tests (SOLs), SAT scores provided since 1993, percent of students receiving advanced or standard diplomas, middle school student participation in Algebra I and II and geometry, and Advanced Placement participation rates. In recent years, the division has experienced unprecedented growth in its population of English as Second Language students, although the division overall has grown by fewer than 300 students in the last five years. This skewed growth has impacted many aspects of the school system, from subgroup achievement to staffing at the school level and support services. A comparison of student demographics with divisions selected for their similarity to WPS is shown in Exhibit 6-2.

EXHIBIT 6-2
OVERVIEW OF PEER PUBLIC SCHOOL DIVISIONS
2004-05 SCHOOL YEAR

SCHOOL DIVISION	TOTAL STUDENT POPULATION	PERCENT HISPANIC STUDENT POPULATION	PERCENT BLACK STUDENT POPULATION	PERCENT ECONOMICALLY DISADVANTAGED
Winchester	**3,678**	**13.6**	**19.1**	**42.0**
Fredericksburg	2,473	9.6	45.2	48.2
Charlottesville	4,388	3.1	48.3	48.1
Manassas Park	2,374	34.8	14.3	31.3
Manassas	6,761	30.3	16.5	23.3
Salem	3,944	1.0	9.3	20.3

Source: Virginia Department of Education Web site, 2005.

Despite the challenges of recent changes in student demographics described further in Chapter 7, each of the WPS schools is fully accredited by the Commonwealth of Virginia, and all but one, the middle school, made Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) last year. The division did not make AYP in 2004-05. The Reading/Language Arts Annual Measurable Objective (AMO) was 63 percent and Math was 65 percent. Of the division's students, 60 percent of Black students, 60 percent of Disadvantaged, and 52 percent of Limited English Proficient (LEP) students met AMO in English. The year before, one elementary school, Quarles, did not make AYP, but it did last year.

In the diagnostic feedback obtained in interviews with WPS staff during a preliminary visit of MGT staff to the division, key concerns relative to the quality and delivery of services by the Department of Instruction were:

- the Assistant Superintendent should be freed to spend more time on curriculum and instruction, rather than Human Resources;

- the need to look at alternatives for students not pursuing college;

- closing the gap on student achievement, with the Superintendent stressing that staff must not become too complacent due to success; there is always room for improvement;

- the lack of and need for a content specialist for teaching staff; there is too much emphasis on special education, but those dollars are from grants so they cannot be used;

- the rapid growth of a diverse population (special education and ESL students) and its financial and programmatic impacts; and

- the need to continue to improve middle school SOLs to achieve AYP (this was the only school not meeting AYP).

6.1   *Organization and Management of Curriculum and Instruction*

In order for efficient and effective educational processes to promote the highest possible levels of student achievement at the classroom level, a school system's organization and procedures must be thoughtfully aligned and communicated to and understood by educators at all levels. The organizational structure must clearly delineate reporting relationships that contribute to the realization of division priorities. Personnel at the division level must have expertise in the aspects of education for which they are responsible. Adequate support staff ensures that administrative time can be devoted to functions the division has identified as critical to the educational process; resources are leveraged to maximize the capacity of the division's staff; and processes for clear and frequent communication and co-planning among those division-level support staff and school-level recipients of their services are in place and protected.

Exhibit 6-3 shows the current organizational structure for the WPS instructional department.

EXHIBIT 6-3
WINCHESTER PUBLIC SCHOOLS DEPARTMENT OF INSTRUCTION
CURRENT ORGANIZATIONAL CHART
2005-06 SCHOOL YEAR
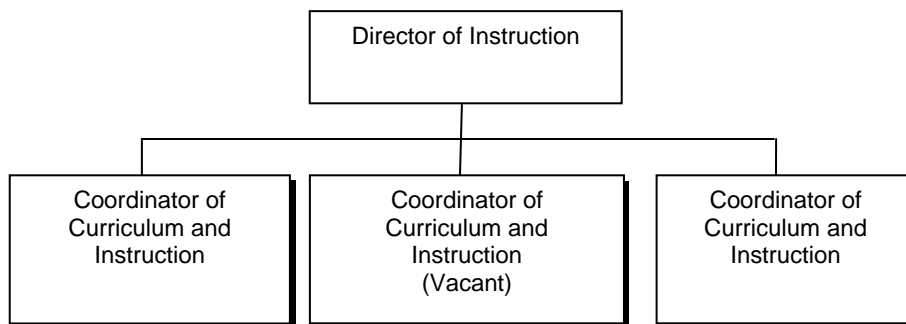
Source: Winchester Public Schools, 2005.

FINDING

Division-level instructional staffing and communication structures are insufficient to provide the level of service and leadership to schools that continuing demographic changes require if WPS is to maintain high student achievement among the majority of students and simultaneously improve subgroup performance. The Instruction Department of WPS is led by the Director of Instruction, who reports directly to the Superintendent. Prior to assuming these responsibilities, the Director worked closely with her predecessor, and thus was familiar with the myriad aspects of the position. The position is supported by three secretaries and two Coordinator of Curriculum and Instruction positions that are currently held by long-time staff members. The Coordinator position previously held by the Director of Instruction has been vacant, although budgeted, for six months. Two other central office positions in addition to the Assistant Superintendent and Director of Instruction also report to the Superintendent: a Director of Technology, who oversees the four Technology Resource Teachers assigned to the division's six schools, and a Director of Special Education and Related Services. There are no content area specialists or teachers on special assignment to support instruction at the division level. The Instructional Director's position has primary responsibility for content, instruction, curriculum development and monitoring, accreditation, professional development, school improvement, translating student achievement data into meaningful, useful information for school-based educators, and monitoring the results. Additionally, since instructional technology falls under another director's responsibility and Special Education still another, it is the Director of Information's role to ensure that those branches of the division are involved in instructional discussions and decisions.

With that breadth of tasks for the core activity of a school division all falling under one person's responsibility, little actual content area support can be offered by the central office for teachers in schools. The division has addressed that need through lead teachers at the school level and in Special Education. Lead teachers serve as liaisons with their school-level peers on division vertical teams and meet with the Director of Instruction monthly. Lead teachers also observe classrooms, note and procure needed resources, and ensure that benchmarks are in place and data used. Two lead teachers are also considered test coordinators at their respective schools.

The Assistant Superintendent, Director of Instruction, the Superintendent, the Coordinators of Curriculum, and principals meet weekly in addition to quarterly vertical team meetings of instructional staff from across the division. Vertical teams are composed of teachers in all grade levels and content areas including related arts, fine arts, technology, and core subjects. Representatives of Special Education and English as a Second Language (ESL) programs are also integral to the composition of the vertical teams. Additionally, the coordinators responsible for instructional programs attend all principals' meetings. All directors reported that more coordinated communications and planning regarding instruction needs to occur, but that authority for implementing such changes is murky without an Assistant Superintendent ultimately responsible for instruction as a whole.

One of the Coordinators of Curriculum and Instruction is responsible for all federal programs that are largely grant-based, and thus writes and administers all division grants with the exception of Title VIB and other grants related to Special Education. This practice makes one employee in the division the contact person for all grant questions; however, responsibility for both writing and administration of all grants has the potential

to cloud non-grant programmatic and planning responsibilities and/or create duplicative meetings for personnel in those programs to attend. For instance, because reading specialists in the elementary schools are funded by Title I, the coordinator meets with them regularly, but they are also on vertical teams. These administrative responsibilities are intimately tied to curriculum and instruction, but this organizational structure potentially disconnects the instructional personnel in such programs from communicating and planning with those in the division with whom they should be meeting in order to make the division's instructional programs cohesive and seamless or requires their attendance at multiple meetings of a similar nature.

This coordinator is also responsible for Safe and Drug-Free Schools (SDFS), ESL, remedial programs, and parent education. Since the preschool program is funded with Title I funds, the coordinator is the de facto principal of the division's preschool program, Stepping Stones. This program is co-located at the Douglas Community Learning Center with three Head Start classes and five preschool handicapped classes administered through the regional program. Other employees with responsibilities for student support services would more logically reside under the Director of Special Education and Related Services. These include guidance counselors who, at one time were in the Department of Special Education, and Student Assistance Leadership Team (SALT) members, including three Student Support Specialists, the Safe and Drug Free Schools Coordinator, and the Family Support Specialist.

The other coordinator has responsibility for accountability, assessment, and the division's alternative education programs, including GED and Adult Education, although the division partners with the Shenandoah Valley Adult Education Consortium for delivery of adult education. This coordinator works with school test coordinators and constantly with the Director of Instruction on collecting, analyzing, organizing, and reporting test data and training division educators in understanding and using it in addition to completing required related state and federal reports. Reports provided to the Board as well as educators in the division are easy to read and detailed to student and subject; some are even color coded, with red designating students not making expected progress.

A comparison of instructional support positions in divisions selected for comparability to WPS in size and characteristics is shown in Exhibit 6-4. Although the various divisions classify positions differently, based on job titles, the exhibit shows that only one other division has fewer instructional support administrative positions and that the average number of such positions is two more than at WPS, excluding the vacant position.

EXHIBIT 6-4
COMPARISON OF DIVISION-LEVEL INSTRUCTIONAL ADMINISTRATORS
AMONG PEER DIVISIONS
2004-05 SCHOOL YEAR

	ASSISTANT, ASSOCIATE, OR ASSISTANT TO SUPERINTENDENT	DIRECTORS	COORDINATORS	SUPERVISORS	MANAGERS	PROGRAM COORDINATORS	SPECIALISTS	TOTAL
Winchester		**2**	**2.5**					**4.5**
Charlottesville	1	2	5	1				9
Fredericksburg	1	5						6
Manassas	2	3	1		1	4		11
Manassas Park	1	1	1				1	4
Salem		4	1					5
AVERAGE INSTRUCTIONAL SUPPORT POSITIONS	**1**	**2.8**	**1.8**	**.2**	**.2**	**.6**	**.2**	**6.6**

Source: Virginia Department of Education Web site, 2005.

Exhibit 6-5 delineates a proposed re-organizational structure for the division's instructional services. Recommended changes include:

- Create an additional Coordinator of Curriculum, Instruction and Professional Development position. This position should assist in implementing and synthesizing all areas of the division with respect to curricular and instructional decisions and build them into the division's professional development program. This person should have an understanding of and facility with technology in order to fully integrate it into the instructional and professional development programs.

- Fill an existing vacancy for a Coordinator of Curriculum and Instruction with an individual responsible for special programs (ESL, Pre-School, and Gifted and Talented Education) and change the title to Coordinator of Special Programs.

- Change one existing coordinator's title to Coordinator of Assessment, Accountability, and School Improvement, expanding that position's responsibilities to include school improvement and evaluation.

- Change one existing coordinator's title to Coordinator of Federal Programs and Grants, but move responsibility for grant administration from the position so that personnel funded by grants are more seamlessly integrated into the instructional program. Add to the responsibilities of the position those of hearing officer for the division and alternative and remedial education.

- Move responsibility for support services including guidance, health, SALT teams, and Safe and Drug Free Schools to the office of the Director of Special Education under the Coordinator for Special Education. This proposed change will be discussed in greater detail in Chapter 7.

The three primary instructional leadership positions in the division's Department of Instruction, in conjunction with other division- and school-level leaders, have successfully moved the division forward in terms of student achievement, curriculum development, and school improvement during the past four years. Curricular and instructional initiatives needed for continuing improvement cannot take place in a cohesive, comprehensive manner with current levels of staffing, reporting relationships, mixed responsibilities, and communications processes. Roles and responsibilities are not all organized according to logical relationships, nor is there a position with final authority for instruction per se. Furthermore, the open Coordinator of Curriculum position, a role of critical importance, should be filled promptly. Immediate changes should be made in order to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of support for curriculum and instruction and to address AYP needs as demographics continue to shift.

EXHIBIT 6-5
PROPOSED ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE FOR THE
WINCHESTER PUBLIC SCHOOLS DEPARTMENT OF INSTRUCTION

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┌─────────────────────────────┐
│ Assistant Superintendent for │
│  Curriculum and Instruction  │
└─────────────────────────────┘
               │
┌─────────────────────────────┐
│ Director of Curriculum,      │
│ Instruction, and             │
│ Professional Development*    │
└─────────────────────────────┘
     ┌─────────┼─────────┐
┌──────────┐ ┌──────────┐ ┌──────────┐
│Coordinator│ │Coordinator│ │Coordinator│
│of Assessment,│ │of Special│ │of Federal│
│Accountability,│ │Programs │ │Programs  │
│and School │ │         │ │and Grants│
│Improvement│ │         │ │          │
└──────────┘ └──────────┘ └──────────┘
```
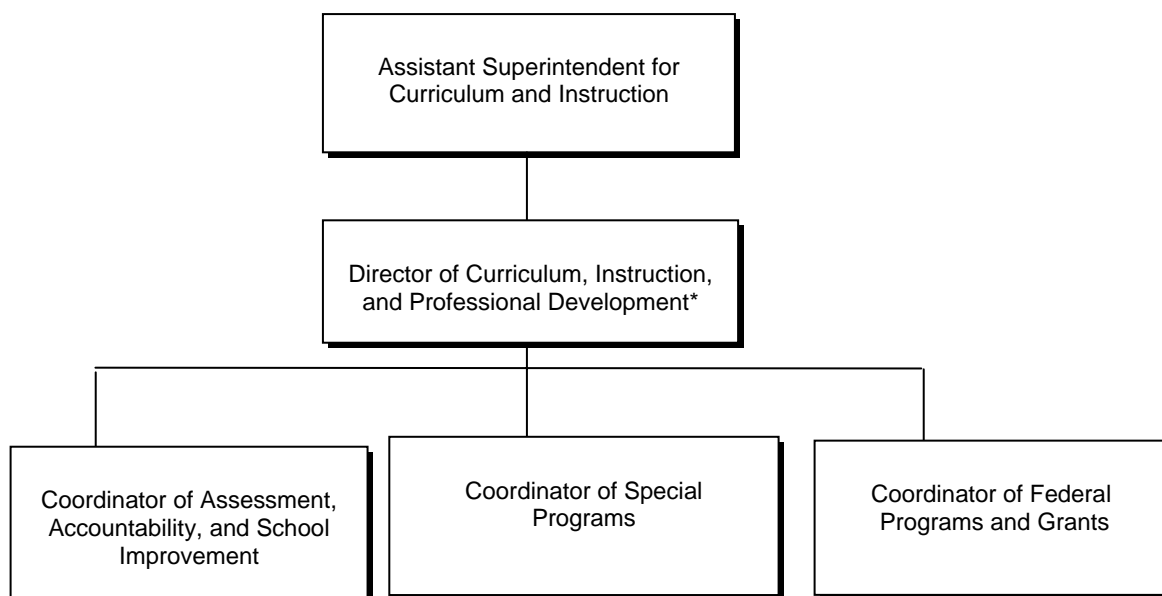
Source: MGT of America, 2005.
*Please refer to proposed timeline for analyzing this recommended position.

Regularly scheduled meetings take place among principals, the Superintendent, and the Director of Instruction and between teachers in the schools, often including the same individuals. Such direct and frequent communication is certainly commendable; however, meetings are time-consuming and the organization would function more efficiently if the Director were freed from so much meeting time to performing related administrative responsibilities such as planning long-term strategies, developing processes to ensure consistent application of decisions made in those meetings, locating best practices to replicate, and providing higher levels of content support and coordination. Additionally, with their myriad responsibilities, similar regular, planned communications and planning do not presently occur among directors.

RECOMMENDATION

Recommendation 6-1:

Adopt the proposed revised organizational structure for the Department of Instruction.

Implementation of this recommendation will ensure that coordination of instructional and professional development issues that cross departments occurs in a concerted effort, and that all division efforts are channeled toward achievement of agreed-upon goals. The proposed changes will provide additional administrative staff to enable the division to more effectively tie all elements of curriculum and instruction together. Although instructional and curricular priorities are contributing to positive strides, they are occurring on a schedule dictated by reaction to arising needs rather than planning for long-term, comprehensive, and coordinated improvement. Much of the time of the Director of Instruction is occupied with meetings with school-level staff to enable them to be arms of the instructional department. This is commendable, but by increasing administrative support for instruction to comparable levels with similar divisions, duties can be re-allocated for better alignment with similar tasks and workloads can be reduced to more effectively plan and complete initiatives likely to continue improved student performance and to address areas where the division did not meet AYP. One aspect of this recommendation should be the development of processes that ensure that regular communication and planning among all division directors occur in order to align curricular decisions across areas of responsibility.

Review the organizational structure of the instructional department of the division no later than two years after implementation of this recommendation regarding the possibility of adding a Director of Curriculum and Instruction. The position would serve as a liaison between the Coordinators and the proposed Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction to channel division instructional improvement efforts. The addition of this position would facilitate planning and implementation of curricular initiatives, and contribute to more effective, efficient instructional and curricular articulation among division departments and schools.

FISCAL IMPACT

The average salary for directors is $83,678. Benefits of 35 percent add another $29,287, for a total position cost of $112,965. The Superintendent's salary is $128,000 plus benefits of 35 percent ($44,800), for a position cost of $172,800. The difference between the two levels of positions is $44,322. Using half of the difference ($22,161) added to the average director salary for a median pay scale for an Assistant Superintendent between Superintendent and Director makes an estimated Assistant Superintendent base salary of $105,839 plus 35 percent benefits ($37,044), for a total of $142,883. The position should be filled in July 2006. The vacant coordinator position is already included in the 2005-06 budget. The cost of adding an additional coordinator position is figured on the average salary of curriculum and instruction coordinators of $88,859. Benefits of 35% ($31,101) added to that base would make a full year's additional cost equal $119,960. implementing the recommendation beginning in July would cost the division $59,980 during the 2006-07 school year.

Recommendation	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11
Hire an Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction	($71,442)	($142,883)	($142,883)	($142,883)	($142,883)
Fill Vacancy for Coordinator of Curriculum and Instruction	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0
Total	**($71,442)**	**($142,883)**	**($142,883)**	**($142,883)**	**($142,883)**

FINDING

Despite the division's efforts to communicate using many available tools with the public in general, parent feedback received at the community meeting during and after the on-site visit reflected a possible need for even more concerted communications with them as a group when instructional and programmatic decisions are made to inform and solicit their input on substantive initiatives. Numerous comments made by parents noted that programs and new initiatives directly affecting their children had been undertaken such as block scheduling, heterogeneous grouping, and math acceleration made without providing information to parents or asking for input. While these concerns may have been voiced by a few disgruntled parents, sufficient concerns were expressed to indicate a need to consider expanding parental communications specifically. Sample comments are:

■ The communication between school administration and parents needs to improve, as we have had new curriculums and programs …dropped on us without any knowledge. Some parents still do not know that their children are being taught differently than before!

■ Newsletters need to be sent in a more timely manner.

■ I don't feel like a <u>partner</u> with WPS.

Additionally, prior to implementation of block scheduling at the middle and high schools and removal of advanced studies for specified students at Daniel Morgan Middle School (DMMS), parent meetings were held. Middle school and parents of rising fifth graders were invited to hear about the teaming concept before its inception. At each elementary school, a panel of division administrators made a presentation and answered questions. Teachers and the principal from DMMS were also available in the audience to respond and describe how instruction would be different for parents of gifted students. Questions and answers were also posted on the division's Web site.

Decades of research on parent engagement strongly correlate parent involvement with high levels of student achievement. Joyce Epstein, a noted leader in the field, has identified a continuum of parental involvement components that build a strong partnership between parents and schools, with one being effective home-school relations and another improved communications. Epstein's research would serve as a basis for a comprehensive parent involvement plan to strengthen parental engagement

in the schools and engender heightened community support. Although mixed and representative only of parents who attended the forum, parent comments reflect a sense of disenfranchisement among some segments of the community. Most effective programs emphasize the importance of the parent and the need for a close relationship between the home and the school; provide structured, concrete tasks for parents; and take a long-term approach to parent involvement. Furthermore, between 50 and 85 percent of variance in achievement scores, IQ, or verbal ability has been attributed to parent, family, and home environment variables. Studies have shown that teachers involving parents in learning activities at home has a positive and significant influence on improved student reading achievement regardless of educational backgrounds. Even at the high school level, a study of 8,000 students found that family behavior patterns influence grades; and parent attendance at school events regardless of income/ educational level is strongly linked to better grades.

RECOMMENDATION

Recommendation 6-2:

Consider developing a parent communication plan as part of an overall district parent involvement plan.

Research demonstrates that when parents are involved in education as partners, student achievement improves. By including communications as one component of a comprehensive, research-based parent involvement plan, the division will be assured that parents are informed of major proposed initiatives and parent representatives are included on appropriate division-level committees. Purposefully keeping parents abreast of plans to change programs, schedules, or practices as they are being considered will bring them on board, help them understand the reasons behind decisions, and, in doing so, make them positive emissaries to the rest of the community and more supportive of WPS. Changing demographics also necessitate re-thinking existing methods of parental involvement. Developing a long-range approach of outreach to parents and parent education reaps benefits in terms of student achievement, parent opinions of teacher, and school efficacy as well as community support.

FISCAL IMPACT

Implementation of this recommendation can be accomplished with existing resources.

FINDING

For years, WPS student performance has been consistently high overall; however, within the past four years, rapidly changing demographics have contributed to a more urgent need to examine the achievement of subgroups of students and the division's failure to make AYP. When that realization occurred, the division had little longitudinal data available technologically, so the current and past Directors of Instruction worked diligently to assemble records of past student achievement in order to render an understanding of performance by subgroups over time. The division now has longitudinal records of most aspects of student achievement as well as newly established processes to ensure that data is regularly analyzed to be used as a basis for instructional decisions. Teachers and principals have participated in much professional development to learn to understand and use existing data for instructional changes at the school, grade, and class level. Data is an ongoing topic of discussion in principals' meetings.

The cultural change in the way education operates in WPS has precipitated notable growth in the performance of Hispanic students in the division. An analysis of student performance data commissioned by the Commonwealth and published in 2005 by Standard & Poor's (www.schoolmatters.org) identified divisions that "have significantly narrowed achievement gaps between 2003 and 2004" so that "their most promising educational practices might be studied and replicated by others that are struggling to narrow their own achievement gaps." The report also stated that "it is hoped that this report sheds light on the power of using data to provide for diagnostic insights that can help inform educators' decision making." This practice is evident in the direction WPS is taking in using data as a foundation for decision making. In the report, WPS was recognized for the strides it had made in narrowing the achievement gap between Hispanic and White students. As one of only nine divisions in the Commonwealth with numbers sufficient to measure a Hispanic-White gap, WPS narrowed the gap by 8.3 percentage points compared to an average of 2.1 points in all K-12 divisions statewide. However, the gap remains at 21.6 percentage points, compared to an average Hispanic-White gap of 10.2 points for all K-12 divisions throughout Virginia. At the same time, WPS reduced the achievement gap between economically and non-economically disadvantaged students. More about the achievement of ESL students is addressed in Chapter 7 of this report.

Two ways the division has in effect turned time spent on student assessment into instructional benefits for students have been the adoption of benchmark assessments and the use of the Flanagan Test for Higher Standards' Reports on-line. Consultants assisted teachers in developing common assessments and writing higher level questions. Last year, teachers identified student strengths and weaknesses overall in terms of strands. This year, the benchmarking procedure occurs every grading period and provides teachers with results by student subgroup so that they know exactly where individual students are and can use that information for re-teaching and grouping for instruction as well as feedback on their own instruction for changes in practice. Teachers in grades K-12 have developed common assessments that are administered each grading period and are monitored by the Coordinator of Curriculum and Instruction responsible for accountability, who works with school staffs to identify and implement strategies. Although initial reactions by teachers to benchmarking reflected concern, now that the process is in place, teachers report that they cannot look at their students in the

same way and now know where each student is and who is at risk. Interviewees also report seeing increased collaboration among teachers to address student needs.

Earlier this year, the division discovered that the benchmark information was being used inconsistently among teachers and schools, and an accountability measure was added by scheduling regular reports to the School Board. Testing reports are submitted by school and by teacher three times a year. A schedule of reports to the Board submitted to the visiting team for the period between February and October 2005 shows 14 reports including:

- student achievement data,
- 2004 Writing-Unadjusted Scores,
- SOL Results (four times),
- NCLB Results,
- assessment schedule,
- SAT scores,
- Tests for Higher Standards Report,
- Gates-McGinity Reading Results/9 Weeks Test,
- SOL/AYP Update, and
- the Accreditation Report.

COMMENDATION

The increased collection, analysis, and use of data as a basis for instructional decision making along with public reporting procedures have contributed to improved student achievement, closer ongoing examination of the performance of student subgroups, and increased accountability procedures that mirror state and federal desires.

FINDING

While the division has made great strides in making access to and analysis and understanding of student performance data a priority and an underpinning of instructional decisions, many interviewees still reported that access to the kind of disaggregated, timely information often needed by both teachers and school- and division-level administrators is not always readily available. This negatively affects the ability of educators to make the kind of strategic decisions that are expected with the division's emphasis on data-based decisions at all levels. A new software system that has recently been installed is expected to address this concern and place more sources of data in the hands of administrators throughout the division. Staff further indicated that few people either at the central office or the school level seemed to be aware of its impending availability, and many interviewees reported that the only access to some information they felt should be available via the division's database was through a specific request for it to the technology department. This was even the case for information needed by the Coordinator of Curriculum and Instruction responsible for accountability and data disaggregation. Best practices demonstrate that just-in-time data available to teachers and administrators facilitate ongoing instructional and curricular decisions leading to improved student achievement.

RECOMMENDATION

Recommendation 6-3:

Plan and implement training on the new database as soon as it is available throughout the division to ensure that all personnel have access to make instructional decisions relative to their positions.

The division has laid the foundation for the regular use of data and created an expectation for its availability. Now that educators know how to use it in their schools and classrooms, they are anxious to know more about their students and currently frustrated that they must request desired information from the Technology Department rather than having access to it at their fingertips. Immediate training on additional sources of information will alleviate their concern as well as allow them to delve deeper into student needs and develop more precise strategies likely to make a positive difference in teaching and student learning.

FISCAL IMPACT

Implementation of this recommendation can be accomplished with existing budgeted resources.

FINDING

An essential element in the development and delivery of a comprehensive curriculum management system is the creation of a systematic process to monitor instruction and use the collected information to inform changes in curriculum, assessment, resource selection and procurement, and professional development. In order for the division to achieve its goal of "Learning for All, Whatever it Takes," curriculum, instruction, and assessment must be aligned along with processes to analyze individual and group performance data, and that information must then be linked to changes in practice. The division has made strides in beginning to create a structure for curriculum alignment and review, but has not set all aspects of it in place.

In 2002, WPS contracted with Phi Delta Kappa for a curriculum audit. The document evidences reading and highlighting by division-level staff; however, when staff were asked how it had been used to change curriculum, responses reflected the array of mandates often having deadlines that interfered with use of its findings. The division has created pacing guides which are reviewed annually and has even addressed the need to revise former high school pacing guides with the adoption of a block schedule this year in the middle and high schools. Common assessments have been created and this year's goal is to correlate performance on them with student success on the SOLs. After the first administration this year, teachers and principals were asked to identify students by name and demographic/AYP subgroups that were most at risk. At that time, they were not equipped to do so, so the division provided training. Professional development and instructional discussions have begun to address the next steps—changes in teacher practice to learn skills to meet now apparent student needs with a resultant awareness and collaboration among teachers.

Three years ago, the division began revising curriculum guides. Staff at all levels and with responsibilities in all areas have been involved in those processes; yet both interviews and a review of curriculum-related policies reveal that there is no set timeline or structure in place that will ensure a regular cycle of revision, implementation, review, and additional revision. Policies do exist that speak to curriculum in terms of development, guides and outlines, materials, and textbook adoption. None of the policies contain clear directions that explicitly describe timelines, monitoring procedures, the use of data to inform instruction, or the creation of a cycle that ensures that, as expectations, student composition, or needs change, the instruction, curriculum, and staff development offered are revised accordingly. With only general expectations set, for instance, "for administration and faculty to evaluate the educational program...and regularly to report findings to the Board along with recommendations," no accountability is provided to ensure that expectations are met. A September 1, 2005, report to the Board recommended that they review the results to assess policies such as testing, accountability, and instruction. This is a recommendation that should be acted upon. Virginia statute 22.1-253.13:1 also specifies the expectations that SOLs in all subjects be regularly reviewed and revised to maintain rigor and balance content knowledge with application. Finally, school-based personnel relate that, without specific written procedures in place, it is sometimes difficult to receive guidance on decisions they must make. In effective school systems, division instructional priorities are aligned with budgetary expenditures reinforced by board policy.

RECOMMENDATION

Recommendation 6-4:

Revise Board policies relating to curriculum and instruction to include clear expectations for timelines, reporting and monitoring structures, and a revision cycle that will ensure that, at least annually, feedback is solicited and incorporated into all aspects of the curriculum, instruction, and professional development that serve as the backbone of the division's instructional program.

The maxim that "what gets measured gets done" is true. WPS is building processes into its way of work in other areas and must do so with the backbone of curriculum and instruction—board policy and implementing procedures. The division has taken steps to create accountability for instruction and testing. It now needs to ensure consistency through development of policies and written procedures that specify expectations and timelines.

FISCAL IMPACT

Implementation of this recommendation can be accomplished with existing resources.

FINDING

Curricular and instructional support positions in the division's elementary schools take two forms that do not appear to be based on school size. No school has an assistant principal. In two schools, Quarles (416 students) and Frederick Douglass (431 students), lead teachers serve the combined role of curriculum support, testing coordinator, and, to some extent, administrative assistant. In other schools (enrollments 437 and 390),

responsibilities are shared by two positions, with an administrative assistant largely responsible for administrative support and discipline serving as testing coordinator and a lead teacher supporting classroom instruction. In one school, the administrative assistant/testing coordinator is a full-time teacher who conducts his testing responsibilities after regular school hours. Although responsibilities vary somewhat among schools, lead teachers are largely in charge of observing and providing classroom support, ordering materials, modeling lessons, scheduling, curriculum work and meetings with division and school personnel, and leading professional development at the school. The consolidation of responsibilities at the two schools occurred as the result of simultaneous administrative and lead teacher vacancies, with the others remaining separated because of the experience of the individuals in the positions.

Staff indicated that due to the division's focus on benchmark testing, testing coordinators spend an estimated two weeks at the beginning of the year pre-testing students, an additional week each nine-week grading period, and approximately five weeks before, during, and after SOL testing, for a total of 11 weeks in test preparation, administration, and teacher training. Because of the various forms testing responsibilities take at elementary schools, with some during and some after school, comparisons of time taken away from other instructional duties are difficult to make. For the positions that share testing, administrative, and lead teacher responsibilities, the time spent in testing is a concern. Principals report that the dual approach is currently working, but note some concern about its continuing without review. Some schools are receiving full-time instructional support from lead teachers and others are not—this is an equity issue among schools, teachers, and students.

RECOMMENDATION

Recommendation 6-5:

Evaluate the efficacy of a single school-based person maintaining responsibility for curricular support/leadership, testing coordination, and administrative assistant responsibilities on an annual basis.

As accountability continues to increase with both state and federal mandates and as the division continues to use data from benchmark and other tests, time invested in test coordination, regardless of the configuration of position responsibilities may interfere with the critical role of instructional support. The division needs to be vigilant in examining the time committed by people in combined positions relative to its goals and priorities.

FISCAL IMPACT

The costs of this recommendation are figured based on an estimate that the one person performing two roles, testing and lead teacher instructional support, is spending eight weeks on testing responsibilities. Figuring an average teacher salary to be $41,940, plus benefits of 35% ($14,679) for a ten month contract, total position costs are $56,619. With two-tenths of that time spent on testing, the personnel opportunity costs of that use of the individual's time are $11,324 (.2 x $56,619). Removing that responsibility from that individual and assigning it to a supplemented position would save the district funds and focus the time of the person who currently has dual responsibilities on instructional support. The median supplement provided an administrative assistant on the salary

schedule at four years of experience is $3,782. The savings of providing a supplemented position at each school would be $7,542 ($11,324-$3,782) per position for a total annual savings of $15,084 for two.

Recommendation	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11
Add Two Administrative Assistant Supplements	($7,564)	($7,564)	($7,564)	($7,564)	($7,564)
Current Costs of Time Saved by Two Positions	$22,648	$22,648	$22,648	$22,648	$22,648
Savings	$15,084	$15,084	$15,084	$15,084	$15,084

6.2   *Program Evaluation*

FINDING

The division does not systematically evaluate its programs to ensure that they are achieving stated results and that resources are being expended cost-effectively. No one is formally delegated the responsibility for program evaluation, nor are formal evaluations regularly conducted for instructional programs. The only evaluations related to educational services that were provided or described were a Phi Delta Kappa curriculum audit of 2002 and two internal evaluations of the ESL program. Survey responses of WPS personnel reveal an awareness of the need for regular evaluation of division programs. Teachers and division-level administrators were almost equally divided in their responses, with administrators reporting 40:40 that the division *needs some/major improvement* is *adequate/outstanding* and teachers 39:40. In contrast, principal responses were 27:73 that the division's process of evaluation was *adequate/outstanding*. The disparity in response may be a factor of difference in interpretation of what program evaluation means, but should be investigated.

The division has undertaken many new initiatives in the past few years. With the need to address both changing demographics and failure to meet AYP, additional changes are likely. In school divisions that have established evaluation and monitoring procedures to examine their practices throughout the year as well as at year-end, interim changes have been made when indicated or ineffective programs or practices discontinued, allowing the divisions to continuously improve throughout the year. WPS's movement to school-year remediation programs indicates its awareness of the merits of immediate intervention for student needs. The same is true of programmatic needs. Interviewees stated a desire to know the effects of programs and practices they had implemented, but noted that no evaluations were available because they are not conducted. Board policy states only that "administration is charged with involving the school staff and the community in a continuous evaluation process of the instructional program," but provides no timelines, priorities, or parameters for accomplishing the evaluation process.

Formative evaluations can inform WPS of interim changes that need to be made in order to more effectively operate processes or programs before they have been in place for an entire school year or longer. It is apparent that WPS has promising programs in place, but most evidence is anecdotal rather than statistical and data-based. Embedding

evaluative processes into the division's way of work will also provide quantified accountability for intended outcomes for schools, students, and the public.

RECOMMENDATION

Recommendation 6-6:

Continue the responsibilities of the Coordinator of Curriculum and Instruction responsible for assessment and accountability regarding program evaluation.

Enhance the importance of ongoing program evaluation by developing a policy to strengthen its contribution as an integral component of the WPS goal of ensuring equitable educational opportunities for all students.

Accountability provides effective school divisions the opportunity for regular examination of programs and practices in relation to the achievement of the purposes for which they were initiated. Where program evaluation is an integral part of division practice and adoption of new programs, regular checkpoints offer information, just as WPS's regular examination of student performance data does, that can be used to:

- inform the division of the need to add a new program;

- adjust an existing program; or

- eliminate programs and practices and resource expenditures that are not providing the benefits for which they were adopted.

The Coordinator of Curriculum and Instruction responsible for accountability has an abundance of available data. The use of data needs to continue to be correlated and analyzed in relation to specific programs to further refine the division's decision making and budgeting and target resources toward its stated goals.

FISCAL IMPACT

Implementation of this recommendation can be accomplished with existing resources. Expanding continuing partnerships with local post-secondary institutions for program evaluation involving their students and instructional staff would serve a two-fold purpose of providing experiential application of post-secondary education and a source of evaluative information for the division.

6.3   *Instructional Technology*

Technology within the division, including instructional technology, is primarily discussed in Chapter 10 of this report, and implications for teaching and learning are discussed in this section. The division was ahead of state mandates in its creation of Technology Resource Teacher (TRT) positions almost a decade ago and continues to channel much technology into classes. Its focus on instructional technology in terms of teacher knowledge and skills, however, is not reinforced by uniform policies, practices, and guidelines.

Concerns related to instructional technology noted in the diagnostic assessment of the division were:

- emphasis is placed on the use of instructional technology, but it varies in terms of actual use by staff;

- some instructional technology concerns have been addressed through the construction efforts; and

- technology use is measured in observations.

Regarding instructional technology, all survey respondents felt that it was *adequate/outstanding,* but at different ratios: administrators 20:80, principals 27:72, and teachers somewhat less inclined at 36:58. The lower rate among teachers with whom TRTs are in direct contact may indicate a need for further investigation regarding the reason and may also reflect the fact that they are spending more time on trouble-shooting and less on direct contact with teachers and students than in the past. The division ought to plumb their thoughts and needs, possibly through a more formalized needs assessment than is currently utilized.

The division's four TRTs are assigned to specific schools in order for them to know the teachers and their needs and attend team/grade meetings and sometimes faculty meetings. They also participate in vertical team meetings. However, there is inconsistency in their use, teacher use of technology, and the professional development TRTs offer, as there are no clear written guidelines or expectations other than job descriptions.

A variety of technology is being channeled toward classrooms with an infrastructure in place for integration of technology into instruction. TRTs testified that they are consequently seeing both students and teachers more excited about instruction and teachers relying more on technology. New construction at the middle and high schools will enhance secondary access to technology. Technology tools, too, have increased for teachers with attendance and grading programs at all schools and Web-based IEPs that have lessened time spent writing IEPs. Teachers were noted to be using Reports On-Line at higher rates than in the past. The WPS technology department uses a retired teacher 15 days a year to collect lesson plans that integrate technology for inclusion on the division's Web site.

TRT positions are meant to enhance teachers' technology skills through professional development, students' use of technology, and by teachers learning from TRT class instruction. However, in some schools some teachers leave their children with TRTs when scheduled for labs, considering lab time additional planning time for themselves, although this practice has reportedly diminished over the years. Interviewees noted that much of what TRTs do is serve as a first line of troubleshooting when teachers' plans include technology and it fails them. TRTs are directed to follow a "5-minute rule;" if the troubleshooting takes longer than that, they are to write a work order. Interviewees noted, though, a range of approximately 40 to 90 percent of TRTs' time being spent on such activities. While that kind of just-in-time support is essential for technology integration into instruction, there are technicians in the division whose job it is to provide that support. There must be a balance of responsibilities for TRTs to be effective in

meeting their primary instructional role. A summer meeting this year delineated current expectations to principals.

Most professional development TRTs offer is after school on a voluntary basis, with little marketing except by word of mouth. Technology personnel at various levels reported that fewer participants are signing up and attending training, although the variety of technology being placed in teachers' and administrators' hands is increasing. Interviewees reported that some informal needs assessments have been conducted in the past. Some training has been required, but there has been no follow-up if participants did not attend; consequently, facility with technology varies widely at both the teacher and administrator levels. Research has demonstrated a correlation between training and computer usage in elementary classrooms. When administrators do not understand or value technology, their teachers are more likely not to either. The division has attempted to address the need to build support for and understanding of technology among administrators by working with a consortium to devise training to help them understand what technology should look like in instruction, but that initiative is still in the planning stage.

Schools are given an instructional allocation that is to include technology. In order to allow school leadership the flexibility of spending funds in areas that meet their schools' unique needs, however, no guidelines are provided. This practice leads to some schools systematically adding hardware to their inventory while others barely purchase supplies to maintain the operations of current hardware. A balance must be struck that will ensure that schools retain flexibility yet afford all students the same opportunities for learning with and through technology regardless of the school they attend. Interviewees testified that there is a current imbalance in resources and encouragement rather than parameter setting regarding the use of TRTs and training. That has led to differences in student skills identifiable by secondary teachers. This issue is addressed more specifically in Chapter 10.

COMMENDATION

The division's practice of collecting and making exemplary lesson plans that incorporate technology into instruction, are created by peers in the division, and are easily accessible to teachers using a retired teacher with that sole responsibility is an excellent means of promoting the use of technology across the division.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendation 6-7:

Consider developing a clear, uniform set of expectations for TRTs along with guidelines that ensure that their responsibilities are aligned with division technology and strategic plans and that their time is protected to focus on the purpose for which they were hired.

Currently, TRTs serve the needs of their assigned school without clear guidelines being given to them or to their supervising principals. This leaves them in the position of providing a smorgasbord of services. While it is commendable that they are given the flexibility to meet each school's unique needs and to provide just-in-time troubleshooting,

it is also essential that clear-cut expectations and monitoring processes be set so that they are contributing to enhanced use of technology for student learning in the way the division intends. School administrators need to be informed of parameters within which their assigned TRT can work and ensure that their teachers understand and honor them. Division-level administration should regularly monitor each school's use of the TRTs and recommend changes when and if necessary.

Recommendation 6-8:

Identify professional development topics that division leadership considers essential to achieve its goals related to integration of technology into instruction and develop procedures to ensure that all appropriate personnel are able to apply the related knowledge and skills.

WPS is expending abundant resources on technology tools for teachers and students that are meant to enhance learning. Although interviewees report that attendance at some training is required, without consequences for non-attendance, those intended to benefit do not always attend. This has particularly detrimental results when those who do not attend are administrators. Additionally, attendance at the training offered by TRTs at schools remains voluntary and is dwindling. By identifying a limited number of critical topics, requiring attendance, scheduling training when few conflicts exist, and establishing consequences for non-attendance, more staff will attain the skills and knowledge that are likely to make the expenditures pay off in terms of student achievement. Better marketing of optional topics that are offered based on a formal needs assessment and tying learning goals to teachers' needs should also increase attendance for those offerings.

FISCAL IMPACT

Implementation of these recommendations can be accomplished with existing resources.

6.3.1 *Testing and Student Achievement*

FINDING

PALS preschool tests and English SOLs show a gap between the performance of ESL students and native English-speaking students. While 70 percent of English-speaking students attending the Stepping Stones preschool program in fall 2004 met the school readiness benchmark, less than 50 percent of the Limited English Proficiency (LEP) students did. Similarly, Spring 2005 data show that less than 50 percent of LEP students in grades 3, 5, and 8 met the state benchmark on the English SOL assessment. WPS has set measurable objectives to address those discrepancies that encompass providing services at home schools, parent outreach and classes, training on effective practices for use with LEP students, and ESL teacher support.

A further examination of student performance in WPS shows a need to focus more concertedly not only on SOL attainment, but also on promoting equity of opportunities among all demographic subgroups of WPS. Exhibit 6-6 shows a five-year longitudinal evaluation of dual enrollment (DE) participation of WPS students by ethnicity.

EXHIBIT 6-6
FIVE-YEAR LONGITUDINAL EVALUATION OF DUAL ENROLLMENT
PARTICIPATION OF WINCHESTER PUBLIC SCHOOLS STUDENTS
2000-01 THROUGH 2004-05 SCHOOL YEARS

	2000-01		2001-02		2002-03		2003-04		2004-05	
	STUDENT NUMBER	DE NUMBER	STUDENT NUMBER	DE NUMBER	STUDENT NUMBER	DE NUMBER	STUDENT NUMBER	DE NUMBER	STUDENT NUMBER	DE NUMBER
Total # High School Students	928	126	959	152	1005	183	1071	201	1114	183
White	743	119	748	138	770	168	786	182	796	169
Black	144	4	132	4	141	5	153	5	163	5
Asian	23	3	29	9	31	11	34	11	40	7
Hispanic	38	0	45	1	63	3	153	3	106	2

Source: WPS Department of Instructional Services, October 2005.

The exhibit reveals that as Hispanic student enrollment has increased, dual enrollment by those students has not. Additionally, while Asian enrollment has been as high as 1/3 of the students enrolled, the highest percentage of Black students enrolled has been 3.5 percent in 2002-03, although they represented 14 percent of the student body. Exhibit 6-7 details Advanced Placement (AP) student participation by ethnicity.

In 2000-01, Black students comprised 4 percent of AP enrollment. In 2004-05, they comprised 3 percent of enrollment, despite their making up 15 percent of the high school student body. Although Hispanic enrollment in AP courses has increased somewhat with an increase in population, in 2004-05, they represented only 3 percent of AP enrolled students, but 9.5 percent of high school students overall. In contrast, Asian students in 2004-05 represented 3.5 percent of the student population but 5 percent of AP enrollment.

EXHIBIT 6-7
WINCHESTER PUBLIC SCHOOLS
ADVANCED PLACEMENT STUDENT PARTICIPATION
2000-01 THROUGH 2004-05 SCHOOL YEARS

	2000-01		2001-02		2002-03		2003-04		2004-05	
	STUDENT NUMBER	AP NUMBER	STUDENT NUMBER	AP NUMBER	STUDENT NUMBER	AP NUMBER	STUDENT NUMBER	AP NUMBER	STUDENT NUMBER	AP NUMBER
Total # High School Students	928	153	959	143	1005	151	1071	185	1114	201
White	743	142	748	133	770	139	786	164	796	178
Black	144	6	132	3	141	1	153	6	163	6
Asian	23	3	29	7	31	8	34	10	40	10
Hispanic	38	2	45	0	63	3	153	5	106	7

Source: WPS Department of Instructional Services, October 2005.

Evidence abounds that high expectations set for all students result in high achievement and that tracking and ability grouping affect expectations. A recent study of AP, although small, also found that even low-income students who took and failed an AP test were 5 percent more likely to graduate from college in five years than similar students who did not take an AP test. The difference is even more marked for Black students, who attain

an 18 percent higher graduation rate. Many of the resourceful actions the division has instigated underscore its understanding of that reality. Certainly, equipping all teachers and administrators to evaluate performance data on a regular basis and providing in-service and discussions that help them use instructional strategies to respond to those analyses will help individual students and even groups of students of all backgrounds. Those processes do not, however, necessarily lead to those students enrolling in AP and dual enrollment courses that will open additional educational and economic doors for them.

RECOMMENDATION

Recommendation 6-9:

Intensify efforts to recruit and counsel students to participate in advanced courses in numbers representative of the student population.

WPS has developed a number of initiatives that are likely to improve the achievement of students of all demographic backgrounds, however, these data provided by the division and acknowledged to be a concern highlight the need to make a more concerted effort to start early in students' educational careers to provide counseling and foundational and entry courses open to the diversity that is now representative of WPS students. Actions taken at the middle school level with respect to math should be expanded to other content areas.

FISCAL IMPACT

Implementation of this recommendation can be accomplished with existing resources. With success, however, additional staff may be required as recruitment efforts succeed.

6.4   *Gifted/Accelerated Instruction*

FINDING

Of 28 comments written by parents during the public forum regarding educational services in WPS, 10 related to either concerns about the Excel program for Gifted and Talented students directly or about expectations and programs for high achieving students. Expressed concerns included the following:

- Excel program students are identified in K or 1 and seem to be locked in at that point. Unless a parent requests admission, there seems to be no vehicle to identify students for Excel in 2, 3, 4…What does the program offer other than the eligibility to take certain classes? We need a program that truly does offer advanced instruction or drop it altogether.

- Homogeneous grouping – All statistical evidence shows the top is pulled down, not the bottom raised up. Let's give our top students top notch competition in the classroom.

- Don't just group students for remediation, but for Gifted and Talented also.

- This school system seems to have declared war on bright and gifted children. Elementary and middle schools have dismantled any sort of homogeneous group in favor of heterogeneous groupings.

- The gifted program, called "Excel," is a token program at best.

In contrast, however, the division's motto, "Learning For All, Whatever It Takes," per the division Web site, is evident in its approach to Gifted Education. Believing that all students, given the right exposure, can succeed at higher levels, WPS has revised its approach to delivery models for a broader group of students. It began looking in a different way at giftedness and gifted students as well, guided by the understanding that they are gifted all the time, not just during gifted instruction. Recognition that this philosophy has implications for grouping, curriculum, and all teachers led to a variety of changes. A decade ago, the division had pull-out programs for fourth and fifth graders at the elementary level; advanced studies in grades 6-8 for identified gifted children and some students in Algebra I; and AP courses and independent studies largely for high school gifted students with little acceleration in local schools.

At present, classes overall are more heterogeneous, but at the elementary level, identified gifted students continue to be pulled out once a month for specialized instruction. In their classrooms, students receive whole group instruction for introduction of topics, and then re-grouping occurs for small group instruction in math and reading. During that time, students of similar abilities are exposed to concepts at their own ability level and assessed accordingly. Teachers have received training on differentiating instruction to prepare them to meet the needs of students of various levels within a single class. Gifted students at the middle school continue to participate in two to three week long workshops throughout the year as a group. The challenge in ensuring that all children's needs are met is in monitoring the use of differentiation and in continuing the process beyond reading and math.

Recognizing that students have talents that are not necessarily academic, the Handley Trust funds an elementary band and chorus program, a summer nature camp, and Destination Imagination, which offers creative thinking challenges for youth throughout the year. It also funds Visiting Scholars and Artists, allowing each school to bring professionals in various fields in to share their expertise with students.

Underscoring the necessity of meeting the needs of bright students who do not meet gifted criteria, three years ago, WPS began compacting math to allow advancement for higher proficiency students and higher expectations for others. This year, borrowing from another division's successful program, WPS has begun Math Acceleration in primary grades, with all students exposed to all kindergarten and some first grade standards. Acceleration is planned to be phased into higher grades over time. Some pull-out is provided by two retired teachers with gifted endorsement serving as resource teachers, as well as classroom teachers with gifted endorsement being tapped for student identification, referral, and gifted contact. Elementary principals have been instrumental in changing the delivery model and philosophy of serving students throughout the day. At the middle school, a fundamental change to opening the doors for all students to succeed in Algebra I has led to some sixth grade students being in Algebra I, some 7[th]

graders in Geometry, and some 8[th] graders in Algebra ll. This year all 7[th] graders are in pre-algebra, with the expectation set that all middle school students should have the opportunity to take Algebra I before high school. Student Algebra I passing rates have not decreased as enrollment in advanced math courses has increased at lower grades. Division administrators express the sincere belief that, if this can occur in one subject area, it can in others as well. Sixth graders this year are learning one half-year of a foreign language, either French, Latin, Spanish, or German. As a consequence of the division's buttressing their belief that all children can achieve at high levels with matching opportunities for students, by the time students leave middle school, they could potentially have accrued credits in Algebra I and ll, Geometry, and German, French, or Spanish I and ll. The division plans to move instruction in foreign languages into the elementary level in the future. The Handley Trust even funds a German Exchange summer program for high school students.

At the high school, teachers and a consultant devised strategies to target subgroups that did not make AYP in math based on performance data last year, with the result that all subgroups made AYP and teachers have raised expectations for themselves and their students. Additionally, students can take 13 of 28 AP courses and many are participating in dual enrollment courses. Exhibit 6-8 shows 2003-04 comparative enrollment figures for WPS students and those from other divisions served by Lord Fairfax Community College (LFCC). In the fall of 2004, 183 Handley students were enrolled in DE classes, earning 1634 credits there and 19 at LFCC. Although WPS has the third highest number of students enrolled, their students took over 500 more hours than other divisions served by LFCC.

EXHIBIT 6-8
WINCHESTER PUBLIC SCHOOLS
COMPARATIVE DUAL ENROLLMENT
STUDENT MEMBERSHIP BY NUMBER OF COURSES
2003-04 SCHOOL YEAR

HIGH SCHOOLS	NUMBER OF STUDENTS	LFCC CREDIT HOURS	CREDIT HOURS TAKEN AT WPS
Winchester Public Schools	183	19	1,634
Clarke County Public Schools	183	74	900
Frederick County Public Schools	276	122	1,106
Page County Public Schools	36	27	101
Shenandoah County Public Schools	232	5	1132
Warren County Public Schools	85	134	263

Source: WPS Director of Instruction, October 2005.

COMMENDATION

WPS has actualized its beliefs in the ability of all students to achieve at high levels with data analysis, strategic instructional planning, and teacher development, and has opened doors to courses traditionally closed to students other than high achievers.

RECOMMENDATION

Recommendation 6-10:

Expand monitoring of instruction at the school level to ensure that differentiation is meeting the needs at students at all ability levels.

Parents of students of all academic abilities need the assurance that their children's instruction is appropriate for their interests and abilities. Only when monitoring is an ongoing part of school processes and teachers know that they will be held accountable for embedding professional development into their instruction will true reform take place. One means of implementing this recommendation would be to develop observation schedules for lead teachers and principals so that they can be sure that teachers are differentiating instruction appropriately for students and offer assistance to teachers who are not yet infusing it into their instruction. Lead teachers may also need additional professional development themselves regarding counseling and observation skills.

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendations can be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING

The division's 2004-2005 Annual Total Report for Gifted Education reflects that the Gifted Program served 450 students who were identified for participation on the basis of specific academic aptitude. WPS has also begun planning for Mountain Vista Governor's School with six other school boards with the intention of offering a half-day program beginning with 11[th] and 12[th] graders in 2006-07. Students served range from one in kindergarten to highs in middle school in the 50s and 42 in 11[th] grade. Twelve percent of WPS students participate in gifted classes. Of that 12 percent, 10 percent of participants are White, 1 percent Black, and .04 percent Hispanic. These percentages are not representative of the student body as a whole, of which, in 2004-05, 63.7 percent were White, 18.9 percent Black, and 14 percent Hispanic.

RECOMMENDATION

Recommendation 6-11:

Intensify plans to identify and place students who are representative of the entire student body in classes for gifted students.

Although the division has broadened opportunities for non-identified students to participate in advanced learning opportunities at all grade levels and in multiple subjects, enrollment in actual gifted activities remains non-representative of the demographics of the student body as a whole. Examining identification and recruitment procedures, expanding awareness among teachers and parents at all levels, and making a concerted effort to ensure that no barriers stand in the way of students from all demographic groups will broaden representation and heighten enrichment opportunities among even more students in the division.

FISCAL IMPACT

Implementation of this recommendation can be accomplished with existing resources.

6.5   *School Improvement*

School improvement plans increasingly are shaping strategic changes at schools and divisions. In June 2005, the Center for Mental Health in Schools at UCLA issued a policy report entitled *School Improvement Planning: What's Missing?* That report stressed that school improvement planning guides tend to ignore or marginalize the ways in which schools address critical factors interfering with learning and teaching. The report called for schools to reframe school improvement policy to redress this deficiency. WPS has begun the path toward reframing its approach to school improvement. Within the past four years, WPS school plans have become more data-based, expanding school improvement foundations beyond what interviewees reported as former dependence on perceptions to grounding in student performance data; however, adjustments would make them more effective in impelling school reform.

School-based personnel report that "every teacher" is involved in school improvement. School improvement goals are also principals' professional annual goals. Until last year, deadlines were set for plans to be submitted to the central office in October, but many were not turned in until April or May with no repercussions. As a consequence, they were far from a driving force for school actions, decisions, or reform. No formative or summative evaluation was conducted.

Recognizing the need for plans to drive change, division leadership convened principals to develop a standard template, set due dates, and schedule periodic reports to the Board, along with an expectation for evaluation to take place this year. In order to build an understanding of the process, its implications for reform, and critical elements, the division created a principal peer review process three weeks before the due date. Plans are more targeted, more data-oriented, and reflect heightened understanding of the relationship of goals to student needs. School improvement plans have also been merged into the division comprehensive plan required by the state.

An examination of sample plans provided to MGT consultants shows that plans are largely uniform and elements that contribute to thoughtful and strategic planning to improve student achievement are included in some plans but not others. Additional features that would enhance accomplishment of stated goals are also missing from all plans. Discrepancies include:

- some schools' goals are set only in terms of general percentages of expected student improvement while others clearly identify performance levels by percentages and scores of all students as well as subgroups on specific tests including SELP;

- some detail-specific timelines for achievement of strategies contrasted to others only including dates that encompass the entire school year;

- some reflect the involvement of specific school and division staff and teams, the use of specific technology and curriculum tools, as well as departmental strategies;

- one plan, Frederick Douglass', even identifies specific grade-level weaknesses in math as a means of targeting SOL areas for attention;

- in some plans, both current status of assessment data and outcomes are designated "TBD," leaving in question the ability of the school to locate a starting point from which to determine success;

- another plan Quarles's, very specifically assigns accountability for action plan achievement; and

- Virginia Avenue's plan not only examined the pass rate of the same students on SOLs at both grade 3 and 5 and the change in performance, but also included disaggregated information on subject 2005 pass rates, the 2006 AMO, and the difference.

In no case is there a column on the chart designating individual/group responsibility for accomplishment of action plan steps, leaving accountability in question. Also, by allowing timeframes to be as long-term as the entire school year, there is no provision for formative evaluation of progress to make interim changes during the year. Interim checkpoints need to be set and monitored.

RECOMMENDATION

Recommendation 6-12:

Provide data analysis as it pertains to the ongoing school improvement process.

School Improvement Plans should be amended to include the individual/group responsible for accomplishing the action steps. Continue involving principals' in the peer review of plans for monitoring throughout the year to develop more consistent processes across the division.

WPS strongly advocates and practices the use of data as a basis for assessment of student performance and planning decisions at both the school and the division levels. Data for assessment of progress toward accomplishment of school improvement plans should also assist in the development of consistent, measurable plans that guide school reform. Adding identified features to all plans, too, will promote consistency and accountability throughout the year. Continuing the inclusion of principals in plan review and revision will facilitate understanding and heighten a sense of teamwork among them.

This recommendation should be fully implemented by the 2006-07 school year.

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be accomplished with existing resources.

6.6   *Instructional Staff Development*

Staff development will be discussed both in this chapter and in Chapter 3. That chapter encompasses discussion of the administration, budget, staffing, delivery system, and documentation processes. This chapter will discuss staff development strengths and needs in terms of preparation of highly qualified teachers equipped to improve student learning in WPS. Research has demonstrated that, to be effective, staff development must be relevant and sustained. *No Child Left Behind* (NCLB) recommends that it be research-based to develop a teacher corps that is highly qualified. Additionally, training needs to be aligned with state standards and local student needs, and attuned to changing student demographics.

The person in charge of WPS staff development is the Director of Instruction. Although there appears to be an understood plan underlying WPS's approach to professional development, planning for training, as other instructional planning at the division level, is reported to take place on an informal basis. Teacher survey results for the division regarding the quality of staff development are shown in Exhibit 6-1 and may be the result of this informality. Some training is offered at the division level and some at the school, some is required and some voluntary. Follow-up to training or sometimes training itself is provided at school sites by division-level administrators meeting with teacher teams. No evidence was provided of evaluation of training or its correlation to student needs even though interviewees stated that decisions regarding offerings are based on data.

The division has adopted some professional development strategies that have or are likely to positively affect teacher skills and student learning. A great deal of recent staff development in WPS has been geared toward understanding and using data to inform instruction. Essentially three levels of training have been provided toward that end:

- mechanics: how to use Reports On-Line and the information that it provides;

- data analysis: information it offers regarding teaching and learning; and

- application: changes in practice based on data.

The training prompted an examination of curriculum, the development of common assessments for content areas, teachers learning to devise questions that probed for higher level understanding of content, and curriculum mapping in some areas. The most dramatic result took place in the subject of Virginia Studies after the discovery that WPS students' scores were among the lowest in the Commonwealth. Teachers examined other divisions with similar demographics whose students were achieving at far higher levels, used a backward design to develop lesson plans aligned with content standards, and student scores rose from 49 percent to 89 percent within a year.

Every Monday, schools are released early for professional development or horizontal or vertical team meetings. Besides division- and school-level funds for training, Handley Trust funds also provide learning opportunities for teacher training. As part of their school improvement planning, schools set up year-long calendars of training that will be site-based. The Director of Instruction reviews requests for conferences regarding the benefits to the division. A form does exist for delineating objectives regarding application

of training upon return to the division after a conference, but it is not uniformly used. Along with the Director of Special Education, the Director coordinates professional development offerings to minimize redundancy. When CRISS (Creating Independence through Student-owned Strategies) trainer training was offered, principals had to provide an assurance that their trained teachers would be released to provide training at other sites. In response to NCLB highly qualified teaching requirements, the division conducted an internal audit of its professional development that has resulted in its co-development of 30 hour content academies with a mix of face-to-face training and training provided via Blackboard.

For administrators, professional development is also informal. Some training was provided for all administrators, with additional follow-up on an as-needed and requested basis by the Coordinator for Curriculum and Instruction responsible for assessment or by him and the Director of Instruction. Leadership has initiated book talks for principals. An additional arm of professional learning for administrators begun this year has been training in the Virginia Academic Review process that is used for schools not meeting accreditation. Although not needed because of WPS accreditation, division leadership felt that understanding the process of day-long administrative visits would inculcate a deeper understanding of commonalities across schools such as professional development needs, special population needs, and various methods of delivering instruction and peer review for suggestions regarding improvement opportunities. Administrative training was described by an interviewee as a transition from management to instructional leadership.

Research shows that when five components are scientifically incorporated into a comprehensive professional development process, up to 95 percent of participants transfer the skill into classroom practice. Those five components are: imparting knowledge, demonstrating or modeling the new strategy or skill, initial practice in a protected or simulated setting, promptly providing structured and open-ended feedback about performance of the practice, and coaching—providing follow-up attention to help with the at-home implementation. All five are essential for transfer of skills or new behaviors into classroom practice.

RECOMMENDATION

Recommendation 6-13:

Formalize the division's approach to professional development related to curriculum and instruction. This should include a comprehensive plan of workshops to be provided by outside the system consultants and the offering of school-based and university level classes to address professional needs.

The division's approach, although informal, has been one of sustenance of training through the provision of follow-up one-on-one training relating to data analysis, book talks, and continued discussion of topics deemed essential by division leadership. This approach has required extensive time on the part of division-level administrators. Taking the time to develop an ongoing, tiered system of professional development activities for administrators and teachers would embed principles, skills, and applied learning in educators' repertoires.

WPS should accomplish the following:

- conduct annual needs assessments and base offerings on identified needs and division goals;

- develop and administer evaluations relating training to student outcomes,

- design leveled training more strategically;

- add a systematic approach to embed professional development content into classroom instruction by including the five components of effective staff development into planning and implementation; and

- require that all attendees to conferences regularly participate in activities such as training that provide benefits to the division.

The implementation of this recommendation should also reduce the time that division-level administrators have to spend in schools working with administrators or groups of teachers and free them for their substantive administrative duties.

FISCAL IMPACT

The implementation of this recommendation can be accomplished with existing resources. Although difficult to specify, this recommendation is likely to save the division funds in terms of regained time currently spent by highly compensated division-level personnel often providing the same one-on-one training at six different schools.

6.7   *Career and Technical Education*

FINDING

An educational journal once referred to career and technical education (CTE) as the most effective dropout prevention program a division could adopt. WPS has demonstrated its commitment to giving students hands-on opportunities to apply learning and understand the link between school and the world of work at both its middle and high schools. Documents provided to MGT reflect a high level of involvement in CTE planning and program oversight by members of the business and industrial community, and consideration of labor forecasts in decisions related to courses to provide students. The advisory council annually reviews programs and courses regarding enrollment and instruction. Teachers recruit students into classes using a variety of approaches: parent nights, class meetings, and brochure dissemination. With recognition of changing community demographics, a concerted effort was launched three years ago to expand CTE courses. Currently, 36 percent of students enrolled in CTE courses are minorities. This closely mirrors student demographics, which show that 35.4 percent of students are minorities. A comparison of labor projections for the Commonwealth of Virginia and WPS offerings reflect that the CTE program is preparing students for relevant fields.

COMMENDATION

WPS has made a concerted effort to provide opportunities for career education to all groups of students in the division to prepare them for forecasted job needs within the Commonwealth.

FINDING

Last year, administrators identified a need for an additional technology lab at the middle school to provide students hands-on experiences while exploring aspects of technology including engineering, forensics, digital management, energy/power, electronics, simple machines, and research/presentation. The plan was for all students to have the opportunity to rotate through the lab in an exploratory manner. This "Inventions and Innovations" lab was recently set up. Currently, however, enrollment data show 30 students are participating in this opportunity at the middle school.

Middle school personnel expressed a need for a greater variety of hands-on experiences for students, especially those who are frequently disruptive but not egregious enough to warrant placement in the alternative school. Research findings substantiate that need for both remedial and at-risk students. Inventions and Innovations would have met that need as well as giving all middle school 7th and 8th grade students the opportunity to explore careers in current needed job paths; however, with only 3 percent of the student body exposed to its curriculum and applications, it is not meeting its intended career exploration purpose, serving as a means of interesting disruptive or other students in the coursework or in school, or proving cost-effective for the expenditure. Plans were for an additional lab to be added during the 2006-07 school year; however, without full utilization of the recently added lab, expending an additional estimated $30,000 for a second lab would not be cost-effective either. Division administrators have shared their concerns with middle school personnel. Additional students were to be scheduled into the class after the site visit, according to interviewees, and further accountability for enrollment for next year is anticipated.

RECOMMENDATION

Recommendation 6-14:

Schedule all students in one grade into the Inventions and Innovations lab during the 2006-07 school year.

School staff has identified the need for additional hands-on opportunities for students. Capitalizing on the addition of the lab will meet three purposes:

- give students hands-on experiences in career exploration in fields that have been identified in Virginia as projected labor market needs;

- help students better understand how what they learn in academic classes links to job opportunities beyond graduation; and

- provide students with opportunities to learn kinesthetically while applying content knowledge and possibly motivating otherwise disinterested students to stay in school and behave.

Unfortunately, with students already scheduled into electives for the year, disruption of instructional continuity would not be beneficial for even the second semester of the 2005-06 school year.

FISCAL IMPACT

Implementation of this recommendation can be accomplished with existing resources. The expenditure has already been made, but is not currently being capitalized to benefit the anticipated numbers of students.

6.8   *Alternative Education*

FINDING

As in other parts of the division's instructional program, data have now begun to guide decisions relating to remedial and alternative programs; however, few processes or guidelines have been formalized to provide consistency or parameters for decision making. Principals are required to develop remediation plans for their schools and submit them to one of the Coordinators of Curriculum and Instruction and the Director of Instruction. One examines the proposal for cost and the other for content. In this way, too, federal funds can be leveraged to support school remediation plans. With personnel at all levels learning better how to analyze data and use it for instructional decisions, much progress has occurred relating to remediation as well. This year, for the first time, evaluation is expected to be a part of plans with final reports to the division and Board.

Individual intervention/remediation plans are now developed for individual students. Subsequent to pre-testing and other benchmark administrations, the division coordinator responsible for testing and accountability provides reports with students falling below benchmarks tagged in red so that teachers can identify concepts and skills not yet mastered and re-teach and group students for remediation. Information is also available for administrators by strand, teacher, school, and student at the department level to support and target plans.

WPS has moved more toward providing remediation during and after the school day. Some elementary schools have trained tutors with college degrees to deliver a directed program. The middle school offers a diverse program including an extensive after school program modeled somewhat after the 21[St] Century Community Learning Grant but without those federal funds. During the day, a cadre of Shenandoah University students performs specific activities in content areas with students. Teachers also meet students before school begins for remediation. The sixth grade team at the middle school has taken an instructional approach in which a team of teachers breaks out instruction so that each is teaching the same subject in a different way with students rotating through all four instructional methods, enrichment, and remediation. This reaches students with different learning needs, levels, and styles without removing lower performing students for "remediation" and targeting them as slow learners.

The high school program offers tutoring with core area teachers after school one afternoon a week each for make-up work. During the day at the high school, a continuum of courses has been devised during the school day for students having difficulty. Core teachers offer extra support. Twelve sections of Core Plus classes allow at-risk students to garner additional support. WPS has also developed new policies relating to make-up work, attendance, and interventions and publicizes opportunities in newsletters, as well as keeping parents informed of student progress through grade reports mailed every three weeks. High school administrators have also taught classes on "clinics," a behavior management approach to teach students responsibility for expected behavior.

COMMENDATION

Winchester Public Schools has focused on learning for all students and schools and offers individualized approaches to remediation that are varied and give students opportunities to succeed without necessarily singling them out as slow learners.

FINDING

Currently, the less than three-year-old WPS alternative school provides education to students who have committed egregious acts and would otherwise be expelled from school, yet does not offer services for students who have displayed a tendency to be habitually disruptive, a need identified by interviewees. Nor are programs and practices designed for less egregious offenses part of a division-wide cohesive approach to preventing students from escalating in the frequency and severity of offenses. The program, at the Douglas Community Learning Center, provides intensive behavioral and academic interventions for students in grades 6-12 with significant behavior problems. Oversight is the responsibility of one of the Coordinators of Curriculum and Instruction, but his time is largely consumed with data disaggregation and training. A recently hired Special Education Coordinator spends an estimated 50 percent of her time as a hearing officer and serves as a support person for Special Education students recommended for long-term suspension housed at the Northwestern Regional Educational Program (NREP). The trailer space and caseload for the long-term suspension program is shared with Clarke County. The program, serving six WPS students and four from Clarke County is staffed at a ratio of one teacher and one aide to 10 students. They encompass procedures to guide placement and detail program and exit criteria. The Special Education Coordinator has also recently worked to develop procedural guidelines for administrators to use including forms and sample letters on a shared drive. A Student Assistance Process Team at schools works in conjunction with the Student Assistance Leadership Team (SALT) to support students and link them with external agencies.

Several survey respondents expressed concerns about the division's approach to alternative education:

- need to do a better job with Alternative Education;

- truant officers bring kids back, but if they do not want to stay, the cycle is constantly repeating itself; and

- need to look at alternative education for those students with behavioral issues.

Fifty-four percent of WPS principals responding to the MGT survey, compared to 74 percent of other principals, said that "our schools effectively handle misbehavior problems." Within the division, teachers were almost equally divided, with 37 percent *agreeing* or *strongly agreeing* and another 36 percent *disagreeing* or *strongly disagreeing*. Those numbers may reflect the expressed need for programs for students who can still be "saved" by the creation of programs or processes to re-direct their behavior into productive channels before reaching the point of referral to the alternative program. Division personnel acknowledged the need for interventions for students who do not fit the traditional mold of school programs, which is especially important with dramatically changing demographics.

The division does have some interventions in place that could be built on to create a more systematic safety net for students with problems that may lead to long-term suspension. At the high school, one teacher began a peer-to-peer mentor program to provide a support system for students who were at risk of failing. Goals were to improve attendance and engage them in school. At first, 24 at-risk students were involved. That number has expanded to a cross-section of students working with five staff members meeting during club day this year. School staff hopes to expand the program further next year to the entire freshman class. Division SALT members also provide a support system for students who might fall through the cracks, first learning of them through truancy/attendance issues. Team members include student support specialists, the Safe and Drug Free Schools Coordinator, and the Family Support Specialist. Meeting every two weeks with a Coordinator of Curriculum and Instruction, they develop family support plans to meet needs interfering with student attendance and learning.

The magnitude of the challenge of improving achievement for student subgroups highlights the need for concerted efforts to design and implement programs and strategies that will keep youth in school and facilitate successful completion. Additionally, the cost to students who drop out in terms of lower wages and higher unemployment rates and the costs to society in terms of lost revenue and increased dependence on social programs necessitate effective solutions to the problem of dropout.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendation 6-15:

Create a comprehensive, long-term, cross-grade plan for students and families to keep students at risk of failing in school.

Just as WPS investigated others experiencing success in teaching students Virginia Studies concepts, it should seek successful practices in keeping students interested and successful in school before they reach the point of being recommended for long-term suspension. Such a plan should be extensive enough that it identifies instructional methodologies, class configurations, requisite professional development, scheduling options, program expansion such as additional CTE courses, and resources. Implementation of this recommendation could have far-reaching benefits as practices adopted for students in danger of failing also prove effective for all students and expand teachers' repertoires of skills and knowledge.

FISCAL IMPACT

Implementation of this recommendation can be accomplished with existing resources.

Recommendation 6-16:

Explore the addition of career and technical courses and programs or academies at the secondary level.

Job projections show that most jobs may not require four years of college, but will require high-level technical skills. The goal of career and technical education is to give curriculum more meaning and to help students understand the relationship between school and life after graduation. Data show that more than half of all high school students either drop out or are not ready for college or the workplace when they graduate. Furthermore, 25 to 50 percent of students entering college have to take at least one remedial course. Since students drop out at the highest rates in the ninth and the tenth grades, prodding students early into areas that interest them may be the way to interest them in career options they might not otherwise be exposed to.

Project Lead the Way, a nonprofit program created by the high-tech industry to inspire students to high-tech careers, is one example of a program that is proven to prepare students for careers by giving them hands-on experiences in school. Academies that prepare students for careers at several entry points also assist students with various interests and academic abilities to experience career paths before graduation and even serve to maintain interest in school attendance.

FISCAL IMPACT

Implementation of this recommendation is likely to be accomplished with existing resources. When course offerings are correlated to job projections, some courses will necessarily have to be added, but others will be deleted. With Perkins, and recovered funds from deletion of outdated programs, funds are likely to be available once new courses and related materials are identified.

7.0 SPECIAL PROGRAMS

This chapter reviews the organizational structure of Special Programs in the Winchester Public Schools (WPS). Special Programs are those programs that provide supplemental or extended support for students and their families and enhance student performance and academic achievement. The Director of Special Education and Related Services is the administrator at the division level responsible for oversight and implementation of Special Programs, the chief one being Special Education, which supplements, accommodates, or modifies the general academic course of study and seeks to provide adequate support to ensure the academic success of students with disabilities. This position also oversees nursing services as a critical support pillar for children with special needs. Additional support services including guidance, English as a Second Language (ESL), preschool programs, and Safe and Drug Free Schools (SDFS) are currently overseen by a Coordinator of Curriculum and Instruction reporting to the Director of Instruction.

This chapter provides a summary of the delivery and evaluation of services to students in special programs in the WPS. The five major sections of this chapter are:

> 7.1   Special Education
> 7.2   Medicaid and Related Service Programs
> 7.3   Guidance Services
> 7.4   English as a Second Language (ESL)
> 7.5   Preschool Programs

CHAPTER SUMMARY

The Winchester City Schools special programs are currently housed in two departments of the division's central administration. This chapter discusses services provided in both areas; some recommendations, therefore, are cross-referenced between this and Chapter 6 of this report. Recommendations contained in this chapter relate to creating structures and functions that contribute to more effective coordination and planning of tasks that will provide a more cohesive support system for students with special needs. Key suggestions that should assist the school division in achieving a more seamless service delivery include:

- moving some functions between the Department of Instruction and the Office of Special Education and Related Services. This would bring all services that contribute to comprehensive support for students with special needs and their families under the umbrella of one department within the division to better consolidate program planning and delivery;

- more systematically infusing and monitoring differentiation and inclusion practices into division classrooms. The division has offered opportunities for its staff to take part in professional development relating to these topics. They could be strengthened by making them more central to WPS's move from self-contained instruction for students with special needs to effective inclusion strategies on the part of administrators and regular and special classroom teachers;

- filling an existing vacancy to take advantage of potential Medicaid reimbursement revenues; and

- examining division practices regarding Special Education student identification and placement and taking steps to heighten awareness of characteristics of Special Education categories as well as fortify pre-referral procedures.

INTRODUCTION

The organizational structure of WPS, with respect to Special Education and Related Services, includes one director who reports directly to the Superintendent. Positions reporting to this position are:

- one half-time and three full-time school psychologists,
- four speech/language pathologists (one is vacant),
- six school nurses,
- a Special Education lead teacher,
- a Special Education coordinator, and
- a transition coordinator located at the high school.

The Director of Special Education and Related Services also serves as the case manager for students placed in a community-funded placement, and attending IEP and Family Assessment and Planning Team (FAPT) meetings for those students. She works with the Directors of Technology and Instruction to coordinate instruction, curriculum, and staff development to try to integrate Special Education with regular education. The pupil personnel role is to provide supplemental or extended support for students and their families that contribute to enhanced student performance and academic achievement, often through links to community agencies.

Exhibit 7-1 shows the current organizational structure for Special Education within Winchester Public Schools.

7.1   *Special Education*

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEIA) 2004 mandates that Special Education services be provided to students with disabilities in the general education setting to the greatest extent possible. These programs and services are related to supplementing, accommodating, or modifying the general academic course of study and are intended to provide adequate support to ensure academic success of students with disabilities.

FINDING

The WPS Director of Special Education and Related Services is on an equal plane with other directors in the system, so the organizational structure does not lend itself to coordination of decisions and planning among the three division-level directors. Many interviewees and survey respondents reported that the Assistant Superintendent spends the majority of his time on personnel-related issues. The Directors of Instruction and Special Education and Related Services both report that they try to coordinate their decisions and planning, but acknowledge that they need to do better.

**EXHIBIT 7-1
WINCHESTER PUBLIC SCHOOLS
ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE OF
THE SPECIAL EDUCATION DEPARTMENT
2005-06 SCHOOL YEAR**

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                    ┌─────────────────────┐
                    │  Director of Special │
                    │ Education and Related│
                    │      Services        │
                    └──────────┬───────────┘
                               │        ┌──────────────┐
                               ├────────│   Secretary  │
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    ┌──────────┬──────────┬────┴─────┬──────────┬──────────┬──────────┐
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│Psycho- │ │Speech/  │ │School  │ │Special   │ │Coordinator│ │Coordinator│
│logists │ │Language │ │Nurses  │ │Education │ │of Special │ │of Transition│
│(3.5)   │ │Pathol-  │ │(6)     │ │Lead      │ │Education  │ │Services  │
│        │ │ogists   │ │        │ │Teacher   │ │           │ │          │
│        │ │(4)      │ │        │ │          │ │           │ │          │
│        │ │(1 Vacant)│ │        │ │          │ │           │ │          │
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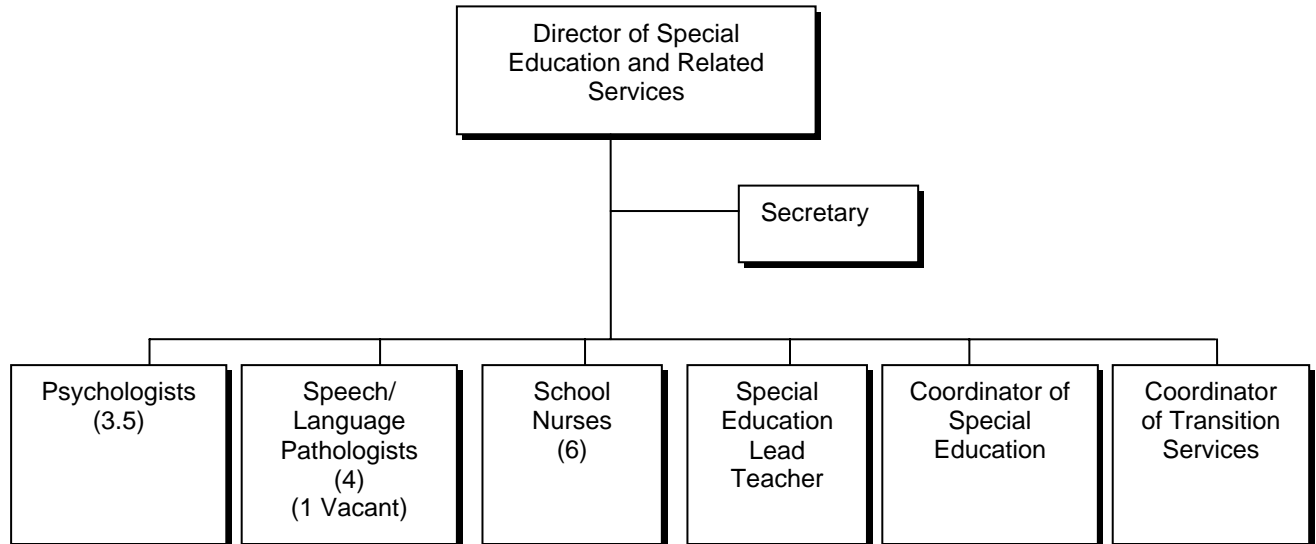
Source: Winchester Public Schools, October 2005.

The Coordinator of Special Education is a new position added in the current fiscal year. Originally, position responsibilities were to serve part-time as the division hearing officer with major responsibilities for support of special education administration. The Coordinator of Special Education's background of 18 years in Special Education appears to validate that Special Education is the primary component of the position. Interviewees report that, in reality, the position is half-time hearing officer and half-time Coordinator of Special Education. An examination of the job description for the position does not designate division of responsibilities by percentages and includes both aspects. A lead teacher has primary responsibility for the instructional side of Special Education support for teachers and schools.

Although no Special Education evaluations have been conducted in the past five years, the division informally evaluates practices and procedures in vertical team discussions of cross-sections of division teachers and review of Standards of Learning (SOL) and Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) data. Such informal processes are commendable in helping individuals involved in those discussions better understand relevant issues; however, they are not sufficient to translate discussion outcomes into broader division-wide practices or to disseminate the content of those discussions beyond group members. This underscores the recommendation made in Chapter 6 to establish clear, formal processes of evaluating programs and procedures to ensure ongoing improvement.

Some WPS data are consistent with Commonwealth and national data in that the majority of students receiving Special Education services have learning or speech/language disabilities. In WPS schools, educable and trainable mentally handicapped (EMH, TMH), those with severe autistic, and emotionally disturbed

students are the primary students served in self-contained classes. Data provided by the WPS and administrators in similar school divisions, and shown in Exhibits 7-1, 7-2, and 7-3, suggest that the division's placement procedures may be contributing to higher than average placement rates of WPS students in Special Education programs. Exhibit 7-2 shows Special Education students by disability for the 2003-04 school year through December 1, 2004. As shown, there were a total of 711 students with disabilities, or 19.3 percent of the division's student population. These numbers are comparable to enrollment of students in Special Education for the previous two years: 697 in 2002-03 and 710 in 2003-04.

EXHIBIT 7-2
WINCHESTER PUBLIC SCHOOLS
SPECIAL EDUCATION STUDENTS BY DISABILITY
DECEMBER 1, 2004, STUDENT DATA REPORT

EXCEPTIONALITY	NUMBER OF STUDENTS	PERCENTAGE OF STUDENT POPULATION
Mental Retardation	69	9.7%
Hearing Impaired	5	0.7%
Speech/Language	116	16.3%
Visually Impaired	0	0.0%
Emotional Disturbed	64	9.0%
Orthopedically Impaired	2	0.3%
Other Health Impaired	72	10.1%
Specific Learning Disability	296	41.6%
Deaf-Blind	0	0.0%
Multi-Disabled	49	6.9%
Traumatic Brain Injury	0	0.0%
Autistic	21	3.0%
Developmentally Delayed	14	2.0%
Severe Disabilities	3	0.4%
TOTAL STUDENTS IN SPECIAL EDUCATION	**711**	**19.3%**

Source: Winchester Public Schools, Office of Director of Special Education, November 2005.

Exhibit 7-3 shows the past three years' number and percentage of WPS first-time referrals that were determined to be ineligible for Special Education services. In all three years, one of every three children referred for possible placement in Special Education was found ineligible. Data was not available for specific categories of Special Education in which students were not found to be eligible. However, an examination of those data might be informative in terms of possible needs for teachers and/or child study teams and principals relating to better understanding of characteristics of those disabilities or classroom interventions for them.

EXHIBIT 7-3
WINCHESTER PUBLIC SCHOOLS
COMPARISON OF REFERRALS TO DETERMINATION OF ELIGIBILITY
2002-03 THROUGH 2004-05 SCHOOL YEARS

YEAR	# OF NEW REFERRALS	# OF INELIGIBLE STUDENTS	% INELIGIBLE
2002-03	110	39	35
2003-04	*229	78	34
2004-05	120	44	36

Source: Winchester Office of Special Education, October 2005.
*Total referrals was the only number provided for 2003-04.

A further examination of the percentage of students placed in Special Education programs in WPS compared to peer school divisions shows that the WPS rate is higher than that of comparable divisions. Exhibit 7-4 shows that the average percent of Special Education students in comparable divisions was 14.9 percent in the 2001-02 school year; in WPS it was 19.1 percent. WPS also had the highest percentage of the divisions selected for comparability in size and demographics.

EXHIBIT 7-4
WINCHESTER PUBLIC SCHOOLS
COMPARISON OF STUDENTS PLACED IN SPECIAL EDUCATION PROGRAMS
2001-02 SCHOOL YEAR

SCHOOL DIVISION	STUDENT ENROLLMENT	STUDENTS IN SPECIAL EDUCATION	PERCENT OF STUDENTS IN SPECIAL EDUCATION
Winchester	3,539	677	19.1
Charlottesville	4,411	765	17.3
Fredericksburg	2,282	346	15.2
Manassas City	6,566	797	14.3
Manassas Park	2,169	311	13.2
Salem	4,030	533	13.2
DIVISION AVERAGE	3,833	572	14.9

Sources: Superintendent's Annual Reports; Virginia Department of Education Web site, 2005.

Interviewees acknowledged that there is "no true pre-referral process in place," despite there being child study teams at all schools, each of which has its own informal process. Training has been conducted in the past for child study leaders and psychologists; however, the early intervention process varies from school to school with the effectiveness of the early intervention process being dependent upon oversight at each school. This is despite the division's using strict criteria, core teams at each school, and regular training. It should also solicit input for recommended changes to procedures from representatives of child study teams at each school. This would serve to enhance current levels of consistency and accountability and to evaluate procedures for revisions as needs indicate.

The emphasis of accountability under No Child Left Behind (NCLB) requires that all students be at or above grade level in all core subjects by 2013-14. The law requires that students who do not make adequate yearly progress be given interventions. NCLB requires the early intervention process to review, establish, and document the scientifically based interventions that the teacher, school, and system have attempted.

Each intervention must be documented with data and data points to determine its success or failure. WPS does not have documentation that it systematically implements this process.

The division has established a pre-referral process this year for ESL with supporting staff development concerning general education interventions and supports for students that may serve as a template for formalizing Special Education processes to ensure uniformity and clarity of awareness of disabilities and interventions.

Best practices in placement are based on school systems having clear procedures for referral and placement that are grounded in documented, required, sequential interventions and clarity of understanding on the part of teachers and administrators regarding characteristics of each disability as well as educational practices that bolster the success of Special Education students within regular classes.

RECOMMENDATION

Recommendation 7-1:

Implement a system-wide early intervention process prior to referral for evaluation for special education services.

WPS should examine division practices relating to two aspects of student identification and placement: (1) professional development for administrators, teachers, and child study team members in terms of understanding of characteristics of each disability and classroom and school-level interventions that can be used to address student needs within regular classes, and (2) a consistent, well-understood, and consistently adhered to pre-referral process that includes multiple layers of interventions taken before referral for possible Special Education placement.

The school division should implement a system-wide early intervention process with a primary focus on research-based, proven effective instructional strategies in the general education classroom. The process should offer the intensity and focus of instruction necessary to alleviate the identified concerns to the greatest extent possible.

With the NCLB requirements for intervention and accountability, the general education program must be responsible for a functional, appropriate early intervention process at every school. The program must address academic underachievement, and behavioral, motivational, and emotional issues. A system-wide early intervention process should aid in closing the achievement gap for students who are at risk for underachievement.

FISCAL IMPACT

Implementation of this recommendation can be achieved with current resources. In fact, putting processes in place to ensure that skills and knowledge to which teachers and administrators are exposed in training is likely to make future expenditures more cost-effective, as personnel time spent in meetings will be more likely to result in placements and students receiving additional intervention prior to referral.

FINDING

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEIA) (2004) mandates that Special Education services be provided to students with disabilities in the general education setting to the greatest extent possible. While existing practices within the division offer support for Special Education students in regular education classes, they have not been formalized into procedures that systematize and regularly monitor their use and consequent benefit to those students. One practice that the division uses is dissemination of an accommodations page to regular education teachers at the beginning of the school year. The document describes modifications that regular education teachers can use for special education students in their classes Special Education teachers are expected to observe those classes and follow up with individual students. All teachers also attend in-service training on an annual basis regarding accommodations. In administrator meetings, concerns are shared among staff who are then encouraged to look for implementation of accommodations during classroom observations. Special Education teachers also receive staff development training and are provided with materials that equip them to differentiate instruction.

The effective implementation of a strong pre-referral system dictates that training on differentiation of instruction take a higher precedence in the division's staff development priorities. Written procedures alone cannot guarantee that proper buttresses will be used to assist students to be successful in regular classrooms before referral for and/or placement in Special Education classes. Successful inclusive practices do not necessarily come naturally to all teachers, but must be taught and practiced with coaching so they may be inculcated into daily use.

The division's approach to inclusion has been representative of its deference to the professional judgment of building administrators. Beginning eight years ago, WPS offered much training for general and Special Education teachers on learning strategies such as cooperative learning groups. Inclusion, however, was not mandated; it was left to the discretion of principals to determine how their schools could best meet student needs. The Director reports that efforts are made to provide combined professional development opportunities for regular and Special Education personnel when appropriate. The Director meets monthly with departments at the middle and high school to discuss how services can be delivered to students differently. The high school staff is reported to have done an outstanding job of inclusion.

Research has substantiated the merits of integrating the vast majority of students with special needs into regular education classes. The full intent of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and of No Child Left Behind (NCLB) federal legislation and the division's approach to disaggregating multiple sources of student performance data is to provide equity of educational opportunities to all students. The division's desire to provide equitable educational opportunities for its Special Education students is indicated by:

- making inclusion the topic of professional development;
- setting an expectation for inclusion by teachers;
- some division practices; and
- discussions at administrators' meetings.

Without, however, creating explicit methods that provide accountability for meeting those expectations, equity of opportunity will likely be based on individual principals' or teachers' values and time, rather than the division's intent.

RECOMMENDATION

Recommendation 7-2:

Expand formal processes in the division to enhance efforts to ensure that differentiation and inclusive practices are used systematically in all Special Education classes.

WPS has made a good faith effort to realize this goal and implemented many strategies to focus on best practices in special education. However, taking additional steps will confirm that its previous and future expenditures of time and other resources will garner intended results. Procedures can be non-burdensome and still reap desired benefits for students. One example of additional steps is to include an item on teachers' and administrators' annual evaluations regarding the use or monitoring of inclusive practices. Embedding that element of evaluations into administrative training and classroom walk-throughs would reinforce the importance of meeting the needs of all students wherever they are being educated.

When the division's efforts are fully realized and collaboration moves more extensively to co-teaching between regular and Special Education students, benefits such as total integration of Special Education students into regular education classes can even result in an inability to discern Special Education students from regular education students. Schools that are effective provide time for teachers to meet and plan together and make provisions to carefully monitor the priorities to which the school staff subscribes.

FISCAL IMPACT

The implementation of this recommendation can be done with existing resources as indicated by division staff.

FINDING

Coordination and communication among positions with support roles for Special Education students is critical to ensure they receive a comprehensive range of services. Division support services that are essential for seamless delivery of services to Special Education students are somewhat fractured, as noted in Chapter 6. The Student Support Specialists, who are responsible for conducting Special Education home studies, attending eligibility meetings, and handling truancy issues, are supervised by one of the Coordinators of Curriculum and Instruction. The coordinator also supervises the family support specialist and guidance counselors, and oversees Title VI-E for support services, ESL, and dropout prevention programs. Nurses are supervised by the Director of Special Education, and the Safe and Drug Free Schools Coordinator, another health-related responsibility, is supervised by the Coordinator of Curriculum and Instruction. This results in positions critical for provision of services to meet the needs of Special Education students being located in two different units of the school system.

Counselors are key positions with regard to support for students with special needs. They are the individuals at the schools who coordinate child study teams, communicate with external agencies, provide counseling, and serve as informal liaisons between regular and Special Education teachers. Having counselors report to a director outside Special Education muddies the waters of authority and thus undermines cohesive program planning and service to students. Since Special Education students are the largest group of students requiring medical services, nurses appropriately report to the Director of Special Education. The position of Safe and Drug Free Schools Coordinator encompasses the broader issue of healthy lifestyle and the development of resiliency within students and should be able to work more closely with nurses and their supervisor. Additionally, the new position of Coordinator of Special Education, although conceived to provide support to Special Education and regular teachers with Special Education students, spends 50 percent of her time in non-Special Education-related hearing responsibilities. Reporting relationships and responsibilities need to be re-organized to more efficiently and effectively coordinate requisite services to students with special needs.

RECOMMENDATION

Recommendation 7-3:

Recognize functions related to Special Education, health, and student hearings.

This recommendation should be made in concert with Recommendation 6-1. By moving the SDFS Coordinator to the Office of Special Education and Related Services, all health-related functions will be consolidated in one location for better coordination and planning of services to WPS students. It is necessary for the Office of Special Education to work with the agencies and community organizations that provide individual and family support. Capitalizing on these relationships should strengthen SDFS.

The following changes in functions within the division would enhance services to students with special needs and their families:

- transfer responsibility for support services including guidance, health, student support, family support, and Safe and Drug Free Schools (SDFs), to the office of the Director of Special Education and Related Services;

- transfer the responsibility for serving as the division's hearing officer to the Coordinator of Federal and Alternative Programs;

- assign full-time responsibility for oversight of student support specialists and the family support specialist to the Coordinator of Special Education; and,

- make the Director of Special Education and Related Services the supervisor of the SDFS Coordinator to integrate all health-related services within the division.

With counselors playing key roles in schools relating to services to students with special needs, their placement in this department will locate them where they can become more

aware of student needs across the division and develop a system-wide approach to meeting them. In this way, all services that are essential for a broad range of support for students with special needs will be merged into a single location where staff can informally meet and discuss student needs and program services, and more effectively and efficiently develop a cohesive, comprehensive range of services for all students.

FISCAL IMPACT

Implementation of this recommendation can be accomplished with existing resources.

FINDING

A number of school divisions have implemented a process for teachers to complete Individual Education Plans (IEPs) on-line to facilitate an efficient and methodical examination of an array of possible considerations to best meet student needs and to increase teacher efficiency and save time in IEP development. The WPS has initiated use of on-line IEPs for its teachers and has already reported saving many teacher hours in IEP development. No evaluation has been conducted on the efficiency of designing IEPs that are more tailored to individual student needs.

COMMENDATION

The Office of Special Education and Related Services is commended for seeking tools to improve student services and channel teacher time from paperwork toward provision of direct student services.

RECOMMENDATION

Recommendation 7-4:

Continue to evaluate the efficiency of the use of on-line IEP software to determine that it is being used consistently and contributing to more use of teacher time for instruction.

The purpose of the program is to free teacher time for additional instructional benefit to students. Anecdotal information gathered informally suggests it is reaping the desired benefit; however, evaluating program use will provide certain documentation that the expense is producing the desired results in terms of quality IEPs and additional instructional time. It will also inform division leadership of additional training or process examination that may need to be conducted to engender the intended outcomes.

FISCAL IMPACT

Implementation of this recommendation can be accomplished with existing resources.

7.2   *Medicaid and Related Service Programs*

Currently, the division is not capitalizing on possible supplemental sources of reimbursed funding. Medicaid billing does not occur even though the division has allocated a half-time position for Medicaid billing. Special Education departments provide a range of

services for students with special needs that are eligible for Medicaid reimbursement. That is a potential source of supplemental income for the eligible services it provides including specific direct and administrative services for students with special needs such as speech therapy and direct, indirect, and capital expenses related to coordination of services for eligible students.

Medicaid is a federal entitlement program that finances medical services. An important focus of the Medicaid program is to improve the delivery and accessibility of health-care systems and resources. School systems and numerous public agencies provide an important link in improving child health because of their regular contact with the child and the parent or guardian.

The Medicaid Administrative Outreach Program allows Medicaid reimbursement to local education agencies. Payments are based on the cost of providing eligible health-related outreach activities. The reimbursement of administrative claims is based on the percentage of students in the total school population that are eligible for Medicaid.

The Commonwealth provides projections based on community demographics and economic factors of possible numbers of students eligible for billed services. Although it does not estimate dollars reaped by the school division, it does estimate a range of numbers of students. Based on a "penetration rate" of 43.16, the state estimates that of the 710 WPS students in Special Education, 306 will be on Medicaid. It then estimates that a range from 30 percent (92) to 60 percent (184) of those students will require billable Medicaid services.

The implementation of the Medicaid Administrative Outreach Program can prove to be an invaluable revenue source for expanded health and social services to the students of the Winchester Public Schools. Dollars reimbursed for services to students could be used to support additional services for WPS students. MGT talked to representatives with the Department of Education and school divisions similar to WPS about accessing Medicaid reimbursement. Of three divisions called, none are billing, although two expressed the desire to do so. A study completed several years ago regarding the feasibility of billing for Medicaid services provided no estimate of revenues that would be generated, but prompted WPS leadership to allocate one half position this year committed to Medicaid billing; however the position has not been filled due to a lack of time to develop a job description. The company that created the on-line IEP system that the division uses has a similar program for assistance with Medicaid reimbursement that may also facilitate filing for those revenues.

RECOMMENDATION

Recommendation 7-5:

Solicit sample job descriptions from other school divisions so that the position that has been allocated can be filled.

An opportunity to garner fiscal benefits that has been acknowledged by division leadership's allocation of a position should not be missed simply because of lack of time to develop a job description. Other larger divisions are certain to have similar job descriptions that could be used as models for the development of the job description that

appears to be impeding the division's availing itself of Medicaid reimbursement. Training should take place during the 2005-06 school year with full implementation in 2006-07.

FISCAL IMPACT

Implementation of this recommendation can be achieved with current resources. The position has already been allocated, so no additional outlay of funds will be necessary. Since no divisions that were selected for similarity to WPS are currently billing, projecting revenues is problematic. The experiences of a larger Virginia school division could be interpolated to estimate funds WPS might be reimbursed. In Campbell County, which has close to 9,000 students, reimbursements in 2002-03 were nearly $30,000 and the following year were almost $64,000, although the school division did not bill for all eligible services. As WPS enrollment is approximately one-third that of Campbell County, a conservative estimate of 20 percent of Campbell County's 2003-04 revenues would reap $12,800 for WPS. Revenues are likely to increase in future years following implementation.

Recommendation	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11
Begin Billing for Medicaid Reimbursement	$0	$12,800	$12,800	$12,800	$12,800

FINDING

No Special Education evaluations have been completed within the past five years, Consequently, no documents regarding the school division's response to evaluative suggestions were available for examination, nor were any that compared division practices in 2000 to current practices. This lack of evaluative data impairs the division's ability to systematically examine all aspects of a program that affect student needs and performance and make adjustments to improve services to students and educators serving them. Only anecdotal evidence can be assembled that tracks program changes over time and evidence revisions as the need for programmatic changes has been indicated. During those five years, both state and federal accountability for meeting the unique, but diverse needs of individual students have dramatically altered the educational landscape and should have prompted program changes that impact all student subgroups and none so much as Students With Disabilities. Interviewees noted changes that have taken place, but no evidence was available that demonstrated the impact of those changes on student success or educator accountability. Evaluation should provide feedback to leaders at the division level regarding the effectiveness of programs and practices for Special Education students. Feedback is also essential to teachers and school leaders so that they can make instructional, curricular, scheduling, and programming changes throughout the school year and over time. As with other WPS programs, evaluation of the Special Education department's programs is reported to be informal, conducted through vertical team meetings and SOL and AYP review, and occurring at schools in anticipation of the budgeting cycle. Just as with other instructional programs, regular, systematic measures should be taken regarding evaluation of the Special Educational operation of the division in order to ensure that continuous improvement takes place.

RECOMMENDATION

Recommendation 7-6:

Include in conjunction with Recommendation 6-7 evaluation of aspects of the Special Education functions of the school division.

Including evaluation of Special Education programs and practices will assist WPS in reaching the NCLB goal that all children will achieve proficiency by 2013-14. This inclusion of Special Education should create an ongoing cycle of examination, revision, and accountability for results within the program at both the school and division levels.

FISCAL IMPACT

Implementation of this recommendation can be accomplished with existing resources.

7.3   *Guidance Services*

Guidance services are intended to offer lessons in life skills. These skills include problem-solving; substance abuse prevention in elementary classrooms to present students with challenging personal or family needs the opportunity for support through resources; personal or small group counseling; and providing family support and referral to appropriate community agencies that can offer more specific support services.

FINDING

WPS interviewees stated that the division does not have a uniform curriculum for guidance. As a result, the level of guidance, counseling, and career preparation that students receive is dependent upon factors such as additional assignments given counselors in individual schools, preferences for individual/group counseling, or procedures that individual schools, principals, or counselors have established to provide uniformity of programs and focus on student needs.

The American School Counselors Association has developed a guidance curriculum that identifies competencies and educational goals for students at each grade and outlines topics that counselors introduce and discuss in classroom instruction. Adopting this would benefit counselors and the students they serve and provide uniformity of delivery of services in all schools.

The Campbell County, Virginia, schools have developed a "Counseling Program Results Agreement" between principal and counselor that outlines counselors' commitment to appropriate student services and is a part of their personnel evaluation with their principals. It includes:

- student results regarding outcomes expected as a result of student referrals and programmatic responsibilities;

- staff results relating to provision of resources to classroom teachers, inservice for faculty, and coordination of the drug prevention curriculum;

- parent results that commit to communications, a lending library, explanation of the counseling program, provision of parenting groups, offering a Bullying Prevention Inservice at a PTA, and discussing the drug prevention curriculum;

- self-improvement commitments to attend counseling meetings and trainings; and

- completing specific assigned tasks.

Use of the document provides accountability for provision of a comprehensive range of counseling services to students and helps counselors to balance their job responsibilities.

RECOMMENDATION

Recommendation 7-7:

Adopt the American School Counselors Association's curriculum for use by WPS counselors and consider adopting an accountability document that will clearly delineate and assure comprehensive counseling responsibilities at every school.

The curriculum was researched and vetted by counselors across the nation for its inclusiveness and relevance for the current needs of American students. This curriculum would provide counselors a comprehensive, grade appropriate guide to topics, skills, and knowledge that students need in a developmental scope and sequence. Furthermore, this practice should ensure consistency of services to students wherever they attend. Review and discussion of the fit of the curriculum with WPS student needs should be an element of regularly conducted counselors' meetings.

Counselors in WPS meet regularly to discuss topics relevant to student needs and professional growth. Taking this additional step would keep responsibility for a broad scope of services before the counselors and help to provide consistency across the division. This document could be used as a template for embedding accountability into other division processes as well.

FISCAL IMPACT

Implementation of this recommendation can be accomplished with existing resources.

7.4 *English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL)*

The WPS Coordinator of Curriculum and Instruction responsible for ESL has worked diligently with community agencies and churches to provide extensive services to the growing number of non-English-speaking residents in the schools and community, despite his myriad other responsibilities. Within the schools, between 1996 and 2004, the population of Limited English Proficient (LEP) students grew 750 percent, constituting 12 percent of the overall student population. Within the past five years, school ESL staff has grown from two positions to 25. One means the division has developed to assist these families to become integrated and successful in the

community is an evening adult ESL program provided by the Northern Shenandoah Valley Adult Education Program. An outgrowth of the adult ESL program has been the development of citizenship classes, job skills, and child care for classes in the Winchester-Frederick County area. When the new middle school is completed, it will house the adult education program because of its centralized location.

To further meet the needs of these new resident adults, WPS has added three parent liaisons. One serves two elementary schools and the middle school and another the other two elementary schools and the high school. The third serves the division's preschool program, of which 40 percent of the student population is ESL.

Last year the division created a direct intake center at its most heavily ESL-populated elementary school. The rationale was to provide a "one-stop" source of services for ESL families and ease enrollment procedures for parents with children in several schools. The center has ties to local agencies, provides language support and intake testing for students so that all of the schools do not have to test students, and sends records to the schools for registration. This center not only centralizes and facilitates registration and placement for students, but also prevents teachers in schools from having to be pulled from their instructional responsibilities to interpret when families arrive for registration.

Finally, the division has focused its fourth year of a 21st Century Community Learning Center grant solely on ESL students. Site directors are located at two elementary schools. They not only provide after school services but also some tutoring during the day to help students develop language proficiency and enrichment. Their association with the regional library and Discovery Museum further enriches student learning opportunities. ESL student achievement is discussed in Section 6.4 of this report.

Programs that are effective in integrating students whose primary language is not English provide outreach to parents through communications in their native language and partnership with community organizations that provide social and other services to families who are non-native English speakers and churches whose congregations serve diverse populations. Other state divisions that have experienced exponential growth also serve as resources to be tapped to create an infrastructure of support for the families of LEP students. One easily accessible resource that enhances communication with families speaking other primary languages is the US Department of Agriculture with its provision of Free/Reduced Lunch Forms in 18 languages at www.fns.usda.gov/cnc/Translations.

COMMENDATION

WPS has responded with speed and precision at both the community and school levels in providing targeted support services to the burgeoning ESL population.

7.5 *Preschool Programs*

At one point, preschool children were served in their home schools. However, due to space limitations, WPS preschool students are no longer served at their home schools, but receive preschool educational experiences at WPS's Douglas Community Learning Center (DCLC). There are no on-site guidance counselors, nurses, or administrators at that site. Next year, fifth grade students at WPS elementary schools will move into the

new middle school, vacating some classrooms around the division and potentially creating space for preschool students to be returned to their home schools. DCLC also houses the Apple Country Head Start program and the Northwestern Regional Educational Program (NREP) for preschool handicapped students, in addition to the WPS Title I Stepping Stones (SS) program for at-risk four-year-olds. Four Title I preschool classes with four teachers and four aides teach SS students. A lead teacher who has been with the program from inception acts as a quasi-administrator for a stipend. The Coordinator of Curriculum and Instruction who coordinates federal grants is the designated principal, although off site. Some classes have SS and Head Start students integrated along with Special Education students, especially those placed for speech. Mainstreaming is described as usually teacher by teacher rather than by general practice.

Space issues and costs in contrast to benefits of the regional program have led the division to investigate the question of whether or not to continue utilizing DCLC as a preschool center and strengthen inclusion in classes at that site or move the programs. The disadvantage of moving the SS program to home schools is that the normally developing peer classes with whom Special Education students could be mainstreamed are diminished. Special Education students have rarely been mainstreamed with "normally developing peer classes" in the Stepping Stones program due to the federal guidelines. The NREP program is set up according to state regulations to offer reimbursement for only certain low incident disabilities. Common ones like Learning Disabled (LD), Developmentally Delayed (DD), and Other Health Impairment (OHI) are not covered. The majority of students in the NREP program before WPS took over eligibility determination of its own students had been identified as Mentally Disabled (MD) or speech only. Disabilities other than MD can be identified and served in the program but the division cannot request reimbursement for them. The share of the NREP program is based on a percentage, with WPS's share being approximately 38 percent of the total budget. Identification of so many preschool students as MD has caused problems when they have entered school and concern on the part of interviewees. To heighten certainty that WPS preschool children are properly identified according to appropriate criteria, the WPS Director has taken over eligibility determination for WPS students, which used to be done through NREP.

A surge in NREP preschool enrollments has resulted in services being targeted to students depending on their specific identified need. Previously, regardless of need, all students had received the full program. Space, though, has become an issue for the NREP center. WPS receives tuition reimbursement from the state for students in that program. As shown in Exhibit 7-5, state reimbursements for the regional program have been between $350,000 and almost $600,000 since January 2002. According to information provided 1-1-06 subsequent to the site visit, 50 Special Education students are served in the regional program (preschool 29, SD 1, ED 20) and an additional 16 receive speech services.

The Stepping Stones Program is one of the few WPS programs that have undergone a formal evaluation, with one having been conducted internally two years ago. Results showed good progress in the achievement of students in the Stepping Stones program. Fifty-six WPS preschoolers are served in SS. Seventy percent of SS preschoolers met PALS benchmarks for readiness, but less than 50 percent of LEP attendees met this benchmark. Division's "measurable objectives" to address related needs include four

yearly home visits by preschool teachers and monthly parent activities on readiness. At-risk students included in regular preschool classes are likely to benefit academically as measured by PALS scores, and there should be more inclusion of students at that age.

EXHIBIT 7-5
WPS TUITION REIMBURSEMENT FOR THE REGIONAL SPECIAL EDUCATION
PRESCHOOL PROGRAM
2001-2005 SCHOOL YEAR

SCHOOL YEAR	WPS EXPENDITURES	WPS REIMBURSEMENT
2001-02	$938,997	$414,690
2002-03	$1,079,253	$355,890
2003-04	$998,472	$502,713
2004-05	$1,144,850	$593,356
2005-06 (estimated)	$1,347,520	$500,000

Source: WPS Department of Finance, 2005.

The transfer of fifth grade students to the newly renovated and expanded middle school for the 2006-07 school year will open an estimated four classrooms at each of the division's elementary schools. WPS has indicated that it intends to review all available space after the fifth grade transition to the middle school. Many programs (reading/math intervention; ESL; gifted; SPED, etc.) are being housed with multiple teachers in one room. The "empty" classes are anticipated to provide the much-needed space to accommodate these programs as well as the projected K-4 population growth at each school. Some current space will be needed for existing grades, but other rooms could be used for preschool classes. This would enable both pre-school at-risk students and pre-school students with disabilities to be transferred back to their home schools, reducing transitions from one school to another throughout their school years. Research has demonstrated that changing schools multiple times in their school careers contributes to increased dropout rates among students. Furthermore, the full intent of IDEA and NCLB legislation is for students, regardless of age or disability, to be served as much as possible with their peers for equity of educational opportunity. In schools where the majority of Special Education students have been co-taught with their grade-level peers, they are assimilated to the point of transparency with non-disabled students; their achievement and that of their peers improves; and all students learn to understand that each person has strengths and weaknesses and develop tolerance of differences.

RECOMMENDATION

Recommendation 7-8:

Intensify plans to return the division's preschool programs to home schools after fifth grade students move to the middle school, with a possible target date of the 2008-09 school year.

Implementation of this recommendation would benefit the division and its students in several ways:

■ provide education for students closer to their homes;

■ reduce time on buses for young children;

- eliminate one school change in student careers;

- begin student education in WPS in the least restrictive environment;

- serve as a model to other teachers for inclusion; and

- free $50,000 currently encumbered to pay for transportation of preschool children for other instructional programs for the increasingly diverse student body.

With two years to plan, budget, and provide requisite professional development, the division would have sufficient time to determine facilities needs, train teachers in inclusionary strategies, and develop a budget in which the additional funds could be best utilized for the benefit of students across the division.

FISCAL IMPACT

The implementation of this recommendation can be done with existing resources as indicated by division staff.

8.0 FACILITIES USE AND MANAGEMENT

This chapter presents the review of Winchester Public Schools (WPS) facilities use and management in four sections. The major sections in the chapter are:

    8.1   Organizational Structure and Management
    8.2   Planning, Design, and Construction
    8.3   Maintenance and Operations
    8.4   Energy and Utility Management

A comprehensive facilities management program coordinates all the physical resources in a school division. The administration of the program must effectively integrate facilities planning with the other aspects of institutional planning. Therefore, the administrator for facilities maintenance should participate in the design and construction activities within the school system. Conversely, the construction management personnel need to be knowledgeable of the operations and maintenance activities.

To be effective, facilities managers must be involved in strategic planning activities. The facilities and construction management departments must operate under clearly defined policies and procedures, and activities must be monitored in order to accommodate changes in the resources and needs of the educational and operational programs within the school division.

CHAPTER SUMMARY

The Winchester Public Schools serve the nearly 3,700 students in the City of Winchester in the Shenandoah Valley in northern Virginia with seven schools across an area of approximately 9.3 square miles. These include four elementary schools, one middle school, one high school, and one community learning center. The facilities management program, although a critical support service for the instructional program, faces numerous challenges.

WPS is in the middle of two large facility improvement projects. These facility improvements are the result of several years of planning with the Winchester City Council. The necessary planning elements are not compiled in a single written comprehensive plan. Board policies regarding facilities deal almost exclusively with facilities construction.

Among the unique challenges facing the Operational Services Department of WPS is the lack of a support services facility to house the maintenance department and to store the necessary equipment and supplies for their operations. Both the maintenance and custodial operations strive for excellence without School Board adopted standards to guide them.

Although the school division started a utility management program, the program has stalled. To enjoy utility savings in the future, Winchester Public Schools will have to emphasize utility savings and invest in related equipment in the near future.

INTRODUCTION

The Winchester Public Schools serve the nearly 3,700 students in the City of Winchester in the Shenandoah Valley in northern Virginia with seven schools across an area of approximately 9.3 square miles. These include four elementary schools, one middle school, one high school, and one community learning center.

Among the unique challenges facing the Operational Services Department of the WPS is the lack of a support services facility to house the maintenance department and to store the necessary equipment and supplies for their operations.

8.1 *Organizational Structure and Management*

The major facilities management functions in the Winchester Public Schools are administered by the Director of Operational Services, who presently reports directly to the Superintendent of Schools. Under Recommendation 2-4 in Chapter 2 of this document, the Director of Operational Services would report to the Assistant Superintendent for Administration rather than the Superintendent. The Director of Operational Services oversees all maintenance and operations, energy conservation, food services, and transportation functions. Exhibit 8-1 provides a chart of the current organizational structure for those charged with facilities management responsibilities.

EXHIBIT 8-1
WINCHESTER PUBLIC SCHOOLS
FACILITIES USE AND MANAGEMENT
CURRENT ORGANIZATIONAL CHART
2005-06 SCHOOL YEAR

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                        ┌──────────────┐
                        │  Director of │
                        │  Operational │
                        │   Services   │
                        └──────┬───────┘
        ┌──────────────┬───────┴───────┬──────────────┐
┌───────────────┐┌───────────────┐┌───────────────┐┌───────────────┐
│ Coordinator of││ Supervisor of ││ Coordinator of││ Coordinator of│
│ Food Services ││  Facilities   ││ Environmental ││ Transportation│
│               ││  Management   ││ Services and  ││   Services    │
│               ││               ││    Safety     ││               │
└───────────────┘└───────────────┘└───────────────┘└───────────────┘
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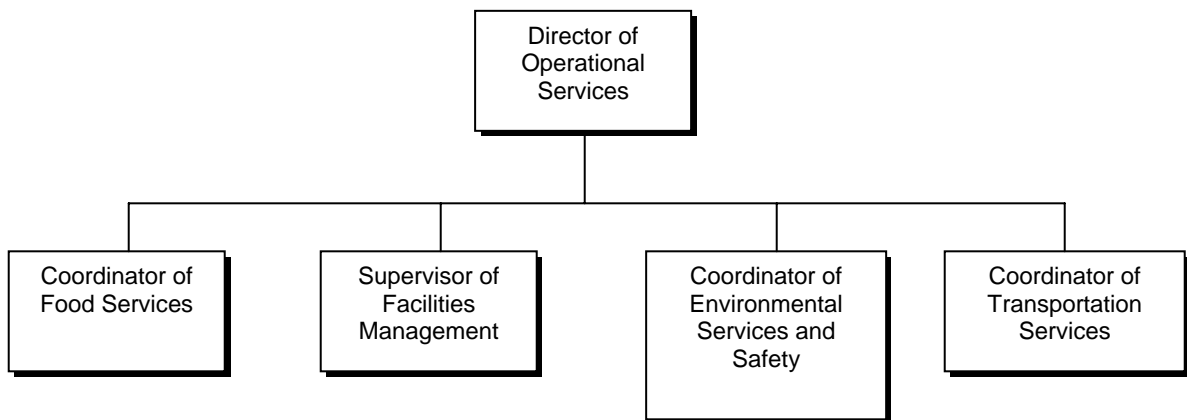
Source: Winchester Public Schools, 2005.

FINDING

The current Board policy manual has very few policies and procedures that provide guidance and direction to the facilities operations and maintenance departments. Priorities for maintenance work are determined by the Director of Operational Services. At times, those priorities may be in conflict with the priorities of building principals or others in the school division. Similarly, the priorities for facilities work are determined by the School Board and Superintendent without written policy to guide their prioritization process or the relative weight of the evaluation criteria.

Because of the financial requirements of operating and maintaining school facilities, governing boards must carefully plan how facilities are maintained. Policies that guide the operations and maintenance of school facilities are thus important components in governing board policy manuals.

RECOMMENDATION

Recommendation 8-1:

Review all facilities maintenance policies and procedures, update them as appropriate, and add needed policies.

The implementation of this recommendation should address a number of issues raised in other sections of this chapter and cross-referenced to this recommendation. Specifically, the School Board should address the following matters:

- a comprehensive change order policy and related administrative procedures (see Recommendation 8-8);

- maintenance standards for maintenance staff (see Recommendation 8-11); and

- custodial standards for custodians (see Recommendation 8-12).

As a result of improving the school board policies and administrative procedures, administrators will more clearly understand the goals for the school division and the processes necessary to reach those goals. These written documents will improve communications and provide guidance in the setting of priorities in the capital projects and plant facilities departments. This sharing of goals will reduce conflict in decision making and will provide more effective and efficient operations in both departments.

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

8.2   *Planning, Design, and Construction*

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; and

- 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 local public school division. New school facilities and major renovations or additions require a substantial taxpayer investment. Existing school facilities represent a community equity that requires ongoing maintenance investments to maintain the value of that equity.

FINDING

WPS has multiple methods for projecting enrollment for five years into the future for facility planning. The school division develops annual enrollment projections using 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. In addition, the sizing of school facilities in a master plan is possible with reliable longer range enrollment projection information.

COMMENDATION

The Winchester Public Schools is commended for having five-year enrollment projections and using several enrollment projection methods, including a cohort survival method in the Capital Improvement Plan.

FINDING

WPS does not have standard sets of educational specifications to guide design professionals as they design new construction projects or renovation projects. These prototypical 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 for students, educators, the community, and their activities and relationships.

This document serves as a written communication between educators and the design professionals. The development of these prototypical educational specifications is only the first set of specifications and the first series of communications. These specifications will need to be modified for specific projects and sites as projects are funded and approved for design. Design specifications and construction specifications should follow this step. Without these educational specifications, new school facilities tend not to be comparable in their potential to deliver equal access to educational programs.

RECOMMENDATION

Recommendation 8-2:

Develop prototypical educational specifications for elementary schools, middle schools, and high schools.

Developing educational specifications provides an effective means of communication between the school division and the design team. The written specifications and the discussion involved in their development greatly improve communications and mutual understanding. Improved communications and mutual understanding lead to a better school construction project.

Having prototypical educational specifications will ensure efficiencies in design and construction for future schools. Further, prototypical educational specification documents ensure that new school facilities will be comparable in their potential to deliver equal access to educational programs.

The implementation of this recommendation should have several beneficial results, including:

- a reduction in the cost of school design;

- a reduction in the number of change orders as a result of standardization;

- standardization that should contribute to greater overall efficiency in construction; and

- greater efficiencies in maintenance and related activities.

While each prototype must be engineered to meet specific site requirements, each use of the plan should result in its refinement and in the development of greater cost efficiencies.

Prototype facilities do not have to have identical exterior/interior appearances. A wide variety of interior/exterior finishes, exterior trim, covered walkways, and appearances of roof systems permit tailoring schools to neighborhood areas while capitalizing on the advantages of prototypical design.

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING

WPS does not have all of the elements necessary to develop a comprehensive capital improvement plan. Comprehensive capital plans usually include descriptions of program offerings, enrollment projections, building capacities, utilization analysis, physical building assessments, and functional analysis (educational suitability).

The following nine steps have been identified by the Council of Educational Planners, International, in the facilities master planning process:

- Establish an organization and specify the roles and responsibilities.

- Collect data about such factors as enrollments, facilities, community expectations, and the educational program.

- Analyze the collected data and identify trends, directions, and goals.

- Develop alternative ways of achieving the ends identified by analysis of collected data.

- Assess the feasibility of each identified alternative.

- Select the preferred or "best" alternative(s).

- Develop a facilities master plan to achieve the chosen alternative(s).

- Implement the plan, provide the required facilities, and put the developed facilities into use.

- Evaluate the completed facilities and initiate an update of the facilities master plan.

The lack of all elements of a comprehensive master plan results in projects being prioritized through a political process rather than a data-driven process. The political process may leave the most pressing projects undone. This erodes trust and confidence and diminishes the effectiveness and efficiency of the school division as a whole.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendation 8-3:

Conduct a physical assessment of all school division buildings, including support buildings, to include structural, electrical-mechanical, safety, and accessibility issues.

By conducting a physical assessment of all school division buildings, Winchester Public Schools will be able to create a ranked list of those buildings most in need of repair, renovation, or replacement. The complete lack of a maintenance and operations building would become a glaring omission in an inventory of school division buildings.

In addition, by conducting a systematic physical assessment of all buildings, the school division will be able to group repair or renovation projects to obtain economies of scale. For example, if the assessment shows that four buildings need roof replacements, those can be bid at one time, allowing the school division to receive a better price than for separate bids.

FISCAL IMPACT

The implementation of this recommendation could be accomplished with existing resources; however, the work may also be outsourced, or a combination of in-house and outsourcing may be used. Any costs cannot be projected until the method of implementation is determined by Winchester Public Schools.

Recommendation 8-4:

Conduct an educational suitability assessment of all school division buildings to include general classrooms, special learning spaces, and support spaces.

By conducting an educational suitability assessment of all school division buildings, WPS will be able to create a ranked list of those schools most in need of renovation or replacement based on their ability to meet the facility requirements of the educational program. The assessment would provide information regarding the appropriateness of room size, adjacencies, utilities, storage, and fixed equipment.

FISCAL IMPACT

The implementation of this recommendation could be accomplished at no additional cost and with existing resources. However, the work may also be outsourced, or a combination of in-house and outsourcing may be used. Any costs cannot be projected until the method of implementation is determined.

FINDING

When a renovation or new construction project is completed for the Winchester Public Schools, 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 specification?

- How might the educational specification be revised to better meet program requirements?

RECOMMENDATION

Recommendation 8-5:

Conduct a post-occupancy review of major facilities renovations or new construction projects upon completion.

The information gathered by a post-occupancy review team should be compared to the original educational specification. In addition, the educational specification should be examined as to its accuracy in describing the facility needs of the educational program. A post-occupancy evaluation team should have three types of individuals:

- an architect with school design experience;

- an engineer with school design experience; and

- an educator with experience in the development of educational specifications.

FISCAL IMPACT

The implementation of this recommendation could be accomplished with existing resources; however, the work may also be outsourced, or a combination of in-house and outsourcing may be used. Any costs cannot be projected until the method of implementation is determined by Winchester Public Schools.

FINDING

WPS has a central repository for all building drawings and blueprints. The blueprints include many "red-lined" drawings that reflect changes made or noted in the field. The drawings are used by a variety of professionals in the Operational Services Department and by subcontractors. The Director of Operational Services and the Supervisor of Facilities Management manage the use and storage of the drawings.

Keeping complete and accurate drawings at a central site is an important timesaver. It also prevents errors, some with safety implications, due to lack of knowledge about the placement of electrical mechanical systems, plumbing, and other types of building components.

COMMENDATION

The Winchester Public Schools is commended for keeping accurate and complete building blueprint records, including "red-lined" drawings.

FINDING

To date, none of the blueprints of school drawings have been digitized, nor have copies been stored off site in case of catastrophic loss. The rooms and cabinets presently used for storage are not fire proof. Should there be a fire or other catastrophic loss, the school division would find itself at a serious disadvantage. Even simple maintenance projects often require the use of the red-lined blueprints. The Operational Services Department would find its productivity greatly reduced. Replication of the drawings after the fact would be extremely costly, if even possible.

All future drawings will be done on computer and the digitized files kept off site with the architectural firm.

RECOMMENDATION

Recommendation 8-6:

Keep backup digitized blueprints or backup copies of blueprints of all schools at an off-site location.

By backing up red-lined blueprints with either physical copies or digitized media, the school division's risk factor would be decreased because they would be protected against catastrophic loss. This would allow critical facility and maintenance operations to continue with minimal disruption in the event of a catastrophic loss of the originals.

FISCAL IMPACT

The fiscal impact of digitizing the remaining blueprints and storing them off site is estimated to be $2,000 per site for each of the seven sites (six schools and the Central Administration Office building) for a total of $14,000.

Recommendation	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11
Back Up Blueprints for Seven Sites	($14,000)	$0	$0	$0	$0

FINDING

MGT consultants were unable to identify School Board policies or written administrative procedures regulating change orders. Interviews with Winchester Public School personnel indicated that change order procedures have not been used recently because there have been no construction projects that required change orders, and any needed change orders would really be a matter of administrative practice. Policy and written administrative procedures should be in place to help control project cost increases.

RECOMMENDATION

Recommendation 8-7:

Develop and adopt policy and administrative 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 Director of Operational Services must authorize a change order request. Change order requests are then taken to the School Board at their next regularly scheduled meeting for their approval.

Such policies and procedures make it easier to detect abuses that could occur, and this recommendation will result in provisions that should minimize those opportunities.

Exhibit 8-2, a Sample Construction Change Order Policy, contains provisions often incorporated in School Board policy. This sample places emphasis upon the following conditions:

- establishing an administratively-approved cap of $25,000 on each change order submitted subsequent to prior approval contract amount;

- prohibiting splitting of change orders to avoid the administrative dollar limit;

- providing that only the Superintendent or his administrative designee (Operational Services Director) may approve change orders administratively; and

- requiring that copies of change orders be submitted to the Board on a timely basis.

EXHIBIT 8-2
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 ($25,000.00) 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 requested change orders must be in writing and must be approved in writing before the work is done.

2.   Requested change orders concerning the same subject shall not be split in the event that the sum total of the initial requested change order increases the contract amount by more than twenty-five thousand dollars ($25,000.00).

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 Board at its first regular or special meeting following the approval date of the change order.

Source: MGT of America, 2005.

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

8.3   *Maintenance and Operations*

Maintenance

The proper maintenance of facilities is critical to ensuring support for an effective instructional program. Research has shown that appropriate heating and cooling levels, building and room appearance, 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 provisions have proven to lead to increased costs of facility operations by shortening the useful life span of equipment and buildings. Many school systems have adopted rigorous preventive maintenance programs and keep a record of the performance of equipment and the costs of regular maintenance against which they measure the effectiveness of programs.

Operations (Custodial)

Safe, clean, and sanitary facilities are essential elements in today's schooling environment. School systems vary in how these functions are delivered. Typically, school boards either contract out (outsource) custodial and other services or organize a comprehensive in-house system of services. Personnel may be employed by either the School Board or the outsource company. Management responsibility, if the program is totally in-house, may reside either partially or wholly with the central office or the

individual school or cost center. The decision to determine the desired structure is usually based on a number of criteria including minimizing costs to the school division, improving services to schools, and reducing the span of control of division or school-based administrators.

The Operational Services Department is designed to support the daily maintenance needs in each school/facility with the repair of buildings and building systems, painting, and emergency response. Primary responsibilities include:

- all emergency response repairs;
- HVAC repair;
- routine maintenance of all schools/facilities;
- all electrical work, carpentry, plumbing, and painting when needed;
- locksmith services;
- roofing repair;
- intercom systems repair;
- minor parking lot and fence repair;
- window replacement;
- flooring installation;
- playground maintenance, installation, inspection;
- minor concrete repair and new installations; and
- minor asphalt repair and overlays.

Custodial services are rendered through a section of the Operational Services Department. The Coordinator of Environmental and Safety Services supports the organization and assists the principals and the Director of Operational Services in providing a safe, clean, quality environment for students, teachers, and staff, in support of the learning objectives of the school. There are 27.23 full-time equivalent (FTE) school custodial personnel.

FINDING

The computerized maintenance management system (CMMS) software does not automatically generate preventative maintenance work orders. Like most medium to large school divisions, the WPS uses CMMS software to help them with the many management responsibilities in facilities maintenance. The Winchester Public Schools' CMMS software is well understood by the present users and has these basic features needed to manage facilities:

- Equipment Records;
- Work Order Module;
- Job Costing Module; and
- Time Cards.

The software does not automatically generate preventative maintenance work orders. Without the automatic generation capability, maintenance workers are not prompted to complete periodic maintenance on a wide variety of equipment.

Preventative maintenance is an ongoing process in which wear and tear and changes to facilities and equipment are anticipated, and corrective actions are taken before a failure,

thus ensuring efficiency and minimizing costly repairs. The program involves systematic inspection, adjustment, lubrication, and replacement of components, as well as performance testing and analysis. As a result, the preventative maintenance program extends the life of the facilities and equipment and minimizes unscheduled downtime. Exhibit 8-3 is an example of the preventative maintenance tasks used in other school divisions.

School divisions without this feature tend to overlook periodic maintenance, and equipment fails as a result. The Operational Services Department CMMS software can be upgraded to include additional modules on an as-needed basis.

RECOMMENDATION

Recommendation 8-8:

Improve the CMMS software to include a feature that automatically generates preventative maintenance work orders.

By having the capability to automatically generate preventative maintenance work orders, the school division can expect longer equipment life and better equipment performance.

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation will require an expenditure to upgrade the CMMS software. The expense of this upgrade should easily be offset by the longer equipment life and better equipment performance. Although it is not possible to fairly calculate the short-term fiscal benefits, the long-term benefits are well documented in building management literature.

FINDING

WPS does not have written maintenance standards as part of their School Board policy manual, so there are no guidelines for expenditure 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 adequacy.

The school division should have maintenance standards that apply to all facilities and help guide the maintenance budget process. Without the standards to guide the maintenance department and its budget, the levels of repair in the different schools will vary according to the wishes of the building principal.

RECOMMENDATION

Recommendation 8-9:

Create maintenance standards that define 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 preventative maintenance activities.

FISCAL IMPACT

Because only the distribution of money is affected, this recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING

WPS does not have written custodial standards as part of its School Board policy manual. As a result, the buildings may not be consistently cleaned at the level indicated by the staffing allocation. According to the Association of Physical Plant Administrators (APPA), one custodian can clean approximately 18,000 to 20,000 square feet in an eight-hour period and meet the industry standard of Level 2: "Ordinary Tidiness."

EXHIBIT 8-3
MONTHLY PREVENTATIVE
SAMPLE MAINTENANCE SCHEDULE

MAINTENANCE MONTHLY ROUNDS:	July	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	June
Measure fuel and send Fuel Reports and fax in												
Send in Water Sample and fax in												
Complete Generator Report and fax in												
AIR HANDLING UNITS:												
Inspect and clean air filters or replace												
Check all controls–at proper setting?												
Check fan motor & belt tension–should have 1/2 to 1" play												
GENERATORS:												
Test glycol ADD GLYCOL												
Start generator and run with full load for 4 hours or more												
FIRE ALARM SYSTEM:												
Notify Principal, test Fire Alarm												
Turn over fire extinguishers and shake to loosen powder												
Inspect all fire extinguishers for proper operation												
FURNACE:												
Test flame for proper combustion; adjust as needed												
Inspect combustion chamber for cracks; repair as needed												
Inspect photo cell;-clean as needed												
WATER HEATER: (GUN FIRED)												
Test flame for proper combustion; adjust as needed												
Inspect combustion chamber for cracks; repair as needed												
Inspect burner assembly; clean as needed												
Inspect photo cell; clean as needed												
Test pressure relief valve												
Drain accumulated rust from bottom of water tank												
BOILERS:												
Test flame for proper combustion; adjust as needed												
Inspect combustion chamber for cracks; repair as needed												
Inspect burner assembly; clean as needed												
Test boiler relief valve												
Blow down low water cut-off control												

Source: MGT of America, 2005.

Three major components of the time and task standards are identified by the Association of Higher Education Facilities Officers or the APPA Standards:

■ Appearance Levels must be defined and described in some detail. (The APPA handbooks provide descriptions for five levels of cleanliness as summarized in Exhibit 8-4.)

■ Standard Spaces must be identified to ensure that the difference in the types of spaces and the cleaning effort required for those spaces is clearly distinguished. (The APPA handbooks identify 33 different types of spaces.)

■ CSF (Cleanable Square Feet) is an industry standard that is used to measure and compare data.

EXHIBIT 8-4
APPA CLEANLINESS SCALE

Level 1:	Ordinary Spotlessness - Only small amounts of litter and ashes in containers. Floor coverings are kept bright and clean at all times. No dust accumulation on vertical surfaces, very little on horizontal surfaces. All glass, light fixtures, mirrors, and washbasins are kept clean. Only small amounts of spots visible.
Level 2	Ordinary Tidiness - Only small amounts of litter and ashes in containers. Floor coverings show periods of peak and valleys in appearance. Dusting is maintained at a high level. All glass, light fixtures, mirrors, and washbasins show evidence of spots and dust.
Level 3:	Casual Inattention - Only small amounts of litter and ashes in containers. Floor coverings show periods of peak and valleys in appearance. Dust accumulation on vents, vertical, and horizontal surfaces. All glass, light fixtures, mirrors, and washbasins show accumulations of dust, spots, and prints.
Level 4:	Moderate dinginess - Waste containers are full and overflowing. Floor coverings are normally dull, marked, and spotted with infrequent peaks. Dusting is infrequent and dust balls accumulate. All glass, light fixtures, mirrors, and washbasins are dirty and spotted.
Level 5:	Unkempt Neglect - No trash pickup. Occupants of building are responsible. Regular floor care is eliminated. Dusting is eliminated. All glass, light fixtures, mirrors, and washbasins are very dirty.

Source: APPA: The Association of Higher Education Facilities Officers, 1998.

RECOMMENDATION

Recommendation 8-10:

Develop standards for custodial services that are consistent with APPA standards.

Custodial standards will create the same level of expectations, and thus internal consistencies, across the school division. This will improve the quality of cleaning and light maintenance activities.

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING

WPS does not have written administrative time and task expectations for custodians for guidance on the time and procedures needed to ensure an appropriate and consistent service level. School divisions with best practices have specific time and task expectations to guide the custodians on the frequency of different cleaning cycles and on their typical duration. This type of guidance helps create a systematic approach to the daily, weekly, monthly, and even annual cleaning tasks. Implementation of time and task guidelines should create greater internal consistency in the cleanliness of school buildings.

RECOMMENDATION

Recommendation 8-11:

Develop time and task standards for custodial services.

The Winchester Public Schools will benefit by having time and task standards for custodians in two major ways:

- The workload for custodians will be more equitably distributed. Schools presently understaffed will receive additional custodian time and will be cleaner.

- It is a well-know motivational principle that higher expectations lead to higher performance. It stands to reason that an organization with no time and task expectations will benefit from improved performance expectations. Exhibit 8-5 details an example of cleaning guidelines as per cleaning standards.

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING

Currently there is no systematic method of assessing custodial service quality that ties in with APPA standards. There is a very basic quality control system in place to determine if custodial care meets the supervisor's expectations. (The direct custodial supervisors are building principals, who are not typically trained in the evaluation of facility cleanliness.) Lack of quality control procedures often leads to poor performance.

**EXHIBIT 8-5
SAMPLE CLEANING GUIDELINES
AS PER CLEANING STANDARDS**

Custodial Evaluation

School: _____
Date: _____

	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4	Level 5	Daily	Weekly	Monthly	Annually	Notes
Classrooms, labs, gyms, offices										
Routine Activities										
1 Vacuum, sweep, dust mop floors										
2 Clean chalkboard or whiteboards and trays										
3 Clean erasers										
4 Empty waste containers										
5 Empty pencil sharpener(s)										
6 Spot-clean walls and doors										
7 Dust flat surfaces										
8 Re-lamp										
Project Activities										
1 Damp-mop floors										
2 Spray buff/burnish floors										
3 Clean trash containers										
4 Dust vents										
5 Interim floor care										
6 Dust blinds										
7 Clean windows - both sides										
8 Strip/refinish floors										
9 Clean light fixtures (project)										
10 Clean furniture and multiple seating (project)										
Hallways, foyers										
Routine Activities										
1 Vacuum, sweep, dust mop floors										
2 Empty waste containers										
3 Spot-clean walls and doors										
4 Dust flat surfaces										
5 Re-lamp										
Project Activities										
1 Damp-mop floors										
2 Spray buff/burnish floors										
3 Clean trash containers										
4 Dust vents										
5 Interim floor care										
6 Dust blinds										
7 Clean windows - both sides										
8 Strip/refinish floors										
9 Clean light fixtures (project)										
10 Clean furniture and multiple seating (project)										
Restrooms, lockers										
Routine Activities										
1 Damp-mop, sanitize floors										
2 Disinfect, sanitize sinks, toilets, and urinals										
3 Clean, sanitize paper dispensers										
4 Clean, sanitize stalls and privacy partitions										
5 Fill paper dispensers										
6 Empty waste containers										
7 Spot-clean walls and doors										
8 Dust flat surfaces										
9 Re-lamp										
Project Activities										
1 Spray buff/burnish floors										
2 Clean trash containers										
3 Dust vents										
4 Clean windows - both sides										
5 Strip/refinish floors										
6 Clean light fixtures (project)										

Source: MGT of America, 2005.

RECOMMENDATION

Recommendation 8-12:

Conduct periodic custodial service quality inspections using forms reflecting the newly adopted custodial standards.

Conducting periodic custodial service quality inspections will enable the school division to gather important information about how custodial services can be improved. The data can be analyzed and shared at the appropriate level of service. Some information may best be shared with custodians, while management personnel may use other information to make structural changes in how, where, or when services are delivered.

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING

WPS is providing systematic training for its custodial and maintenance employees to ensure that they are aware of current best practices and have access to information that will improve their services. With this periodic training, employees become more aware of new methods and products that provide efficiencies. In addition, the risk of injury decreases when employees are trained in the latest methods and in the hazards of certain products currently in wide use.

Product sales representatives provide additional seminars and training sessions to help custodial employees provide improved service. This not only helps employees, but the improved productivity and safety record reflects on their company. Some insurance companies even provide small premium reductions when training of custodians is documented.

COMMENDATION

The Winchester Public Schools are commended for providing systematic training for custodial and maintenance employees to improve their productivity.

RECOMMENDATION

Recommendation 8-13:

Explore the possibility of reduced insurance premiums as a result of the record of custodial and maintenance training.

Systematic training helps the employee, increases productivity, and improves the safety record of the school division. A systematic, formal training program for facilities maintenance and custodial staff often including the following subject areas may be sufficient to reduce liability insurance premiums:

- time management;
- professional skill development;
- effective work scheduling;
- quality control;
- personnel management strategies;
- interdepartmental communication skills;
- customer communication skills; and
- work habits.

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING

Custodians are not carefully dispensing the volumes of products recommended by the manufacturer. Most custodians use a variety of waxes and cleaning products that range from the "very safe" to those that are hazardous (e.g., organic acids). Almost all custodial products have detailed use instructions and corresponding Materials Safety Data Sheets (MSDS) that provide some product safety information. However, custodians typically "measure" the amount of products to be used by estimating the amount of product they need to mix or apply. Industry experts indicate that overuse of custodial supplies is a major cost factor in many school systems. Based on the results from some test schools, Atlanta Public Schools in Georgia has calculated a potential savings of 20 to 30 percent by installing dispensing systems.

RECOMMENDATION

Recommendation 8-14:

Use automatic product dispensing devices for each custodial closet to reduce excessive use of custodial products.

The Winchester Public Schools will benefit from the proper use of custodial products. The manufacturers recommended use rate is usually significantly less than custodians' "estimated" product requirements. With an estimated three custodian closets per each of the seven schools plus the school division office building, the savings across the school division would be significant.

FISCAL IMPACT

The fiscal impact for this recommendation over five years is estimated at $26,250. The number is derived from multiplying the estimated total custodial materials and supplies budget of $114,600 for FY 05 by five percent (five percent was used because the budget for paper products was commingled with the cleaners and waxes). The cost of the dispensing hardware is estimated at $2,400. This number was derived by multiplying 24 custodial closets times $100 for each dispensing device. (Many custodial supply companies will provide the dispensing devices at no cost.) The cost of the metering devices was subtracted from the first year savings.

Recommendation	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11
Use Automatic Dispensing Devices	$3,330	$5,730	$5,730	$5,730	$5,730

FINDING

WPS is not allocating custodians consistently with the national best practices of one custodian per 19,000 to 19,500 square feet. MGT consultants found considerable variance in the levels of cleanliness in the different buildings. Some buildings were quite clean while others were less so. There was also a variance in the square feet per custodian across the school division. A detailed analysis of the square feet per custodian appears in Exhibit 8-6. Portable classrooms were included in the analysis, except for those at the high school, which is under renovation.

EXHIBIT 8-6
WINCHESTER PUBLIC SCHOOLS
SUMMARY OF SQUARE FEET PER CUSTODIAN

SCHOOL	SQ FT CLEANED	CUSTODIAN FTE	AVERAGE SQ FT PER CUSTODIAN
John Kerr Elementary School	46,613	2.78	16,774
Quarles Elementary School	75,000	2.78	26,990
Virginia Avenue Charlotte DeHart Elementary School	71,084	2.78	25,580
Frederick Douglass Elementary School	65,200	2.78	23,463
Daniel Morgan Middle School	125,359	7.04	17,811
John Handley High School	271,929	9.08	29,958
Douglas Community Learning Center	31,545	1.00	31,545
Grand Total	**655,185**	**27.23**	**24,060**

Source: Winchester Public Schools, 2005.

The smallest area per custodian was 16,774 square feet per FTE. The largest area per custodian was 31,545 square feet per FTE, and the average was 24,060 square feet per custodian.

The variance in custodian services leads to inequities in care across the school division. Some schools that are "over staffed" may be very clean, while those schools that are "under staffed" may suffer from the shortage.

In order to bring the midpoint of the APPA custodian allocation of "Custodial Service Level 2 – Orderly Tidiness" and one FTE per 19,500 square feet, the school division would have to add approximately 6.3 FTE custodians.

RECOMMENDATION

Recommendation 8-15:

Hire 6.3 FTE custodian positions to the work force and balance the square feet per custodian loads.

The addition of 6.3 FTE custodians should result in cleaner schools. It will allow custodians to improve the level of cleanliness of floors, do minor repairs on walls and hallway wall surfaces, vacuum more often and thoroughly, dust the ledges and window blinds, and empty trash. In combination with other recommendations in this chapter, this should make cleaner, more inviting spaces for students to learn. A common side effect is an increase in the community support for the schools since there is a perception that the community's capital investment is being cared for and protected.

FISCAL IMPACT

The fiscal impact of this recommendation would be an increase in operating costs due to an increase in the number of custodians on staff. To achieve a custodial staffing level of one custodian per 19,500 square feet, Winchester Public Schools would need to increase the custodial staff by about 6.3 FTE positions. The wage is assumed to be $23,800 per year and benefits are 35 percent of the wage. The cost from increasing 6.3 custodians times $32,130 (the average wage and benefits) equals $202,419 per year.

Recommendation	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11
Hire 6.3 FTE Custodians	($202,419)	($202,419)	($202,419)	($202,419)	($202,419)

8.4   *Energy and Utility 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 lighting levels. Light switches are motion activated and 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 US 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 also to encourage behavioral change in staff and students. Schools who have participated in energy and utility conservation programs report no decrease in comfort levels as a result of the programs.

FINDING

In the Winchester Public Schools, there are a number of areas where energy and utility efficiency can be improved. MGT consultants found some older light fixtures with incandescent bulbs. Most light switches in most buildings did not have occupancy sensors. Most sinks did not have motion-activated water faucets. Urinals and toilets lacked motion-activated flush valves. Motion-activated water faucets and flush valves have been shown to save water. Conservation of water when the school division has to pay for treatment of every gallon in some areas is especially important. Vending machines can be a significant user of electricity. The vending machines lacked motion-activated electrical switches.

Most of the schools have direct digital controls (DDC) for their heating ventilation and air conditioning (HVAC) equipment. John Kerr Elementary and Douglas CLS do not have DDC.

This lack of energy and utility conservation equipment requires the school division to pay more for their utilities than necessary and diverts critical general fund dollars from instruction to plant facility costs. Exhibit 8-7 details the annual costs and annual costs per square foot for utilities.

EXHIBIT 8-7
WINCHESTER PUBLIC SCHOOLS
SUMMARY OF UTILITY COSTS FOR FY05

SCHOOL	TOTAL SQ. FT.	ANNUAL UTILITY COSTS	UTILITY COST PER SQ. FT.
John Kerr Elementary School	46,613	77,893	1.67
Quarles Elementary School	75,000	86,380	1.15
Virginia Avenue Charlotte DeHart Elementary School	71,084	94,117	1.32
Frederick Douglass Elementary School	65,200	83,368	1.28
Daniel Morgan Middle School	125,359	153,908	1.23
John Handley High School	271,929	279,974	1.03
Douglas Community Learning Center	31,545	63,735	2.02
Grand Total	**655,185**	**775,640**	**1.18**

Source: Winchester Public Schools, 2005.

RECOMMENDATION

Recommendation 8-16:

Install additional energy- and utility-saving devices throughout the Winchester Public Schools.

By initiating an energy and utility improvement process, the annual operating costs for utilities will improve. Automated switches (including direct digital controls on HVAC equipment) and valves lower utility consumption. Lower utility consumption will reduce costs.

FISCAL IMPACT

The installation of energy-saving equipment is estimated at $.60 per square foot for HVAC controls, lighting improvements, occupancy sensors, automatic water valves, etc.). The total school building square footage is 655,185 square feet. The cost for the energy-saving equipment is estimated at $393,111 (655,185 sq. ft. x $.60).

Installation of the utility-saving equipment described above is estimated to save at least 15 percent per year, based on results in school divisions and in universities. With the assumption that utility costs are $1.18 per square feet ($775,640 from FY 05 budget divided by 655,185 square feet), the savings would be $116,346 ($775,640 x 15%). With the first savings being used to pay for new equipment, the payback period is just slightly longer than three years. The full savings will be realized in fiscal year 2010-11. Therefore, the net savings for a five-year period are estimated at $188,619.

Recommendation	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11
Install Energy and Utility Savings Devices	$(393,111)	$0	$0	$0	$0
Utility Savings	$116,346	$116,346	$116,346	$116,346	$116,346
Net Annual Savings	**($276,765)**	**$116,346**	**$116,346**	**$116,346**	**$116,346**

FINDING

WPS has too many types of Direct Digital Control (DDC) systems in its schools. It uses three different types of DDC systems to monitor and control the HVAC systems in the schools. This requires maintenance personnel to operate multiple systems, update multiple types of hardware, and be trained on multiple systems. If one type of DDC were used, the school division would operate more efficiently.

RECOMMENDATION

Recommendation 8-17:

Establish a DDC standard and purchase one type of system.

A single DDC system will enable the school division to operate the Direct Digital Controls more efficiently. Training and product updates will take approximately one-fourth of the

time that it presently takes. Although the school division cannot bid a "sole source product," it can usually buy its way up to a standard system if another system is selected in a low bid process.

FISCAL IMPACT

The savings in having a standard system will probably be offset by the cost of "buying up" to a standard system over the next five years. Therefore, the offsetting cost and savings of this recommendation are assumed to be the same, and there is no fiscal impact during the next five years. However, in the years beyond the fiscal impact analysis of this study, savings would typically be realized.

FINDING

Although WPS has installed some energy-saving devices in its schools, there are still a number of areas that provide opportunities for significant utility savings.

The school division does not have an assigned resource conservation manager who is directly responsible to the Director of Operational Services. Moreover, there is no aggressive program to affect the energy conservation behavior of students and staff in the school division.

A review of selected school systems using a resource conservation manager found they were satisfied with the program and that savings equaled or exceeded the costs of the position. One small school district reported that after five years, the energy conservation culture in the district had become so ingrained that the Maintenance Director assumed training responsibilities after the Resource Conservation Manager resigned his position and left the district.

RECOMMENDATION

Recommendation 8-18:

Employ a half-time Resource Conservation Manager to lower utility costs.

A Resource Conservation Manager can act as an instructional resource to school principals and teachers regarding energy conservation. Through this role, the Resource Conservation Manager can affect behavioral change in staff and students. The rate of behavioral change can be accelerated with an incentive program for students and staff (e.g., funds from recycling, additional supply budgets as a percent of utility savings).

Through careful monitoring of utility bills, the Resource Conservation Manager can provide guidance to the Director of Operational Services, the Assistant Superintendent, and the Superintendent of Schools on which utility cost intervention programs would have the best payback. The Resource Conservation Manager can also be directly involved in obtaining grants and incentives from utility companies. A sample job description for a Resource Conservation Manager is provided in Exhibit 8-8. The Resource Conservation Manager should report directly to the Director of Operational Services.

**EXHIBIT 8-8
SAMPLE RESOURCE CONSERVATION MANAGER
JOB DESCRIPTION**

**RESOURCE CONSERVATION MANAGER (RCM)
PERFORMANCE RESPONSIBILITIES**

1.   Monitor and report resource use habits and trends.

- Establish a resource accounting database using compatible software.

- Coordinate with the facility operator to identify conservation opportunities.

- Complete walk-through surveys of each facility during and after normal operating hours using standardized survey forms.

2.   Report base year consumption data to management and building staff. Coordinate conservation opportunities with the building staff and review the heating and lighting procedures at the school. Direct development and implementation of Resource Conservation management plans.

3.   Prepare monthly status reports that include an assessment of conservation savings for review by management, building staff, and occupants.

4.   Coordinate with management to provide resource efficiency information and training for all staff and occupants through such means as newsletters, presentations, and workshops.

5.   Develop a recognition program that encourages actions toward savings goals and provides financial rewards for each building when goals are met.

6.   Coordinate with interested staff to develop conservation teams to assist with implementation of program initiatives in their buildings.

7.   Develop a recognition program that encourages monthly monitoring of conservation savings and provides incentives for individual buildings to achieve beyond minimum threshold levels.

8.   Establish a bulletin board at each school that tracks the progress of the school's conservation savings.

9.   Consult with the Business Office regarding the administration of the conservation *share-the-savings* rebates to the schools.

10.   Coordinate with interested teachers the development and implementation of student conservation groups to monitor and reduce energy and natural resource consumption in their school buildings. Establish student "energy patrols."

11.   Encourage the use of school building as learning laboratories to model energy conservation and environmental stewardship practices that may apply at school and at home.

12.   Cooperate with the Curriculum Department to integrate energy and environmental education into the school division's curricula and facilitate teacher workshops.

13.   Work closely with representatives of local utilities.

Source: MGT of America, 2005.

FISCAL IMPACT

Both costs and savings determine the fiscal impact of this program for the Winchester Public Schools. The cost of a half-time Resource Conservation Manager is estimated to be $27,000 ($20,000 + 35% benefits). Based on utility savings reported by other districts, the utility savings realized through behavioral changes in students and staff through the employment of a Resource Conservation Manager is estimated to equal $77,564 (10% of total utility costs of $775,640 - the FY2005 budget actual). The five-year net savings for the program is $252,820.

Recommendation	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11
Employ Resource Conservation Manager	($27,000)	($27,000)	($27,000)	($27,000)	($27,000)
Generate Utility Savings	$77,564	$77,564	$77,564	$77,564	$77,564
Net Annual Savings	**$50,564**	**$50,564**	**$50,564**	**$50,564**	**$50,564**

9.0 TRANSPORTATION

This chapter presents the major findings, commendations, and recommendations for the transportation function in Winchester Public Schools (WPS). The five major sections of this chapter are:

    9.1   Organization and Staffing
    9.2   Planning, Policies, and Procedures
    9.3   Routing and Scheduling
    9.4   Training and Safety
    9.5   Vehicle Maintenance

CHAPTER SUMMARY

WPS provides effective student transportation services; however, emphasis could be placed on greater efficiencies. The school division is in compliance with most Virginia Department of Education (VDOE) policies and procedures, but the Transportation Department could improve its ability to control costs and deliver students to and from their destinations more efficiently. Making recommended improvements outlined in this chapter will increase efficiency, personnel retention, and operational integrity.

Notable accomplishments of the Transportation Department are:

■   The maintenance program conducted by the City of Winchester for Winchester Public Schools is excellent. Maintenance personnel are well trained to maintain buses, and an automated system keeps track of maintenance requirements.

■   Use of cameras on new buses is excellent and contributes to significantly reducing discipline problems.

The Coordinator of Transportation Services (Transportation Coordinator) reports to the Director of Operational Services. The Transportation Coordinator has been in the position for several years and at the time of the MGT on-site visit had made a decision to accept reassignment as a bus driver. Overall, WPS accomplishes its mission to transport students to and from school on a daily basis, yet due to organizational issues and the level of experience of transportation personnel, the overall mission is accomplished marginally and with difficulty.

MGT found that the division should improve in the areas of its spare bus policy, routing and scheduling, communications (radio traffic to and from buses) and telephone (contacting the Transportation Department by phone), substitute driver procurement and retention, student accountability (accurate headcount and list of students transported on buses), bus replacement policy, records administration, management oversight of maintenance costs, and safety. Many of the areas needing improvement are aggravated by the thin organizational structure and the frequent use of the Transportation Coordinator and Lead Driver as substitute drivers. The major areas needing improvement for greater efficiency that are discussed in this chapter relate to the spare bus policy, routing scheduling, communications, substitute drivers, recruitment, and retention.

The Transportation Department has other areas that could be improved. These are discussed in other portions of this chapter. Making improvements recommended in this chapter could improve operational efficiencies, improve hiring and retention of bus drivers, and reduce costs.

INTRODUCTION

Transporting students safely to and from school, special events, and extra-curricular activities is a major responsibility and a significant expense for our nation's schools. The Winchester Public School Division covers 436 square miles, is located in the Shenandoah River Basin approximately 72 miles west of Washington, DC, and is one of many public educational systems performing this service. The county's geographic configuration is rural, with a slow pace of growth and development. The population according to the last census count is 23,585, with a projected population of 26,230 in year 2010.

The Code of Virginia, Section 22.1-176, states, in part, "County School Boards may provide transportation of pupils, but nothing herein contained shall be construed as requiring such transportation." WPS provides all students free bus transportation to and from school within their attendance area. Transportation is also provided between the home or school and other educational facilities operated by WPS in which the student is enrolled. Additionally, students may be required to meet a bus at an assigned stop a distance up to one-half mile from their residence on a state maintained road.

The WCPS Transportation Section does not perform vehicle maintenance. This function is provided by the County, The Coordinator of Transportation Services and Lead Driver were interviewed numerous times during the MGT onsite visit and their input contributed to several findings, observations, and recommendations contained in the transportation section.

A survey of WPS administrators, principals, and teachers was conducted as part of this performance audit. They were asked two questions related to transportation. One of these questions asked respondents to rate various parts and functions of the school system, including transportation, and to determine whether the function *needs major improvement*, *needs some improvement, is adequate*, or *is outstanding*. In rating transportation in WPS, 40 percent of administrators, 36 percent of principals, and 14 percent of teachers stated that the transportation function *needs some improvement* or *needs major improvement*. Thus, the rating is positive but there is room to pursue excellence.

Exhibit 9-1 benchmarks these survey ratings of administrators, principals, and teachers in WPS. As the exhibit shows, only 60 percent of administrators, 64 percent of principals, and 48 percent of teachers rate transportation services as *adequate* or *outstanding.*

EXHIBIT 9-1
TRANSPORTATION COMPARISON SURVEY
RESPONSES OF ADMINISTRATORS, PRINCIPALS, AND TEACHERS
WINCHESTER PUBLIC SCHOOLS
2005-06 SCHOOL YEAR

RESPONDENT GROUP	% INDICATING NEEDS SOME OR MAJOR IMPROVEMENT	% INDICATING ADEQUATE OR OUTSTANDING
WPS Administrators	40%	60%
WPS Principals	36%	64%
WPS Teachers	14%	48%

Source: MGT Survey, October 2005.

School officials of WPS requested that this transportation assessment provide comparative analysis of WPS with other, comparable school divisions in the Commonwealth of Virginia. The peer divisions selected were Charlottesville City, Fredericksburg City, Manassas City, Manassas Park City, and Salem City.

As shown in Exhibits 9-2 through 9-10, the comparative analysis uses five-year reports from the 1999-2000 to the 2003-04 school year. This is the most recent data available from VDOE.

Exhibit 9-2 provides a five-year overview of students transported in each school division. It shows pupils who were provided regular and exclusive transportation in WPS (morning and afternoon riders) using school transportation services. The total number of students transported in all divisions in 1999-2000 was 15,973; that dropped to 15,808 in 2003-04. This was a reduction of 165 students, or 1 percent. Conversely, WPS experienced a gradual increase from 1,395 students in 1999-2000 to 1,682 in 2003-04, an increase of 287 students, or 20.5 percent.

EXHIBIT 9-2
WINCHESTER PUBLIC SCHOOLS AND PEER SCHOOL DIVISION
FIVE-YEAR OVERVIEW
OF NUMBER OF REGULAR AND EXCLUSIVE
STUDENTS TRANSPORTED

SCHOOL DIVISION	1999-2000	2000-01	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04
Winchester	**1,395**	**1,348**	**1,550**	**1,601**	**1,682**
Charlottesville	5,077	4,439	4,247	4,247	4,116
Fredericksburg	2,436	2,161	2,257	2,257	2,387
Manassas	3,970	4,105	4,117	4,117	4,540
Manassas Park	1,792	2,064	1,686	1,686	2,173
Salem	2,698	2,740	2,740	2,740	2,592
PEER SCHOOL DIVISION TOTAL	**15,973**	**15,509**	**15,047**	**15,057**	**15,808**
PEER SCHOOL DIVISION AVERAGE	**3,194**	**3,101**	**3,009**	**3,011**	**3,101**

Source: Commonwealth of Virginia, Department of Education, 2005.
*Note: Numerical entries are totals for students transported during morning and afternoon runs.

Exhibit 9-3 below shows WPS and peer division yearly mileage increases. It is noted that the peer school division average reflects gradual yearly increases over the five-year period from 226,062 to 298,935. WPS, on the other hand, experienced increases and

drops in mileage until school year 2002-03, when there was a dramatic drop to 175,912 miles, followed by an increase to 201,176 in 2003-04. These drops and increases every other year for WPS are an anomaly and should be considered unusual. WPS may have difficulty collecting and processing mileage data, or there actually may have been significant drops and increases in the number of students transported. Supervisors should monitor and closely supervise future mileage collection by the Transportation Department.

Exhibit 9-4 shows that average transportation costs for the peer divisions increased over the five-year period from $1,156,726 to $1,407,465, or 21.7 percent. WPS transportation costs increased from $672,397 over the five-year period to $1,077,454, or 60.2 percent. During the same period, Exhibit 9-2 shows that WPS usage increased by 20.5 percent, whereas the other peer divisions show a decline in usage except in Manassas and Manassas Park.

EXHIBIT 9-3
WINCHESTER PUBLIC SCHOOLS AND PEER SCHOOL DIVISION
FIVE-YEAR OVERVIEW
OF TOTAL YEARLY MILEAGE
FOR REGULAR AND EXCLUSIVE STUDENTS

SCHOOL DIVISION	1999-00	2000-01	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04
Winchester	**204,444**	**188,753**	**208,147**	**175,912**	**201,176**
Charlottesville	295,103	293,399	300,204	300,204	371,856
Fredericksburg	211,124	225,335	278,898	278,898	209,827
Manassas	219,647	284,838	364,240	364,240	422,890
Manassas Park	136,772	180,791	171,996	171,996	217,030
Salem	267,665	264,780	264,089	264,089	273,076
PEER SCHOOL DIVISION TOTAL	**1,130,311**	**1,249,143**	**1,379,427**	**1,379,427**	**1,494,679**
PEER SCHOOL DIVISION AVERAGE	**226,062**	**249,828**	**275,885**	**275,885**	**298,935**

Source: Commonwealth of Virginia, Department of Education, 2005.
*Note: Numerical entries are totals for students transported during morning and afternoon runs.

EXHIBIT 9-4
WINCHESTER PUBLIC SCHOOLS AND PEER SCHOOL DIVISION
FIVE-YEAR OVERVIEW TOTAL TRANSPORTATION COSTS
FOR ALL TRANSPORTATION SERVICES

SCHOOL DIVISION	1999-2000	2000-01	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04
Winchester	**$672,397**	**$1,032,699**	**$857,724**	**$791,164**	**$1,077,454**
Charlottesville	$1,384,986	$1,463,403	$1,478,342	$1,478,342	$1,568,436
Fredericksburg	$647,624	$687,861	$673,919	$673,919	$924,073
Manassas	$2,422,750	$2,072,679	$2,493,098	$2,493,098	$2,780,963
Manassas Park	$513,009	$572,097	$711,000	$711,000	$804,347
Salem	$815,261	$795,739	$966,213	$966,213	$960,109
PEER SCHOOL DIVISION TOTAL	**$5,783,630**	**$5,591,779**	**$6,225,572**	**$6,322,572**	**$7,037,328**
PEER SCHOOL DIVISION AVERAGE	**$1,156,726**	**$1,118,355**	**$1,264,514**	**$1,264,144**	**$1,407,465**

Source: Commonwealth of Virginia, Department of Education, 2005.
*Note: Numerical entries are totals for students transported during morning and afternoon runs.

Exhibit 9-5 shows that transportation costs for regular and exclusive students of WPS were $318,703 in 1999-2000 and increased to $508,458 in 2003-04. This is an increase of $189,755, or 59 percent. The peer division average increased from $627,510 in 1999-2000 to $650,206 in 2003-04. This is an increase of $26,696, or 4.2 percent.

EXHIBIT 9-5
WINCHESTER PUBLIC SCHOOLS AND PEER SCHOOL DIVISION
FIVE-YEAR OVERVIEW OF TRANSPORTATION COSTS
FOR REGULAR AND EXCLUSIVE STUDENTS

SCHOOL DIVISION	1999-2000	2000-01	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04
Winchester	**$318,703**	**$464,486**	**$433,598**	**$683,830**	**$508,458**
Charlottesville	$518,900	$567,667	$602,153	$602,153	$731,499
Fredericksburg	$474,584	$388,761	$324,616	$324,616	$603,330
Manassas	$1,337,620	$1,003,557	$942,453	$942,553	$966,499
Manassas Park	$269,107	$319,665	$337,412	$337,412	$467,988
Salem	$537,340	$586,602	$634,079	$634,079	$681,714
PEER SCHOOL DIVISION TOTAL	**$3,137,551**	**$2,866,252**	**$2,840,713**	**$2840,813**	**$3,251,030**
PEER SCHOOL DIVISION AVERAGE	**$627,510**	**$573,250**	**$568,142**	**$568.162**	**$650,206**

Source: Commonwealth of Virginia, Department of Education, 2005.
*Note: Numerical entries are totals for students transported during morning and afternoon runs.

It is generally accepted that transportation costs for exclusive students are normally significantly higher than transportation costs for the regular student population. Buses have to be specially equipped, bus driver aides are usually mandatory, and there are other requirements that add to the cost to transporting exclusive or special students. Exhibit 9-6 shows that WPS exclusive transportation costs were $156,987 in 1999-2000 and raised to $242,427 in 2003-04, an increase of $85,440, or 54 percent. The peer division average was $221,032 in 1999-2000 and rose to $250,403 in 2003-04, an increase of $29,371, or 13 percent. The data show that WPS has lower five-year transportation costs for regular and exclusive students than its peers.

EXHIBIT 9-6
WINCHESTER PUBLIC SCHOOLS AND PEER SCHOOL DIVISION
FIVE-YEAR OVERVIEW OF TRANSPORTATION COSTS
FOR EXCLUSIVE STUDENTS

SCHOOL DIVISION	1999-2000	2000-01	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04
Winchester	**$156,987**	**$167,476**	**$196,970**	**$598,101**	**$242,427**
Charlottesville	$155,145	$194,259	$220,027	$220,026	$309,733
Fredericksburg	$151,623	$159,457	$120,606	$120,606	$150,849
Manassas	$603,356	$439,694	$227,706	$227,706	$422,304
Manassas Park	$156,121	$137,651	$152,463	$152,463	$184,149
Salem	$138,915	$144,854	$156,577	$156,577	$184,149
PEER SCHOOL DIVISION TOTAL	**$1,105,160**	**$1,075,915**	**$877,379**	**$877,378**	**$1,252,017**
PEER SCHOOL DIVISION AVERAGE	**$221,032**	**$215,183**	**$175,475**	**$175,475**	**$250,403**

Source: Commonwealth of Virginia, Department of Education, 2005.
*Note: Numerical entries are totals for students transported during morning and afternoon runs.

Cost per mile to transport both the regular and exclusive student population in WPS is shown in Exhibit 9-7. The data show that WPS has performed at about the same rate as its peers. For school year 2004-05, WPS spent $385.50 and the peer average was $372.07.

EXHIBIT 9-7
WINCHESTER PUBLIC SCHOOLS AND PEER SCHOOL DIVISION
FIVE-YEAR OVERVIEW OF COST PER PUPIL PER YEAR
FOR REGULAR AND EXCLUSIVE STUDENTS
2004-05 SCHOOL YEAR

SCHOOL DIVISION	1999-2000	2000-01	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04
Winchester	**$284.81**	**$409.88**	**$333.43**	**$110.08**	**$385.50**
Charlottesville	$198.80	$252.93	$262.98	$262.98	$362.48
Fredericksburg	$203.86	$249.70	$197.57	$197.57	$323.46
Manassas	$396.35	$0.00	$535.39	$535.39	$517.51
Manassas Park	$197.86	$264.08	$325.63	$325.63	$369.35
Salem	$236.78	$250.54	$269.91	$269.91	$287.56
PEER SCHOOL DIVISION TOTAL	**$1,233.65**	**$1,017.45**	**$1,591.48**	**$1,591.48**	**$1,860.36**
PEER SCHOOL DIVISION AVERAGE	**$246.73**	**$203.45**	**$318.29**	**$318.29**	**$372.07**

Source: Commonwealth of Virginia, Department of Education, 2005.
*Note: Numerical entries are totals for students transported during morning and afternoon runs.

A critical assessment of transportation efficiency is how much a school division spends per mile per year to transport its student population. Exhibit 9-8 shows that WPS is spending less than its peer comparisons.

EXHIBIT 9-8
WINCHESTER PUBLIC SCHOOLS AND PEER SCHOOL DIVISION
FIVE-YEAR OVERVIEW
COST PER MILE PER YEAR
FOR REGULAR AND EXCLUSIVE STUDENTS

SCHOOL DIVISION	1999-2000	2000-01	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04
Winchester	**$2.12**	**$3.50**	**$2.99**	**$1.11**	**$3.43**
Charlottesville	$3.45	$3.88	$3.73	$3.73	$4.01
Fredericksburg	$2.36	$2.40	$1.60	$1.60	$3.68
Manassas	$7.17	$0.00	$6.06	$6.05	$5.56
Manassas Park	$2.59	$3.01	$3.19	$3.19	$3.70
Salem	$2.39	$2.59	$2.80	$2.80	$2.73
PEER SCHOOL DIVISION TOTAL	**$17.96**	**$11.88**	**$17.38**	**$17.37**	**$19.68**
PEER SCHOOL DIVISION AVERAGE	**$3.59**	**$2.37**	**$3.47**	**$3.47**	**$3.93**

Source: Commonwealth of Virginia, Department of Education, 2005.
*Note: Numerical entries are totals for students transported during morning and afternoon runs.

Exhibit 9-9 shows deadhead miles for WPS compared to it peers. Deadhead miles are defined as mileage spent moving to begin a route or going to pick up a student prior to commencing transportation service. Deadhead miles can be considerable and add significantly to student transportation costs. As the exhibit shows, WPS is third highest among its peer comparison group in deadhead miles.

EXHIBIT 9-9
WINCHESTER PUBLIC SCHOOLS
PEER GROUP COMPARISONS
DEADHEAD MILES

SCHOOL DIVISION	1999-2000	2000-01	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04
Winchester	**22,680**	**25,296**	**25,910**	**23,616**	**28,980**
Charlottesville	97,380	95,220	96,300	96,300	122,580
Fredericksburg	320	13,446	15,228	15,228	6,620
Manassas	26,544	55,311	151,066	151,066	207,426
Manassas Park	19,566	60,102	43,826	43,825	68,760
Salem	1,325	1,208	0	0	1,332
PEER SCHOOL DIVISION TOTAL	**145,135**	**225,287**	**306,420**	**306,419**	**406,718**
PEER SCHOOL DIVISION AVERAGE	**29,027**	**45,057**	**61,284**	**61,283**	**81,343**

Source: Commonwealth of Virginia, Department of Education, 2005.
*Note: Numerical entries are totals for students transported during morning and afternoon runs.

The costs of deadhead miles are considerable, as shown in Exhibit 9-10. The chart shows that WPS spent $48,048 for deadhead miles in 1999-2000 and almost doubled that amount in 2003-04 by spending $99,515, an increase of $51,467, or 107 percent. The peer division total of $116,154 rose to $385,305 in school year 2003-04 for an increase of $269,151, or a whopping 232 percent over the five-year period. Clearly, transportation officials, school administrators, and staff should make every effort to reduce costs associated with deadhead miles.

EXHIBIT 9-10
WINCHESTER PUBLIC SCHOOLS
PEER GROUP COMPARISONS
COST OF DEADHEAD MILES

SCHOOL DIVISION	1999-2000	2000-01	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04
Winchester	**$48,058**	**$88,602**	**$77,532**	**$26,261**	**$99,515**
Charlottesville	$336,395	$369,220	$359,292	$359,292	$491,820
Fredericksburg	$287	$32,258	$24,412	$24,412	$24,360
Manassas	$190,204	$374,006	$914,618	$914,618	$1,152,424
Manassas Park	$50,721	$181,200	$139,890	$139,890	$254,284
Salem	$3,166	$3,132	$0.0	$0.0	$3,637
PEER SCHOOL DIVISION TOTAL	**$580,773**	**$959,816**	**$1,438,212**	**$1,438,212**	**$1,926,525**
PEER SCHOOL DIVISION AVERAGE	**$116,154**	**$191,963**	**$287,642**	**$287,642**	**$385,305**

Source: Commonwealth of Virginia, Department of Education, 2005.

The exhibits shown in the preceding section of this chapter provide comparative analysis of WPS with selected peers. WPS compares favorably overall and in some areas outperforms the peer divisions. WPS is accomplishing its mission to transport students to and from school. This is being done effectively and it is recognized that there are

areas that could be improved. The remainder of this chapter examines the topics outlined in the introduction, beginning with an examination of organization and staffing. The remaining sections on planning, policies, and procedures; routing and scheduling; training and safety; and vehicle maintenance provide assessments of how well WPS performs the transportation function.

9.1   *Organization and Staffing*

FINDING

Exhibit 9-11 shows how the WPS Transportation Department is currently structured and staffed to accomplish daily operations and transportation functions. The organization is "thin" in the capacity to effectively perform all the management functions associated with school transportation operations. Nonetheless, this team effectively performs the core daily mission because of the commitment of employees inside and outside of this structure.

There are 24 bus drivers for the 24 daily bus commitments of 81 regular and eight (8) exclusive student bus routes. There are four special needs aides who are also qualified commercial driver's license (CDL) bus drivers and are the substitutes indicated in the chart. Additionally, the Coordinator of Transportation Services (Transportation Coordinator) and Lead Driver are CDL qualified and function as substitute drivers when necessary. Both were used as substitute drivers on two of the four days during the MGT on-site assessment.

The Driver Trainer is included among the 24 bus drivers. Lastly, there is one (1) Contract Substitute, who drives or performs tasks as assigned by the Transportation Coordinator.

Outside of the Transportation Department structure, the Director of Operational Services' half-time Secretary provides essential and valuable administration support, and the WPS Receptionist prepares bus driver route plans and receives and passes on parent inquiries and complaints for resolution. Together with the three Car Drivers, the Mail Courier, and their substitutes, plus the coaches who drive for their school athletic activities, this team of WPS employees works well to support students and families.

While employees work well to support WPS student and families, more is involved in achieving efficiency and effectiveness in a growing community than just doing well on a day-by-day basis. The Transportation Department must plan, program, budget, review budget execution, manage maintenance costs, manage the spare fleet and bus replacement plan, train, recruit, maintain records, submit required reports, assess technology needs, etc. This very thin organizational structure cannot do all of this well when the Transportation Coordinator and Lead Driver routinely drive as substitutes, available IT technology is not used, and persons are not professionally developed to be managers, which requires competencies beyond having a history as a superb, experienced bus driver.

**EXHIBIT 9-11
WINCHESTER PUBLIC SCHOOLS
ORGANIZATIONAL CHART
TRANSPORTATION DEPARTMENT
2005-06 SCHOOL YEAR**

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                    ┌─────────────────────┐
                    │ Director of         │
                    │ Operational         │
                    │ Services            │
                    └──────────┬──────────┘
                               │        ┌──────────────────────┐
                               ├────────┤ Secretary            │
                               │        │ Shares ½ time with   │
                               │        │ Director of Finance  │
                               │        └──────────────────────┘
                    ┌──────────┴──────────┐
                    │ Coordinator of      │
                    │ Transportation      │
                    │ Services            │
                    └──────────┬──────────┘
```

Lead Driver/Driver Trainer	Bus Drivers	Bus Aides	Contract Substitute	Driver Trainer

Substitutes	Car Drivers	Mail Courier
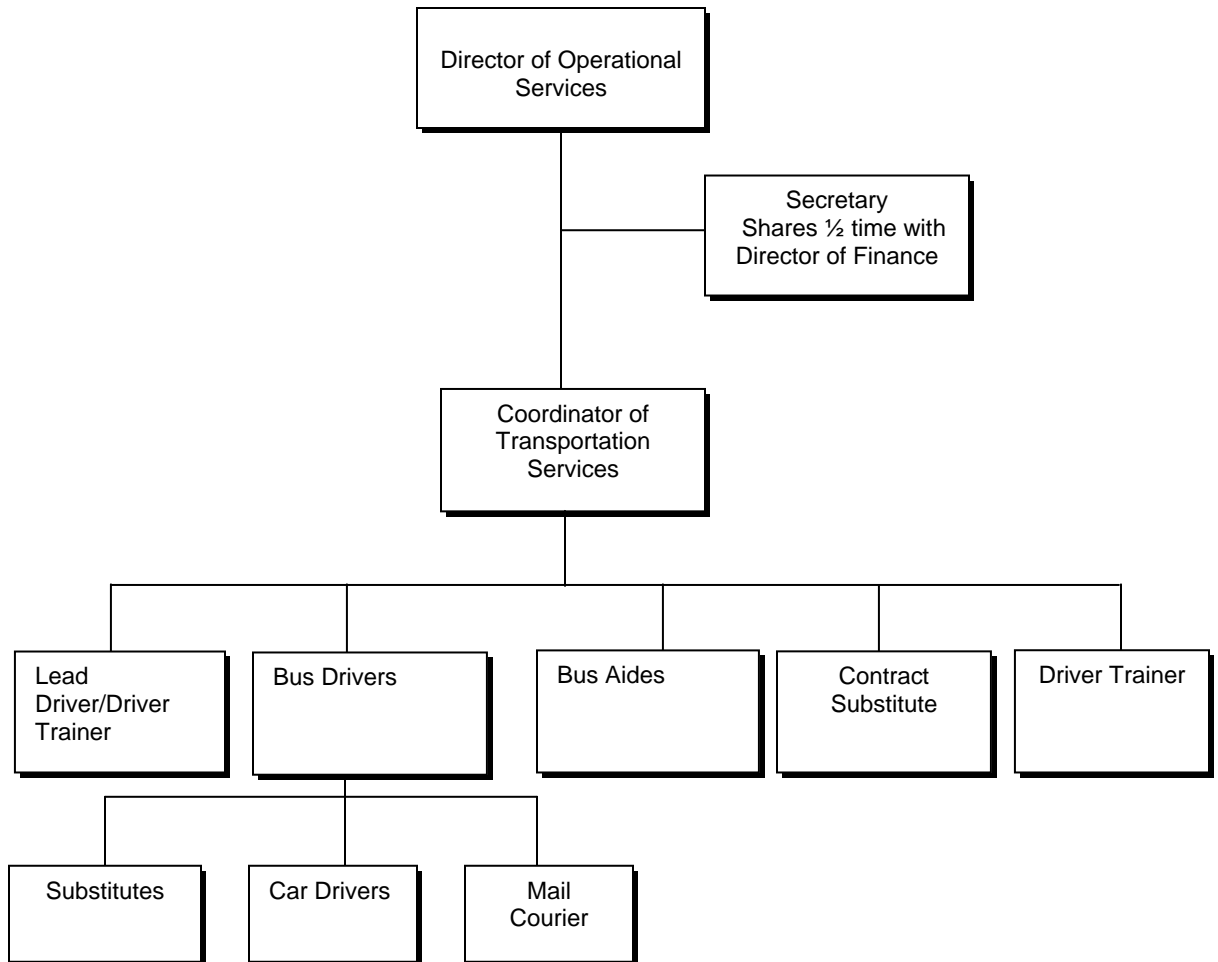
Source: Winchester Public Schools, Transportation Department, 2005.

To illustrate the current short falls:

- The Transportation Coordinator did not have a Transportation Plan for this year or past years, yet the WPS "Division-wide Comprehensive Plan Targets" for school years 2005-06 to 2010-11 contain goals (numbers 27, 28, and 29) that require transportation planning and implementation.

- Vehicle maintenance is centralized in the Division of Public Works that performs maintenance for city vehicles and equipment—some of that is out-sourced, yet the Transportation Coordinator and the Director of Operational Services could not show the MGT team how

they track repairs by vehicle, or the relative costs of services among vendors for comparable repairs. Thus, managers do not know the cost/benefit factors pertaining to the vehicle fleet, nor can they compare price and service quality among vendors. All that is visible is payment of a voucher against Transportation's accounts as reported in the Director of Finance records.

■ The WPS Receptionist does an excellent job in preparing the bus driver route plans showing the route, student names, and addresses, but there is no central database consolidating this information, which could be easily accomplished with the help of the Director of Technology, who can also help redesign the finance reports to better support the MIS cost analysis needs for transportation management.

■ Whenever the Transportation Coordinator or Lead Driver serve as substitute drivers they cannot be responsive to calls from principals and can only respond to bus driver situations by radio. In the focus group, participants indicated that cell phones are not always a reliable back-up because of dead space. Since the central office closes at 5:00 p.m., control and responsiveness are further diminished because no one is available to receive land line calls or monitor the base station radio; yet some bus runs are not completed until after 6:00 p.m. Delays in response time were cited during interviews with principals, and by participants in the driver/aide focus group. (See communications comments in Section 9.3, Routing and Scheduling.)

Interviews with the Transportation Coordinator and staff and comments in the driver focus group reveal that not having sufficient, reliable substitute drivers adversely affects the overall transportation operation. Not only is key staff called on to drive when substitutes are not available, but regular drivers are also asked to make double-up runs.

During the on-site review, MGT learned that the Transportation Department has problems obtaining reliable substitute drivers because regular work is not assured on any given day, the pay is low, and substitutes do not receive benefits. The recurring need for substitute drivers compels the use of key staff and regular drivers as substitute drivers. Thus the Transportation Coordinator and Lead Driver are pulled from primary duties, and regular drivers drive double routes.

This practice results in a loss of efficiency and effectiveness in multiple transportation function areas ranging from planning to record keeping. The Lead Driver is at the top of the driver salary scale and a substitute is at the lowest level. The disparity between a substitute and Transportation Coordinator is even more dramatic: A current vacancy announcement for the Transportation Coordinator position sets a salary range of $43,105 to $67,156, while a substitute driver available every day, earning $11.50 per hour and receiving no fringe benefits would cost approximately $9,600 a school year. The Transportation Coordinator, if used as a substitute driver on a regular basis, cannot perform the functions the position requires, and that is both an inefficient and ineffective use of resources. Hiring a second Contract Substitute Driver will allow the Transportation Coordinator to focus on the management issues the position requires. Fringe benefits for a Contract Substitute would add $4,200 to the annual cost of a substitute driver. For $4,200 annually, WPS could increase the effectiveness of the Transportation

Coordinator. Otherwise, the Director of Operational Services will be engaged in transportation management functions more than he should have to be.

RECOMMENDATION

Recommendation 9-1:

Hire a Contract Substitute Driver and use the Transportation Coordinator as a driver in emergencies only.

Prepare a detailed job description for this position and eliminate the use of the Transportation Coordinator as a substitute driver. To implement this recommendation, the Director of Operational Services should obtain approval of the Superintendent to hire a Contract Substitute Driver to begin work in school year 2006-2007.

The driver would account for approximately 880 hours of time due to regular driver absences and other substitute driver non-availability, and thus alleviate the demand on critical management time of the Transportation Coordinator and sometimes the Lead Driver.

FISCAL IMPACT

The Contract Substitute Driver position with fringe benefits would cost $13,800 per school year, $4,200 more than if a substitute drove every school day. This driver would account for approximately 880 hours of time due to regular driver absences and other substitute driver non-availability, and thus alleviate the substitute demand on the critical management time of the Transportation Coordinator and sometimes the Lead Driver.

Putting this into perspective, it is important to note that the recent announcement to fill the Coordinator of Transportation Services (Transportation Coordinator) position is advertised at a salary range of $43,105 to $67,156. As pointed out several times in this chapter, the Transportation Coordinator spends a considerable portion of her time as a bus driver due to a shortage of substitute bus drivers. WPS pays a significant wage for a Transportation Coordinator who in fact performs a majority of her time as a "glorified bus driver." Concurrently, WPS budgets $9,600 yearly to hire a substitute driver whose services are required intermittently. Substitute bus drivers are difficult to hire because WPS does not offer them a benefits package. Hiring a full-time contracted substitute bus driver with benefits would cost $13,800 per year or a differential of $4,200. A contracted substitute driver with benefits could be used to eliminate using the Transportation Coordinator to drive a bus and use the expertise of the Transportation Coordinator to manage many critical responsibilities, including satisfactory supervision and response to radio and telephone communications, routing and scheduling, bus maintenance, supervising and coordinating the transportation function, and other critical tasks associated with the position. The cost to implement this recommendation is $21,000 over the five-year budget cycle.

Recommendation	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11
Hire Contracted Substitute Driver	($13,800)	($13,800)	($13,800)	($13,800)	($13,800)
In the Current WPS Budget	$9,600	$9,600	$9,600	$9,600	$9,600
TOTAL COST	**($4,200)**	**($4,200)**	**($4,200)**	**($4,200)**	**($4,200)**

FINDING

The Transportation Coordinator does not have the essential management information to support effective review and decisions affecting transportation functions such as vehicle fleet maintenance management (operations cost per vehicle), review of the adequacy of spare buses, turnaround times for repairs by the Division of Public Works and outsourced vendors, and comparative costs and service quality among maintenance support providers.

RECOMMENDATION

Recommendation 9-2:

Generate a quarterly report by school year 2006-2007 that will support the management needs of the WPS Transportation Department.

This management information supports current operations, planning, budgeting, and budget review decisions. Reports provided by the Director of Finance only provide cost against Transportation accounts. Management improvements in this finding should yield long-term cost savings that cannot be estimated at this time.

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING

There is no single database recording which specific students are on which buses and routes.

If the Transportation Department used an automated routing and scheduling system, such data would be available. Given the current crisis management environment, having such information can be important. As previously stated, the Receptionist prepares bus route plans for each driver. This information is stored in her computer. No one is available to use this source (not consolidated) after 5:00 p.m. Each school has a computer-generated report that accounts for their assigned students, and the format provides a data field for entry of the bus number transporting each student. But not all schools enter data in this field. The information exists to create a single database that could be available to critical managers in emergency situations.

RECOMMENDATION

Recommendation 9-3:

Create a single database to capture transportation-specific information for all Winchester Public School students.

The Director of Operational Services should confer with the Director of Technology on how best to use existing data sources to develop and maintain a single database recording student information and bus/route. This action should be approved by the Superintendent.

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING

Other transportation management functions are not performed as well as the daily movement of the students to and from school.

Review of the job descriptions of the incumbent Transportation Coordinator and Lead Driver and interviews with them confirmed that some functions are not performed at all, largely because of the daily demands stemming from driving as a substitute driver and the cycle of catch-up after such demands. There is also a knowledge and comfort gap with respect to some functions and the use of technology. The current vacancy announcement for the Transportation Coordinator position declares a preference to promote from within WPS. This practice is reasonable and laudable, but if a bus driver is promoted, the Director of Operational Services needs to develop the management skills of the new Coordinator, the Directors of Technology and Finance, and the Division of Public Works in order to assist with internal learning requirements. Professional development supports the WPS Strategic Plan Goal # 13.

RECOMMENDATION

Recommendation 9-4:

Conduct an objective assessment with the newly hired Transportation Coordinator to determine knowledge and comfort gaps and then design and coordinate a professional development strategy beginning with the recommendations described in this chapter.

During the MGT onsite interview, administrative action was being completed to install a newly selected Transportation Coordinator. The individual selected was beginning to make transition coordination and accomplish other actions in anticipation of taking over Transportation Coordinator responsibilities when the incumbent leaves the position.

The Coordinator should be required to visit nearby school transportation operations to observe peer practices. This recommendation should provide the school division with a comprehensive tool for transportation operations.

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be accomplished with existing resources.

FINDING

The bus drivers work with their schools to identify their passenger requirements, work out the best route based on experience, coordinate with the Transportation Coordinator and Lead Driver on the proposed route plan, and finalize the route with the Receptionist at WPS central office (this position receives all phone calls and inquiries to the central

office on transportation matters). They adjust transportation requirements based on changes and support each other to ensure the daily mission is accomplished.

Several parents commented on their caring and competent service at the public forum. Additionally, during the interview with five school principals, all concurred with one principal's observation that the drivers and aides are "awesome."

COMMENDATION

The bus drivers and Aides are commended for their dedication, flexibility, and professionalism in accomplishing the core Transportation mission to move the students safely to and from school.

9.2 *Planning, Policies, and Procedures*

FINDING

As indicated in the Organization and Structure section, the Transportation Coordinator could not produce a current or prior year transportation plan.

The WPS area is growing in population and new housing developments are being constructed. There is a plan to shift fifth grade students to the middle school in 2006-07, and purchases of equipment are in budgets. There is limited planning, but it is not documented, and staff are not able to determine the desired performance indicators or budget issues to be identified whenever limited and informal plans are implemented.

The WPS Strategic Plan identifies goals and performance indicators directly and indirectly involving transportation planning; however, there is no formal transportation plan in place to guide the implementation process and be the basis for keeping drivers and interested public informed. Given the thin capacity in the Transportation Department, plans could be informed by the guidance of the Director and developed in coordination with the drivers, Special Education, Division of Public Works, and other directorates in WPS where appropriate. Plans need not be elaborate, but need to be clear as to the goals, objectives, timelines, performance indicators, responsibilities, and the schedule for performance review.

RECOMMENDATION

Recommendation 9-5:

Guide the new Transportation Coordinator in the development of a simplified transportation plan that addresses internal objectives and Strategic Goals 27, 28, and 29 as they apply to transportation functions.

There is no formal transportation plan, nor has there been one in recent years. Planning provides a baseline for programs, budget actions, and performance reviews. Function level planning allows for deliberate alignment with the Strategic Plan.

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be accomplished with existing resources.

FINDING

Prior to this efficiency review, the Director of Operational Services recognized that there were shortfalls in the performance of some transportation management functions, including that the Transportation Coordinator position had been a nine-month position. To address some of the shortfalls, he obtained approval to make this position a 12-month position and added a Lead Driver to strengthen the Transportation Coordinator's management capacity.

This decision will enhance transportation management in WPS. It also provides a framework to address and resolve other employee positions in WPS.

COMMENDATION

Winchester Public Schools is commended for making the Transportation Coordinator a 12-month position and creating a Lead Driver position.

FINDING

WPS has a clear set of policies governing school transportation.

The WPS Web site makes information available to those who have Internet access. Within Transportation, there is some uneven understanding on policies pertaining to incentives/recognition for outstanding performance and the overtime policy that is being resolved. Having a Web site where employees can view policies and procedures is an important WPS initiative. Furthermore, the recent addition of a Lead Driver should enhance the management's capacity to communicate internally.

RECOMMENDATION

Recommendation 9-6:

Put additional transportation information on the WPS Web site.

The WPS Web site makes a sufficient amount of information available to bus drivers and other personnel in the Transportation Department and is instrumental in keeping the workforce informed. Having a competent communications source to review policy reduces misinformation and improves morale.

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be accomplished with existing resources.

FINDING

Office management and administration procedures are inadequate, and internal procedures are not documented.

The Transportation Coordinator's office properly uses the procedural guides for the training of drivers and special needs aides. There is evidence that the office complies with the criminal checks required for new hires and the random drug testing; however, there is no procedural guide for transportation operations. Because of the stability in the workforce, long tenures, and a high degree of collective cooperation among those who have or care about the transportation mission, much seems to get accomplished through a shared understanding of "this is how we do this." But office management practices do not benefit from this shared understanding. Certain records may exist, but their existence is not readily knowable. For example, the MGT team had a difficult time obtaining individual training records; in-service training records were incomplete and contained extraneous information such as purchases from COSCO; and the consistency in doing performance evaluations could not be determined, nor could accident reports be easily reviewed.

The existing Contract Substitute Driver who performs tasks as assigned by the Coordinator could be used to maintain essential records in an orderly manner. The ability to produce certain records of qualifications and compliance with regulations and policies can be critical in the event of claims or litigation. Additionally, this employee could give redundant capacity for manning the radio base station to ensure constant coverage as long as buses are still transporting students.

RECOMMENDATION

Recommendation 9-7:

Establish and document administrative procedures and assign responsibilities for record maintenance and base station operations to the Contract Substitute Driver.

Office management and established administrative procedures have been neglected in large part because of the need for substitute drivers and the absence of capacity in the Transportation Department to do much more than transport students on a daily basis.

This recommendation should enable effective operations for transportation-related functions.

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be accomplished with existing resources, since the Contract Substitute Driver is also employed by the school division.

9.3   *Routing and Scheduling*

WPS does not use an automated, computer-based route scheduling system to manage bus routes and student pickup points.

Routing and scheduling in WPS is the responsibility of the Lead Driver, who is under direct supervision of the Coordinator of Transportation Services (Transportation Coordinator). The Lead Driver does route coordination determination. She reported that she programs routes to be used to transport students in WPS, but does not compose those routes in terms of students who are assigned to ride the buses. The schools perform this task, working with the bus drivers who are assigned to service their schools. Together they finalize the student assignment to a bus and route. The Lead Driver is involved in the process only as it pertains to her bus route, since she is called upon to drive a bus almost daily due to the shortage of substitute bus drivers.

WPS uses 24 of its assigned 34 buses and three of four automobiles daily providing school transportation services for students. The Lead Driver and Transportation Coordinator could not provide the exact number of daily bus routes and extrapolated that the department completes 120 regular routes for regular students and eight routes for exclusive or special education students, for a total of 128 routes daily. Children are picked up and discharged at pre-assigned bus stops, at their home, or at other, specially designated pickup points.

The Lead Driver, officials at each school, and bus drivers for the respective schools design or improve bus routes, determine number of buses required, and assign students to buses.

The respective schools receive a request for student transportation service, determine which area the student lives in, and refer the requirements to the bus drivers assigned to their school for action. Bus drivers hold meetings among themselves at their respective schools, determine which driver will add a student to his or her route and make arrangements for the student to be transported by his or her bus serving the area where the student is located.

Requests for regular and exclusive routes call for a determination as to where students live with respect to existing routes. For new students, parents or guardians are told by the school the student attends the location of the bus stop. It is supposed to be the one closest to the student's home address. According to bus drivers, this is accomplished by looking up the location of the student with respect to pickup points already in existence. In rare circumstances, a new pickup point may be established. Under this system, very few changes are made to regular and exclusive routes from year to year. As a result, student pickup points may or may not be at the best locations.

Bus routes within the WPS transportation area of responsibility have been in existence for many years. In this mostly rural area, student transportation bus routes parallel existing roads of communication. The Director of Operational Services told the MGT team that bus routes currently used by WPS have been in use for many years and are only minimally changed or deleted. Major changes usually occur when there is a requirement to service new housing complexes or subdivisions.

Maintaining efficient bus service to transport students is important because it drives a significant portion of any school division's budget, since they determine transportation resources required (number of buses, bus drivers, and logistical support). A bus route is when a bus departs from its start location and while in transit picks up students at stops along the way and drops them off at one or more schools. From start to finish (when last students are dropped off) constitutes completion of a route. The same bus, upon

completing one route, could then be used to start a second route. The same process applies when determining resources for exclusive or Special Education resources. Any number of exclusive/special students can comprise a route. The transit to deliver one or more students to their respective destination(s) completes an exclusive/special route.

According to data extrapolated by the Lead Driver and Transportation Coordinator the WPS Transportation Department regular student transportation averages 128 routes daily (64 mornings and 64 afternoons). Exclusive student transportation averages eight routes daily (4 mornings and 4 afternoons). Exhibit 9-12 shows the number of buses, number of students transported, number of daily routes, and total of routes for the school year.

EXHIBIT 9-12
WINCHESTER PUBLIC SCHOOLS
REGULAR AND EXCLUSIVE BUS ROUTES
2005-06 SCHOOL YEAR

CATEGORY	NUMBER OF BUSES USED MORNING AND AFTERNOON	NUMBER OF STUDENTS TRANSPORTED DAILY (MORNING AND AFTERNOON)	NUMBER OF DAILY ROUTES (MORNING AND AFTERNOON)	NUMBER OF ROUTES FOR THE SCHOOL YEAR
Regular Education	44*	1,602	120	21,600
Exclusive Education	4*	130	8	1,440
TOTAL	**24***	**1,732**	**128**	**23,040**

Source: Winchester County Public Schools Transportation Department, November 2005.
*24 buses used mornings and 24 buses used afternoons are usually the same buses.

WPS Transportation Department personnel are aware that efficiencies can be gained using computer-generated systems. It was reported that two years ago that WPS contracted with LPS, Inc. to study using an automated bus routing system. The report recommended that WPS consider implementing automated routing and scheduling.

The MGT on-site consultant observed that the transportation culture in WPS is receptive to automated routing and scheduling. The Director of Technology supports automating the system and would provide any necessary technical assistance to the Transportation Department.

RECOMMENDATION

Recommendation 9-8:

Implement an automated route scheduling system to manage bus routes and student pickup points.

MGT of America recently obtained estimates from major route scheduling software vendors on costs associated with purchasing and implementing routing and scheduling software packets. Prices range from $15,000 to $50,000, with maintenance costing

approximately 10 percent of the package price. The WPS Transportation Department currently has access to a server, dial-up modems, and communications equipment in place. It could therefore put in place a system to meet its needs and improve efficiency of its routing and scheduling at modest cost.

The benefits to WPS of implementing an automated system are significant. *School Bus Fleet Magazine*, computer experts, and other school divisions in the Commonwealth of Virginia (Fairfax, Prince William, Arlington) state that a 10 percent to 15 percent or more reduction in routes is achievable initially using automated route scheduling to manage bus routes and student pickup points. The savings for this reduction can be found in the fiscal impact section for this finding.

Implementing a computer-based routing and scheduling system for regular, exclusive education, and special arrangement riders will identify optimum routes and produce significant cost savings. The Director of Operational Services could work with the Director of Technology to contact current vendors in the business for advice and subsequent purchase and implementation of such a system. Several major vendors now serving school divisions in the Commonwealth of Virginia are shown in Exhibit 9-13.

EXHIBIT 9-13
ROUTE SCHEDULING SOFTWARE VENDORS
2005-06 SCHOOL YEAR

NAME OF SOFTWARE	VENDOR NAME AND LOCATION	TELEPHONE
Bustops	MicroAnalytics, Ontario, Canada	416-691-1222
Edulog	Education Logistics, Missoula, MT	406-728-0893
MapNet	Ecotran Corporation, Beachwood, OH	352-546-2614
Transfinder	Forth & Associates, Ltd., Schenectady, NY	518-377-3609
Versa Trans	Creighton Manning, Delmar, MY	800-433-5530

Source: MGT of America, Inc., November 2005.

FISCAL IMPACT

It is accepted that initially a 10 percent to 15 percent reduction in routes is achievable when utilizing automated routing and scheduling technology. Human error inherent when using the current manual routing and scheduling system could be eliminated. Automated routing and scheduling is state-of-the-art technology that helps to maximize bus fleet management. The basic foundation of the system is the Geographic Information System (GIS). Once the map is created, student addresses or locations in student databases create a match. Critical information is provided on which student(s) are at which bus stop, by name and address. Changes may be made to the database (student moves or reassignments) at any time to keep the routing and scheduling system current.

The fiscal impact of implementing this recommendation is calculated at a 10 percent reduction of the 128 daily bus routes in WPS. Forty-eight (48) buses are used daily (24 mornings and 24 afternoons) to cover these routes. A 10 percent route reduction could

result in elimination of 12 routes (6 in the mornings and 6 in the afternoons). Since the same buses perform both morning and afternoon runs, WPS could eliminate two buses and two bus driver positions from its inventory through efficiencies using automated routing and scheduling.

In October 2005, school bus prices ranged from $65,000 to $70,000.

School bus salvage value is estimated at $3,000 per bus and is expected to generate revenue of $6,000. The savings as to the cost of new school buses is based on a purchase price of $53,000 per vehicle. The elimination of two bus driver positions would create additional savings (the minimum salary for one bus driver plus benefits is $25,933 yearly). Yearly cost savings from this recommendation are as shown below, and the five-year cost savings are estimated at $297,464. WPS should take advantage of the internet using E-bay or other opportunity to advertise sale of surplus buses to a national audience. Using this selling approach eliminates dependency on the local region market where the average price paid for a school bus is approximately $1,700. Using the internet, WPS could normally sell surplus buses between $2,500 to $3,500.

Recommendation	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11
Sell Two Excess Buses	$0	$6,000	$0	$0	$0
Reduce Annual Bus Replacement Reduction	$0	$106,000	$0	$0	$0
Eliminate Two Bus Driver Positions	$0	$51,866	$51,866	$51,866	$51,866
Purchase Bus Routing Software (estimate)	$0	($22,000)	$0	$0	$0
Maintain Software	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0
TOTAL SAVINGS	**$0**	**$141,866**	**$51,866**	**$51,866**	**$51,866**

FINDING

Winchester Public Schools has in place a staggered bell schedule that does not ensure efficient transport of elementary, middle, and high school students to effectively meet school opening and closing times, free breakfast and lunch programs, student enrichment programs, and other after school activities.

The Director of Operational Services indicated that Strategic Goal number 28 for WPS is to achieve maximum participation in the free and reduced-priced lunch program. This is not being accomplished efficiently according to parents and principals, considering that many students currently enrolled are not arriving at school in time to take full advantage of the breakfast program. Further information regarding student nutrition and student participation can be found in Chapter 9, Food Services.

Principals and staff at schools were interviewed by the MGT on-site consultants and expressed their concerns that buses arriving at their schools to deliver and pick up students adversely impact on the free breakfast and after school enrichment programs.

The current bell schedule, shown in Exhibit 9-14, for elementary schools is the primary reason for the problem in the morning. Some late tier students at the end of the day need to leave earlier than the scheduled pickup because of their enrichment activities. Elementary school principals are of the opinion that Daniel Morgan Middle School drives the times in the current bell schedule. The elementary principals are in agreement that the elementary schools need to be on the same bell schedule.

The current morning and afternoon bus schedules are staggered in response to bell times used by the schools. WPS needs to devise and implement a more effective and efficient bell schedule, thereby improving bus transportation services and support for the free breakfast program and enrichment activities.

EXHIBIT 9-14
WINCHESTER PUBLIC SCHOOLS
BELL SCHEDULE
TRANSPORTATION OPERATIONS
2005-06 SCHOOL YEAR

GRADE LEVEL	SCHEDULE
John Kerr Elementary	8:15 a.m. – 3:35 p.m.
Virginia Avenue Elementary	8:15 a.m. – 3:35 p.m.
Charlotte DeHart Elementary	8:15 a.m. – 3:35 p.m.
Quarles Elementary	7:50 a.m. – 3:10 p.m.
Frederick Douglass Elementary	7:50 a.m. – 3:10 p.m.
Daniel Morgan Middle School	7:30 a.m. – 2:50 p.m.
Handley High School	7:40 a.m. – 3:10 p.m.

Source: Winchester Public Schools Transportation Department,
November 2005.

RECOMMENDATION

Recommendation 9-9:

Integrate school principals and school administrators into the bell planning and implementation process to guarantee that the final bell schedule takes maximum advantage of bus transportation assets.

This recommendation should be programmed to meet the transportation and enrichment activity needs and requirements of WPS. The Director of Operational Services, assisted by the Transportation Coordinator, should begin initiation of a plan that outlines a conceptual framework for a bell schedule for the 2006-07 school year. This draft plan should be presented in a formal "working meeting" to school principals and administrators for their comments and recommendations not later than February 2006. The Director of Operational Services should incorporate their comments and recommendations and prepare a draft final not later than March 2006 for subsequent review and comment by school principals and administrators. When these comments and recommendations are integrated as appropriate, the final version of the bell schedule for WPS should be submitted not later than April 2006 to the Superintendent for approval. Superintendent approval should be not later than May 2006 to allow adequate planning for implementation at the start of the 2006-07 school year.

During the MGT on-site visit, it was brought to the attention of MGT that ongoing action was being accomplished to integrate school principals and school administrators more fully into the bell planning and implementation process. School principals during an onsite meeting indicated that they eagerly anticipated full involvement in the process.

It is strongly recommended that the new bell schedule be implemented at the start of the 2006-07 school year.

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING

WPS transit times for exclusive students could be improved, and the Individual Education Plan (IEP) should include the Transportation Department in the planning process.

The Transportation Department has a significant responsibility to transport exclusive students. Bus drivers and aides, along with other transportation elements, accomplish the following:

- transport students as required to specified locations;

- ensure that students are transported safely to and from Special Education;

- provide sufficient buses to transport the students;

- provide spare Special Education support buses as required; and

- provide transportation reports on Special Education students as required.

A significant amount of planning and coordination is required to transport exclusive students. The Director of Operational Services and the Transportation Coordinator are the key staff responsible for monitoring exclusive student transportation.

The Director of Special Education has significant staff interest and responsibility in ensuring transportation arrangements for exclusive students meet state and federal requirements. During MGT on-site interviews, the Director of Special Education stated that efforts are made to determine requirements. In addition, essential information for use by bus drivers is proposed regarding exclusive students transported. Furthermore, the Director of Special Education is receptive to including the Transportation Department in an appropriate phase of the IEP process for exclusive students to ensure that the available and correct form of transportation can be provided for the exclusive or special student population.

In the planning cycle, the Transportation Coordinator, Lead Driver and bus drivers must be made knowledgeable of transport requirements in order for them to be innovative in reducing the amount of travel time for exclusive students. Indications are that this is not being done.

The Transportation Department could initiate action to reduce the ride time of exclusive students. Remedial actions need to include improved routing and scheduling, improved pickup and student discharge procedures, consolidation or cluster pickups where feasible, and the merging of exclusive students with regular students for pickups when possible and approved by the Director of Special Education.

Involvement of the Transportation Department is a necessity at the appropriate juncture in the IEP process before transportation requirements are determined by the Director of Special Education. The MGT on-site review team found that the Transportation Coordinator or a designated representative is not involved in a timely manner in the IEP evaluation process conducted by the Special Education Department.

When the maintenance section is informed of Special Education demands, the buses have to be properly configured. To satisfy requirements for wheelchair students, buses with wheelchair lifts have to be pressed into service. Configuring wheelchair buses requires removing seats and installing railings and other special apparatus to hold the wheelchair(s) securely in place during transit. Including the Transportation Department earlier in the process would allow for more efficient and cost-effective services for WPS.

RECOMMENDATION

Recommendation 9-10:

Improve the transit time for exclusive students through coordination by the Director of Special Education with the Transportation Department at the proper juncture in the IEP process to improve the transportation of exclusive students and the physical preparation and configuration of buses to accommodate them.

When determining transportation for exclusive students, transportation staff should be involved in the Individual Education Plan (IEP) at the appropriate time as standard procedure.

It is recognized that the Director of Special Education has taken initiative to work with the Transportation Coordinator to improve transportation of exclusive students and physical configuration of buses to accommodate them. She also indicated a willingness to initiate a process in coordination with the Transportation Coordinator to involve transportation planning at the proper juncture of the IEP process.

If a transportation representative is involved early at the proper juncture in the IEP process, requirements should become known, and transportation personnel should be prepared to structure buses for exclusive students more efficiently. This should result in more cost-effective service.

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendations can be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING

WPS radio (between buses and the base station at the Transportation Department) and telephone (outside calls to the Transportation Unit) communications are inefficient.

During the MGT onsite visit it was indicated that base stations were being installed at each school to help eliminate dead spots and improve communications. These initiatives along with installation of a base station in the transportation department should improve communication capabilities.

The buses have radios that are used to transmit and receive radio traffic while WPS students are being transported. The radios serve the important function of providing immediate transmission of any difficulties and also serve as an important medium in the event of any student emergency.

At issue is that the radios do not have reliable communications with the Transportation Department base station located at the WPS Central Administrative Office. The base station uses a handheld high frequency radio to send and receive transmissions. This radio is not conducive for use inside the central office building and has only limited reliability. As a result, buses in other parts of the WPS area of operations are not able to communicate effectively with the base station. In addition, due to the limitations of the base station, it cannot effectively serve as a relay station for other bus drivers who may be trying to contact each other. During the MGT on-site focus group meeting with bus drivers, they emphasized the communications difficulties encountered when trying to communicate with the base station while transporting students.

WPS operates on frequency 159.060 as an integral part of the City of Winchester's communications system that includes police, fire, and other agencies. The City of Winchester's communications system is highly efficient, reliable, and secure. It is important, however, to use the right equipment with the city's communications system in order to maximize transmission and reception capabilities. At the present time, WPS is not using the right equipment for its base station and therefore is unable to maximize communication capabilities.

To use more effective equipment, WPS could purchase and install a power pack, mobile unit and outside antenna. The Winchester Public Works Director discussed this issue with MGT of America during the on-site interview and is familiar with the problem. His operation has excellent communications, and his base station uses a power pack, mobile unit and outside antenna. These items were installed with minimal cost, and he indicated that he would oversee installation of these items at the request of the WPS Transportation Coordinator.

Parents at the public forum held on November 1, 2005 at Daniel Morgan Middle School expressed their frustrations in attempting to contact the Transportation Department by telephone during normal business hours. The MGT on-site team found that the Transportation Coordinator and the Lead Driver (who are supposed to respond to radio and telephone calls) are seldom in the office when student transportation services are provided in the mornings and afternoons because both of them are driving buses due to substitute driver shortages. Therefore, radio transmissions from buses and telephone calls do not receive a response. This results in the WPS Receptionist taking messages for them. The Transportation Coordinator or Lead Driver return calls after they return from driving a bus. Since there is no one in the Transportation office during their absence, calls from parents or other interested parties are not responded to promptly. Remedial action for this issue would be to ensure that either the Transportation Coordinator or Lead Driver is present in the Transportation office during normal business hours. The Organization and Staffing section of this chapter addresses this issue and recommends action to free the Transportation Coordinator from serving as a substitute driver.

RECOMMENDATION

Recommendation 9-11:

Improve communications immediately between the Transportation base station and buses operating in WPS by installing a power pack, mobile unit, and outside antenna and ensure that either the Transportation Coordinator or Lead Driver is present in the office during critical morning and afternoon bus runs.

It is imperative that communications are improved in WPS regarding transportation. The current conditions of buses being unable to communicate with the base station are unacceptable. This is particularly disturbing when corrective action is easy to accomplish. Given that child safety is adversely impacted when poor radio and telephone communications exist, it is incumbent on all involved or responsible for school bus transportation operations to take corrective action to remedy the situation.

FISCAL IMPACT

The estimated cost to locally purchase a mobile unit, power pack, and outside antenna, including installation, should not exceed $1,600. The Winchester Public Works Director may arrange for installation at no cost.

Recommendation	2005-06*	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10
Install a Mobile Unit, Power Pack and Outside Antenna in the Transportation Department	($1,600)	$0	$0	$0	$0

*Because of the need to improve communications, safety, and reporting while providing transportation services for WPS students, this recommendation should be implemented immediately. Therefore, it is projected in the 2005-06 school year as opposed to the fiscal impact stipulated for this study to begin in the 2006-07 school year. If funding is available, this equipment should be purchased and installed immediately to enhance safety for WPS students.

9.4   *Training and Safety*

FINDING

Accident reports are not being submitted to the Virginia Department of Education's Transportation Division in a timely manner.

The Transportation Coordinator could not ascertain if accident reports were being submitted, and the secretary in the Finance Department who compiled the reports could not verify what was done with them when completed. The Director of Operational Services indicated that the reports were being submitted, and that the process could perhaps be improved.

Transportation training and safety responsibility is difficult to fix in WPS. During the MGT on-site visit, discussions were held with the Transportation Coordinator, Lead Driver, Director of Operational Services, and a secretary in the Finance Department. All have some responsibility for training and safety in Transportation. The MGT on-site team found that these different WPS elements outside the purview of the Transportation

Coordinator contribute to training and safety transportation functions. For example, the secretary in the Finance Department compiles safety and accident reports; the Transportation Coordinator or Lead Driver investigates accidents; and the Director of Operational Services consolidates and coordinates submission of reports to the state. The MGT on-site team was informed that this arrangement evolved because the Transportation Coordinator has no administrative staff. At issue is the difficulty of fixing overall responsibility in WPS for transportation-related training and safety and ensuring that required functions are accomplished.

The WPS Transportation Accident, Safety, and Training Program are coordinated under supervision of the Director of Operational Services. The Transportation Coordinator stated that she emphasizes the importance of maintaining an active and responsive safety program to keep personnel highly trained. However, except for accident investigation, she has limited responsibility for transportation accident, safety, and training issues. The MGT on-site team found that there are significant misunderstanding among the different players as to who is responsible for the program, what reporting is required, and who the reports are supposed to be submitted to for consolidation and submission to the state.

WPS has an accident prevention and safety program. The MGT on-site team found that:

- safety meetings are conducted for all drivers;

- WPS bus drivers possess a valid Commercial Driver's License (CDL), are 21 years of age, and are physically fit to operate a school bus;

- mandated classroom and 24-hours behind the wheel training is completed by all bus drivers;

- some training is accomplished for other personnel assigned to the Transportation Department;

- the Transportation Coordinator, Lead Driver, and in some instances the Director of Operational Services conduct accident investigations; and

- the Director of Finance pays any claims resulting from any school bus accidents and ensures processing and payment.

Exhibit 9-15 shows transportation-related staff development training offered as part of the WPS Transportation Department is safety and accident prevention program. It shows whether it is required by law, employee satisfaction, certification, and any pay differential.

EXHIBIT 9-15
WINCHESTER PUBLIC SCHOOLS
TRANSPORTATION-RELATED STAFF DEVELOPMENT TRAINING
2005-06 SCHOOL YEAR

TRAINING OFFERED	REQUIRED BY LAW	EMPLOYEE SATISFACTION	CERTIFICATION	ANY PAY DIFFERENTIAL
CPR & First Aid	Yes	Moderate	Yes	No
Driver Training	Yes	Low	Yes	Yes
Special Needs*	Yes	Moderate	Yes	No
Passenger Control	Yes	Moderate	No	No
Safety	Yes	Moderate	Yes	No
DMV Regulations	Yes	High	No	No
Drug Abuse	Yes	Moderate	Yes	No
Bus Evacuation of Students*	Yes	High	Yes	No
Radio and Cell Phone Use	Yes	Low	Yes	No
School Bus Safety Curriculum	Yes	High	Yes	No
Automotive Service Excellence (ASE)	No	High	Yes	No

Source: WPS Transportation Department Interviews and Focus Group Evaluations, November 2005.
*Training hosted by Virginia Department of Education at away locations for two or more days.

Training, safety, and accident performance indicators are important management tools. In discussions with the Transportation Coordinator and other members of her staff, it was determined that the Transportation Department does not use many performance indicators to manage its safety and accident program. Exhibit 9-16 is provided to incorporate these variables and could be considered for use by the Transportation Coordinator as a safety and accident management tool.

The WPS training, safety, and accident prevention program could be improved. Centralizing a single source with overall responsibility for the program is essential. In addition, WPS should train those who manage the program to better understand the myriad tasks associated with this responsibility.

EXHIBIT 9-16
WINCHESTER PUBLIC SCHOOLS
TRAINING, SAFETY, AND ACCIDENT PERFORMANCE INDICATORS
2005-06 SCHOOL YEAR

PERFORMANCE AREA	PERFORMANCE INDICATOR
Safety	■ Accidents per 100,000 miles ■ Incidents per 100,000 miles ■ Pre-performance checks ■ Safety Orientations
Cost Effectiveness	■ Average rider trip time in minutes ■ Driver absentee rate ■ On-time performance ■ Open routes due to unfilled positions
Training	■ Driver Training ■ Safety Training ■ Student Discipline Training

Source: Created by MGT of America, 2005.

RECOMMENDATION

Recommendation 9-12:

Centralize overall responsibility for the training, safety, and accident program in WPS to ensure that personnel who manage the program are adequately trained.

There is no single source identified with overall responsibility for training, safety, and accident programs in WPS. Extreme decentralization of this important function is confusing and unacceptable. As a result, the Superintendent and other key administration officials are not provided with a reliable source of information on training, safety, and accident programs as they relate to transportation services in WPS.

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation should be implemented immediately using existing resources.

9.5 *Vehicle Maintenance*

The City of Winchester performs maintenance for WPS, including all buses and vehicles assigned to the Transportation Department. The Transportation Coordinator reports that there are 34 buses and four automobiles are used to transport the WPS student population. The school division also reports 24 buses and three automobiles are used daily during the current school year to transport 1,732 students to and from school in the mornings and afternoons and to support activities and enrichment programs. Eight of the 34 buses are designated as spares. A maintenance section that is a sub-element of the Winchester Public Works maintains all buses.

The informal maintenance agreement between the City of Winchester and Winchester Public Schools has been in existence for several years. The MGT on-site team discovered that there is no written or formal agreement, memorandum, or contract between the city and WPS stipulating the parameters of maintenance to be performed on vehicles and equipment that are the property of WPS.

FINDING

There is no contract, memorandum, understanding, or formal agreement between the City of Winchester and Winchester Public Schools for maintenance of vehicles and equipment.

A contract, maintenance agreement, or memorandum should be accomplished between WPS and the City of Winchester specifying at minimum echelons of maintenance, spare parts inventory, spare bus procedures, bus replacement procedures and other critical elements in the maintenance area. Under the present system, WPS pays City of Winchester maintenance vouchers without any full understanding if services or repairs performed were approved or necessary.

RECOMMENDATION

Recommendation 9-13:

Initiate and formalize a contract, memorandum of agreement, or other formal document with the City of Winchester for vehicle and equipment maintenance services.

Considering the inventory, value, and diversification of WPS vehicles and equipment, there should be a contract or formal agreement outlining maintenance expectations for the City of Winchester. Maintenance contracts or agreements minimally outline:

- who is to perform the service;

- what level of services, repairs, and maintenance are expected;

- maximum and minimum times vehicles or equipment are to be out of service and penalties incurred by the City of Winchester's Vehicle Maintenance Section when the standard is not met;

- responsibilities of the provider to enforce equipment warranties;

- duration of the contract or agreement;

- maintenance shop hours of operation when vehicles and equipment are accepted for repairs, maintenance, or other services;

- reports and updates as required;

- 24-hour emergency repair or towing services; and

- other services deemed appropriate, essential, or desirable as they pertain to the maintenance interests of WPS.

This recommendation should be implemented as soon as practical.

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with current resources.

FINDING

The Vehicle Maintenance Section of the City of Winchester has an impressive vehicle maintenance information system (VMIS) that conforms to Commonwealth of Virginia School Review Procedures as they relate to transportation.

The City of Winchester's Transportation Department exceeds Commonwealth guidelines and has a highly effective VMIS, employing several technological innovations and indicators to manage the fleet. The following are the major technology-related practices examined by the MGT on-site team:

- A highly effective and efficient system is used to monitor fuel tanks. Each bus driver has a card that is inserted into a slot when it is time to refuel vehicles. The computer-generated system records the vehicle number, date fuel was dispensed, and number of gallons.

- Mechanics in the City of Winchester's Vehicle Maintenance Section use diagnostic tools to troubleshoot repair problems.

- The Shop Foreman has every bus, commercial vehicle, and other piece of equipment in a central computer that tracks scheduled maintenance, oil changes, and other critical information about every piece of equipment in the inventory. During the on-site assessment, MGT observed this system in operation. Randomly, upon request, the MGT team was provided the history, scheduled maintenance, and other information on equipment under responsibility of the Vehicle Maintenance Section. The results were outstanding.

- The City of Winchester Shop Foreman for the Vehicle Maintenance Section uses exceptional fleet management indicators to manage the WPS vehicle and equipment fleet.

COMMENDATION

The City of Winchester's Transportation Department is commended for its exceptional Vehicle Maintenance Information System.

FINDING

The number of spare buses for Winchester Public Schools is excessive and could be reduced.

WPS has 34 buses, of which 24 are used for student transportation services. Of the remaining 10, two are designated activity buses, and eight are considered spares. The result is that 23 percent spare buses support 24 buses used daily for student transportation purposes.

Most school divisions in the Commonwealth of Virginia and nationwide maintain a spare bus policy of 10 percent unless there are unusual circumstances to keep a higher percentage. Spare bus determinants include normal life expectancy of school buses, average wear and tear, maintenance, and number of diesel versus gas-powered vehicles. Exhibit 9-17 shows the school bus spares and percent of the fleet in WPS.

EXHIBIT 9-17
WINCHESTER PUBLIC SCHOOLS
SCHOOL BUS SPARES AND PERCENT
2005-06 SCHOOL YEAR

PASSENGER BUS UTILIZATION	NUMBER OF BUSES	ROUTES FOR AM AND PM	NUMBER OF SPARES	PERCENT OF SPARES
Exclusive Education buses	4	8	2	100%
Regular Education buses	28	120	6	36%
Band Activity buses	2	None	None	None
TOTAL	**34**	**128**	**8**	**23%**

Source: MGT of America, Inc., and WPS Transportation Department, 2005.

All transportation operations require substitute vehicles to cover for units experiencing breakdowns or scheduled preventive maintenance. The generally accepted range for school bus fleet spares is 10 percent to 15 percent of the regularly scheduled peak bus usage. The factors affecting the spare bus ratio are fleet age, effectiveness of the maintenance program, climatic and operating environment, fleet mix, and training program.

The peak bus requirement per day for WPS is 24 buses. The school division's total bus fleet is 34, of which two are activity buses, leaving eight, or 23 percent, as shown in Exhibit 9-17, as spares. Considering that a 10 percent spare bus policy is sufficient, WPS may not be adhering to an effective spare bus policy.

School divisions throughout the country maintain a spare bus policy of 10 percent to 12 percent for a more effective practice.

Though it is the prerogative of WPS to maintain a 23 percent spare bus policy, it may not be necessary and is not supported by the MGT on-site team as a continuing WPS course of action. A 10 percent spare bus policy for WPS is considered appropriate.

With the current number of buses (24) used for student transportation purposes, a 10 percent spare bus policy would equate to 2.4 or three buses. Since there are eight spare buses currently in use, WPS could eliminate five buses from its spare bus inventory. This means that WPS could reduce its inventory of spares from eight to three.

RECOMMENDATION

Recommendation 9-14:

Implement spare bus policy mandating 10 percent of the peak use bus fleet as spares.

The WPS bus fleet age is within the boundaries of other divisions in the Commonwealth of Virginia and school systems nationally. The WPS fleet uses a 10-year bus replacement plan according to documentation provided to MGT, and all of its buses are diesel power driven.

A reduction to three spares and other initiatives in this chapter could trim the current bus fleet from 34 to 29.

There is justified concern by WPS Senior Management that full utilization of all spare buses on numerous days is a common practice. MGT strongly suggests that implementation of automated routing and scheduling, proactive management of maintenance operations, and a fully trained Transportation Coordinator should significantly reduce the requirement to press into service all spare vehicles.

FISCAL IMPACT

The sale of five excess buses, with an average sale price of $3,000, should return $15,000 to the school system. Maintenance and other support requirements for each bus are estimated at $1,450 (fuel, maintenance, etc). Total cost savings from this action are $20,800. WPS should take advantage of the internet using E-bay or other opportunity to advertise sale of surplus buses to a national audience. Using this selling approach eliminates dependency on the local region market where average price paid for a school bus is approximately $1,700. Using the internet, WPS could normally sell surplus buses between $2,500 to $3,500.

Recommendation	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11
Sell 5 Excess Buses	$0	$15,000	$0	$0	$0
Vehicle Support	$0	$1,450	$1,450	$1,450	$1,450
TOTAL SAVINGS	$0	$16,450	$1,450	$1,450	$1,450

FINDING

WPS does not have a comprehensive school bus replacement plan. The WPS Transportation Department maintains 34 vehicles. Implementation of the above recommendation to reduce spare vehicles will leave 29 vehicles for consideration as part of the bus replacement plan. The MGT team was not provided a replacement plan approved by the School Board; however, the team was informed by the Transportation Coordinator that a 10-year bus replacement plan is in effect. Considering the spare bus policy, age of several buses and other variables, a 10-year bus replacement policy is not considered feasible for WPS and is not advised.

The fleet inventory does not reflect the 10-year bus replacement plan indicated by the school division since the oldest vehicle in the inventory is a 1984-year bus. Exhibit 9-18 is the bus fleet inventory for WPS. It shows that of the 34 buses in WPS, 9 are over 12 years old (shown from 1984 to 1994). Considering that WPS could implement recommendations for a spare bus policy as enumerated in the preceding section, the bus fleet for WPS could consist of 29 buses for school transportation purposes. Using this rationale, target buses to eliminate from the bus fleet could be the oldest buses from 1984 to 1989. This would put WPS in a position to target and implement a 12-year bus replacement policy. In view of other challenges confronting the Transportation Department at this time, it is probably in the best interest of WPS to reduce spare buses and then concentrate on achieving a 12-year bus replacement policy.

EXHIBIT 9-18
WINCHESTER PUBLIC SCHOOLS
BUS FLEET INVENTORY
2005-06 SCHOOL YEAR

YEAR PURCHASED	NUMBER OF BUSES	FUEL USE TYPE
1984	1	Gas
1988	2	Diesel
1989	3	Diesel
1991	2	Diesel
1993	1	Diesel
1994	6	Diesel
1996	1	Diesel
1998	3	Diesel
2000	2	Diesel
2002	1	Diesel
2003	4	Diesel
2005	4	Diesel
2006	4	Diesel
TOTAL BUSES	**34**	**Gas/ Diesel**

Source: WPS Transportation Department, November 2005.

RECOMMENDATION

Recommendation 9-15:

Create and implement a 12-year bus replacement cycle.

WPS should establish a 12-year replacement cycle. With the reduction of spare buses from 34 to 29 covered in the preceding section and efficiencies gained from maintenance performed by the City of Winchester, a 12-year bus replacement policy is attainable for WPS.

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

10.0 TECHNOLOGY MANAGEMENT

This chapter provides finding, commendations, and recommendations regarding the use of technology for Winchester Public Schools (WPS). The five sections of this chapter are:

10.1   Organizational Structure
10.2   Infrastructure and Web Site Development
10.3   Planning, Policies, and Procedures
10.4   Software and Hardware
10.5   Staff Development

MGT analyzes the administrative and instructional technology resources of a school division when performing an efficiency review. The analysis includes reviewing the infrastructure that supports the school division; the organizational structure to ensure its effectiveness; planning, policies, and procedures for technology; software and hardware consistencies; and staff development to ensure these areas are consistent with best practices among school divisions across the country.

CHAPTER SUMMARY

The Technology Department of WPS has an efficient organizational structure with appropriate reporting structures that maximize departmental and divisional communication and productivity. The department has an impressive slate of technology initiatives designed to enhance services at both the school and division level. While the ambitiousness of the projects is impressive, it will be important to establish a clear system of oversight and assessment to ensure that projects are completely in a timely manner and with a positive impact on the teaching and learning environment.

In terms of external operations, the Technology Department needs to work on policies and procedures that help ensure effective functioning of computer labs and systems throughout the division. In addition, the Technology Department needs to focus on continuous improvement of its internal operations in terms of regular review and updates of its long-range goals and plan, appraisal of departmental performance, and monitoring of purchasing processes.

Among the other recommendations for the department are:

- developing a database that provides a comprehensive inventory for all software used throughout Winchester Public Schools;

- creating a mechanism to track and report technology-related training data to instructional staff; and

- adding a phase to technology-related initiatives that includes staff training.

INTRODUCTION

The Winchester Public School Division's Technology Department supports six schools along with central administration. Therefore, the Technology Department supports over 3,600 students, 300 teachers, and over 430 administrators.

WPS has eight technicians supporting the central administration as well as school-based administration. Currently, four technology resource teachers support the high school, middle school, and four elementary schools for technology integration in the classroom.

Staff are responsible for the school division's infrastructure, Web site, technology-related planning, software, hardware, and technology-related training of staff.

Exhibit 10-1 shows the student average daily membership and technology instructors per 1,000 among the comparison school divisions. As shown in the exhibit, WPS slightly is below the peer division average for student membership, yet above average for technology instructors per 1,000 students.

EXHIBIT 10-1
STAFF PER 1,000 STUDENTS
PEER SCHOOL DIVISIONS
2003-04 SCHOOL YEAR

SCHOOL DIVISION	STUDENT AVERAGE DAILY MEMBERSHIP	TECHNOLOGY INSTRUCTORS PER 1,000 STUDENTS
Winchester	**3,529**	**1.13**
Fredericksburg	2,370	0.00
Charlottesville	4,180	0.00
Manassas Park	2,180	2.29
Manassas	6,591	0.15
Salem	3,886	1.39
Division Average	**3,789**	**0.83**

Source: Virginia Department of Education Web site, 2005.

Exhibit 10-2 shows the breakdown of technology staff among the comparison school divisions:

As shown in this exhibit:

- WPS is slightly above average for administrative technology staff among the peer school divisions; and

- WPS is below the average of technical and clerical positions for technology among the peer school divisions.

EXHIBIT 10-2
TECHNOLOGY PERSONNEL
PEER SCHOOL DIVISIONS
2003-04 SCHOOL YEAR

SCHOOL DIVISION	TECHNOLOGY		
	ADMINISTRATIVE	**TECHNICAL AND CLERICAL**	**INSTRUCTIONAL SUPPORT**
Winchester	**1.0**	**6.8**	**0.0**
Fredericksburg	1.0	2.0	0.0
Charlottesville	1.0	7.0	0.0
Manassas Park	0.3	8.0	2.0
Manassas	0.0	7.0	3.0
Salem	0.0	4.0	0.0
Division Average	**0.6**	**5.8**	**0.8**

Source: Virginia Department of Education Web site, 2005.

10.1 *Organizational Structure*

Ideally, technology is one area of a school division that supports all administrative and instructional personnel in a positive manner. Organizing technology resources to effectively achieve this outcome can be challenging.

The International Society for Technology in Education (ISTE) has developed a Technology Support Index rubric to assist school divisions in determining their needs in a variety of technology support areas. The ISTE Technology Support Index identifies integrated school divisions as having an organization structure where the technical support functions and instructional technology functions report differently, but each unit is cohesively organized, and there is communication between them. Higher-functioning school divisions (i.e., those functioning at an exemplary level) instead have an organizational structure where all of the technology functions report through the same unit in the organization, providing for a logical chain of command and communication structures, which is the case for Winchester Public Schools.

FINDING

The WPS Technology Department consists of 13 staff members. As shown in Exhibit 10-3, the Director of Technology oversees the Supervising Network Engineer, two Technology Support Specialists, five Network and Computer Technicians, and four Technology Resource Teachers. All of the positions reside in the Central Administrative Office except for two of the Network and Computer Technicians and all four of the Technology Resource Teachers. One of the Network and Computer Technicians resides at the high school, other in the middle school. The Technology Resource Teachers are allocated as follows:

- one position supports the high school;
- one position supports the middle school;
- one position supports two elementary schools; and
- one position supports two elementary schools.

**EXHIBIT 10-3
WINCHESTER PUBLIC SCHOOLS
TECHNOLOGY DEPARTMENT
ORGANIZATIONAL CHART**

```
                        Director of Technology
                                (1)
         ┌──────────────────────┼──────────────────────┐
   Supervising                                    Technology Support
  Network Engineer                                    Specialists
       (1)                                                (2)
        │                 Technology Resource
  Network & Computer           Teachers
    Technicians                  (4)
       (5)
```
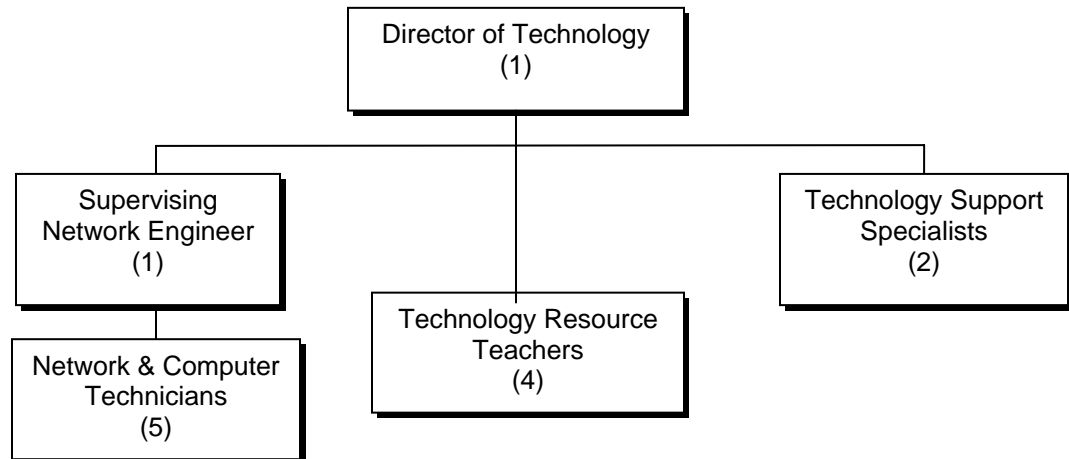
Source: Winchester Public Schools, Technology Department, 2005.

The Technology Resource Teachers currently report to the Director of Technology, which is a best practice among school divisions. As shown in Exhibit 10-4, MGT proposes that dotted lines be added to the current structure between the Technology Resource Teachers and both the newly created position of Assistant Superintendent of Instruction and school principals. The dotted lines indicate that all included staff should meet regularly for ensuring that technology is integrated in the delivery of instruction by teachers.

**EXHIBIT 10-4
WINCHESTER PUBLIC SCHOOLS
TECHNOLOGY DEPARTMENT
PROPOSED ORGANIZATIONAL CHART**

```
   Director of              Assistant Superintendent for
   Technology                Currriculum and Instruction
      (1)
                                   School Principals
   ┌─────────────┬─────────────────────────┐
 Supervising                          Technology Support
Network Engineer                          Specialists
    (1)                                       (2)
     │               Technology Resource
Network & Computer        Teachers
  Technicians               (4)
    (5)
```
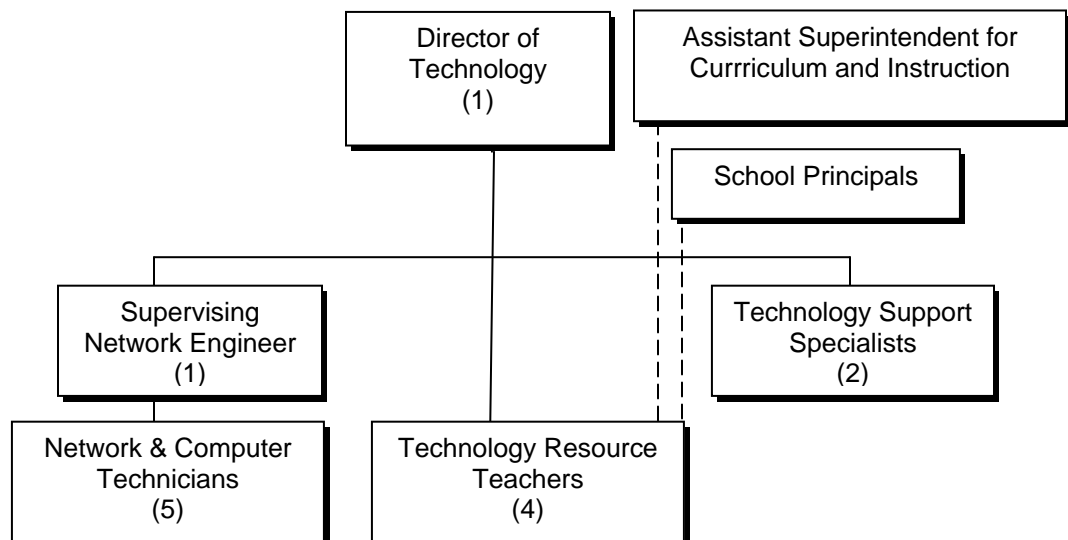
Source: MGT of America, 2005.

COMMENDATION

Winchester Public Schools is commended for having the Technology Resource Teachers report to the Director of Technology.

RECOMMENDATION

Recommendation 10-1:

Create a formal relationship between the Technology Resource Teachers and both the newly created Assistant Superintendent for Instruction and school principals.

The Technology Resource Teachers should create a formal relationship with the Assistant Superintendent for Instruction and school principals by setting up regularly scheduled meetings to ensure that technology staff are performing in a consistent manner and that the school division is proceeding in its integration of technology. Communication should be open between the three departments in order to better serve the teachers within the division.

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING

WPS has been trying to implement several technology-related initiatives without using a comprehensive action plan to measure impacts of the initiatives and maintenance of established systems.

The WPS Technology Department is currently working on the initiatives shown on Exhibit 10-5. As shown, it is attempting to move 12 projects into production simultaneously.

According to staff interviews, a calendar or action plan has not been created to determine impacts on staff or timelines when initiatives are anticipated to be fully implemented and operational. Interviews also suggested that these initiatives tend to be more along the lines of directives from the Superintendent or other central administration staff. Furthermore, staff do not feel as if they can ask for a delay on one of these projects, especially since the priority of each project has not been determined.

These initiatives have also delayed the school division's move to migrate the network into an active directory. An active directory would allow for easier system planning and deployment, which will most likely result in a reduction in planning, hardware, and software costs.

The current environment of trying to implement so many new systems or applications at the same time is not an efficient practice. In order for any implementation to go smoothly, very detailed action plans with schedules based on prioritization are needed to ensure each aspect of the project has been carefully planned, evaluated, and tested before moving into production. When so many projects are being implemented, proper evaluation is not possible since staff are unsure of which project or phase is

EXHIBIT 10-5
WINCHESTER PUBLIC SCHOOLS
CURRENT TECHNOLOGY INITIATIVES

1. **Support of Instruction**
    *   "Just-in-Time" teacher support and training(TRTs)
    *   On-line Testing, Reporting, and Analysis support
    *   New Instructional Software (including Star Reader, Accelerated Math)
    *   Increased use of SASI — Test History, Reporting

2. **John Handley High School Renovation and Expansion**

3. **Daniel Morgan Middle School School Renovation and Expansion**
The two renovation and expansion projects involve the design and implementation of technology infrastructure for new and renovated building areas. Relocation of equipment and establishing temporary connectivity during building phases. Maintenance of all current services. Involves coordination with general contractor, architects, and WPS and Operations staff, and the selection and supervision of sub-contractors for structured cabling, cable TV, and audio/visual systems.

4. **Telephone System**
Integrate and install system-wide IP-based telephone system (-7OO phones). The IP based system leverages the school system's existing network infrastructure to bring phone access to every office and teaching area. The central office, high school and middle schools phases are nearing completion. Plan to complete elementary phases by end of school year.

5. **Blackboard Learning System**
Implement an on-line learning resource to support instruction and improve communication. Initial phase, under way this fall, targets the high school. Use at middle and elementary is currently under discussion.

6. **On-Line Testing**
Work with DDOT to expand on-line SOL testing to the middle school. Work to expand, develop, and improve system's pre-test delivery and analysis system using Tests for Higher Standards system. Assist teachers and administrators with data access and analysis.

7. **EIMS**
Continue implementation of the state's Educational Information Management System (EIMS). Develop workshops (late fall) for administrators and lead teachers so that they can use the provided reporting system.

8. **SASI Implementation**

Continue SASI implementation. WPS has completed first annual cycle with the new student information system. Projects for the coming year include merging of test scores into the test history package, full configuration and use of the Virginia transcript reports, and continued configuration and data entry/checking to provide accurate local and state Student Data Collection reporting. A review and refinement of user security settings is also planned.

9. **Student Records Document Imaging**
Evaluate and procure a suitable document scanning, storage and retrieval system to provide for the electronic storage of student records. The project will provide for outside help in converting student records dating back to the 1920s and a system to enter new records each year. The RFP is currently on the street. Project work is expected to begin in late November.

10. **Parent Connect**
Plans are to bring this web-based student information portal on-line during the second grading period of this year. This service integrates with SASI, the school's student information system. The system provides access to grades, attendance, and discipline records via password to parents.

11. **Crosshatch Fingerprint System**
This laptop scanning system provides the personnel department with the ability to scan a prospective employee's fingerprints and transmits them electronically to the Virginia State Police where they can be cross checked with state and national databases. This system provides a very quick response in determining when performing a criminal background check.

12. **Web Applications**
Two web-based applications are currently under development by department staff. An on-line Job Application System is being created for the personnel department. Will allow application submission and review on-line. An improved technology work order system is also under development that will streamline the submission and processing of work requests and streamline management of the work flow process for the Technology Department. Both systems should be online shortly into the new year.

Source: Winchester Public Schools Technology Department, 2005.

causing a situation with the infrastructure. This practice also tends to burn out staff since they have to produce without the required planning and evaluation phases.

Best practices as indicated by the State of Texas Department of Information Resources state that many steps are needed to ensure the successful of project implementation. WPS needs to address each step of project planning to appropriately allocate resources to accomplish the implementation of these initiatives.

RECOMMENDATION

Recommendation 10-2:

Create and follow project development steps for all technology-related initiatives to ensure successful project implementation.

The Superintendent should ask the Director of Technology to create a spreadsheet on the status of each initiative currently under way. Current issues involving previously established projects should be included on the spreadsheet. The Superintendent and the Director of Technology should evaluate each project to determine priority order. Once priorities have been established, the technology staff should meet to discuss the detailed plans needed to implement the top three priorities. The move to active directory should be added as a high priority to the list. These plans should be based on the following steps as provided by the Texas Department of Information Resources:

1. *Establish Project Environment*

   To ensure a project can be run effectively, the environment must be established, with adequate project tools and facilities.

2. *Create Work Breakdown Structure*

   To be able to estimate the effort required to do the work on a project, and to determine the staffing needs, the first activity required is to carefully describe the work to be accomplished. The work items are documented in a work breakdown structure that provides for efficient planning and tracking.

3. *Identify Project Risks*

   At this point in the planning stage, and again at significant points of change in the project, the project team performs a risk identification process.

4. *Define Project Measures*

   Any project can benefit from using appropriate measures to track progress in dealing with its particular issues, objectives, and/or risks. This activity defines the most useful measures for a given project,

5. *Allocate Work to Personnel*

This activity generally is done in iteration with the scheduling activity, to accommodate schedule requirements and to address other issues and conflicts.

6. *Develop Initial Project Schedule*

This activity is generally done in iteration with the allocation of personnel, since initial schedules often reveal conflicts in resource needs or dependencies between tasks. The result of this activity is the first project schedule, likely to be adjusted as the project proceeds and conditions change in the later phases of the project.

7. *Complete Project Development Plan*

Remaining portions of the Project Development Plan are completed, based on the organization plan template.

8. *Measures*

Measures of the project progress, product quality, and process performance can be used to track and manage project planning activities.

9. *Handling of Project Planning -* Track items such as the following:

- Schedule attainment – did planning begin and end on the dates planned?

- Effort required – compare the amount of planning effort to what was expected.

10. *Verification Activities*

While project planning is being done, the following verification activities are appropriate for management:

- Review the assumptions being used by the project manager and project team at the outset of planning. Ensure that any Statement of Work or project scope documents is available and correctly represents the project situation.

- Review drafts of project plan elements as they are developed to provide input and feedback on team assumptions and requests for information.

- Review the final project plan to ensure all management expectations are being met.

The following verification activities are appropriate for Quality Assurance personnel:

- Review drafts of project plan elements as they are developed to provide input and feedback on team assumptions and requests for information.

- Review the planned approach of the project team to ensure that it is using an appropriate tailoring of organization process assets.

- Review the final project plan to ensure that all customer expectations are being met and that the plan meets organization standards.

The implementation of this recommendation should assist the school division in properly planning, prioritizing, and scheduling projects in accordance with best practices.

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING

The Technology Plan for Winchester Public Schools lacks several necessary components.

WPS has created a technology plan for the 2004-07 school years. WPS is commended for updating the technology plan every three years rather than the six-year cycle used by other school divisions. This plan was developed by a group of stakeholders and states that this work group provided significant input in the ongoing revision of the plan, yet according to staff interviews, subsequent reviews have not taken place. While the plan provides recommendations, strategies, and school years to implement the objectives, there are only yearly due dates and departments or staff responsible for the implementation of objectives are not specified.

Exhibit 10-6 shows the curriculum integration model, which uses at least one software application.

Exhibit 10-7 shows the software categories pertaining to curriculum integration; however, there is no documentation available to show which teachers have taken the courses. The plan further states the level of technology-related skills and the hours of time needed to reach each of the five stages, yet no documentation could be provided on the specific levels each teacher has acquired in the school division.

The WPS Technology Plan further states that "a strong in-service program is the cornerstone of Winchester Public Schools' Technology Plan"; however there was no recent evidence that this information had been provided to each staff member.

Staff interviews indicated that in-service days have been eliminated for the 2005-06 and 2006-07 school years due to the construction work in progress on the two schools. Therefore, training is not being offered during these two school years.

EXHIBIT 10-6
WINCHESTER PUBLIC SCHOOLS
CURRICULUM INTEGRATION MODEL

- Subject:

- Task Title:

- Objective(s), Performance Indicators, Essential Knowledge: What the students will learn.

- Standards: Virginia Standards of Learning and/or local curriculum goals.

- Performance Assessment: Formative and summative measures by which student learning will be monitored and evaluated.

- Performance Task Procedures: Instructional methods and tasks used for teaching.

- Assessment Criteria: Rubric

- Resources and Materials: Tools, materials, personnel that teachers and students will utilize.

Source: Winchester Public Schools, Technology Plan.

EXHIBIT 10-7
WINCHESTER PUBLIC SCHOOLS TECHNOLOGY PLAN
FOUR SOFTWARE CATEGORIES

BASIC TOOLS	REFERENCE MATERIALS	SIMULATIONS AND EDUCATIONAL GAMES	STRUCTURED LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS
All Subjects ■ Word Processing ■ Database ■ Spreadsheet ■ Hypermedia ■ Concept Mapping ■ Presentation	− Software that provides databases of information.	− Software that provides a simulated experience or drill and skill.	− Software designed to teach the user specific information and skills.
Sample Math Tools LOGO ■ Mathematic ■ Calculators ■ Geometer's ■ Sketchpad	Databases: ■ Encyclopedias, atlases, almanacs, etc. ■ World Wide Web	■ Simulations ■ Games – Drill and Skill ■ Virtual Reality	■ Traditional Integrated Learning System (ILS) ■ Exploratory
Sample Science Tools ■ Probeware ■ Image Processing	Unique Characteristics: ■ Multimedia ■ Interactive ■ Hypermedia cross-referencing ■ Boolean Search	Unique Characteristics ■ Multimedia ■ Interactive ■ Can be problem-based	Unique Characteristics: ■ Multimedia ■ Interactive

Source: Winchester Public Schools, Technology Plan.

Exhibit 10-8 shows the survey results for WPS administrators, principals, and teachers reporting technology in WPS. As shown in the exhibit, 100 percent of administrators and 91 percent of principals state that the school division provides adequate instructional technology; however, only 58 percent of teachers agree with this statement. Furthermore, only 71 percent of teachers *agree* or *strongly agree* that the school division provides adequate technology-related staff development.

EXHIBIT 10-8
SURVEY RESULTS FOR WINCHESTER PUBLIC SCHOOLS
ADMINISTRATOR, PRINCIPALS, AND TEACHERS

SURVEY ITEMS	(%G + E) / (%F + P)[1]		
	ADMINISTRATORS	PRINCIPALS	TEACHERS
The school division's job of providing adequate instructional technology.	100/0	91/9	58/40
The school division's use of technology for administrative purposes.	80/20	82/18	43/28

Source: MGT of America Survey Results for Winchester Public Schools, 2005.
[1]Percent responding *Good* or *Excellent* / Percent responding *Fair* or *Poor.* The *Don't Know* responses are omitted.

Most school divisions throughout the country consider their technology plans as a living document. These living documents are routinely reviewed for accuracy and updating and include detailed action plans using specific staff members held accountable for implementation within specific and limited time frames.

RECOMMENDATION

Recommendation 10-3:

Review the WPS Technology Plan on an annual basis and include departments or positions responsible for implementation within specific and limited time frames.

The WPS Technology Plan should be considered a living document due to the fast changes of technology, so frequent reviews to update and revise the plan are required of all school divisions. The plan should include all pending projects that are known during the review and should also provide an avenue for new initiatives to be encouraged and discussed, with a mechanism to manage expectations of requesters. This recommendation should allow for a more streamlined and organized process to implement new system applications throughout the school division using existing resources.

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING

WPS technology employee evaluations are not performed on an annual basis and are rather subjective, yet do include a comment section for the evaluator's input.

According to staff interviews and MGT observations while reviewing personnel records, employee evaluations for technology are not performed on an annual basis for all staff. Some staff indicated that it had been a year or more since they were last evaluated, while others had been recently reviewed. MGT found that not all staff are evaluated in the same manner and supervisors rely too heavily on subjective information rather than actual performance.

MGT reviewed the evaluation form that is used for staff in the WPS Technology Department. The form allows the evaluator to select exceptional, satisfactory, and unsatisfactory performance characteristics. The form also allows for evaluator comments and states that the employee's performance goal(s) for the evaluation period are to be included, yet this portion on goals has not been used for each technology staff member. Performance indicators, such as customer feedback, number of work orders completed, complexity of work orders, and average time taken to complete work orders are not available on the evaluation form.

A more effective approach for WPS is to evaluate technology-related staff on an annual basis and include objective performance measures as well as customer feedback.

RECOMMENDATION

Recommendation 10-4:

Schedule annual performance evaluations that include objective performance measures and customer feedback.

Technology staff, like any school division staff, need feedback on their job performance. Performance indicators that WPS should incorporate include the number of work orders completed, the complexity level of work orders, and the length of time to complete a work order. This information provides a factual indicator on how the employee is performing and is a more effective way to provide evaluations to technology staff.

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

10.2 Infrastructure and Web Site Development

Infrastructure is the underlying system of cabling, phone lines, hubs, switches, and routers that connects the various parts of a Wide Area Network (WAN). An infrastructure enables other systems to perform their functions.

Of all technology resources, infrastructure is probably the most important. If a sound infrastructure is in place, most users will have a means of accessing people and information throughout their organization and beyond, greatly facilitating their ability to

accomplish the responsibilities of their job. Increased efficiency and effectiveness will be the result. Without a sound infrastructure, such capabilities are available only on a piecemeal basis, usually to individuals who have the vision and the resources to create this capability for themselves.

School division Web sites are key to communicating information to internal staff, students, parents, taxpayers, other stakeholders, and the general public throughout the world. Web sites enable school divisions to share information regarding calendars, menus, bus routes and times, school locations, attendance zones, and school board information.

FINDING

Winchester Public Schools operates a citywide network linking seven school sites and six city sites to the school's central office using a star topology. The central office is linked to a local community college where the system connects to Network Virginia for Internet access. The school division provides network management for the city, including firewall and proxy services.

Sites are linked using fiber lit at 100 MB with larger sites using a fiber backbone and smaller sites using a copper backbone. Connectivity to the desktop is 100 MB at larger sites and 10 MB at the smaller schools. Plans to move to a direct 1 GB connectivity between switches are on hold due to recent restrictions on E-rate funding. The IP Telephony project that is currently under way will provide 100 MBS connectivity across the school division.

Daily backups are handled by two automated tape library systems located at the central office and Daniel Morgan Middle School.

COMMENDATION

Winchester Public Schools has successfully implemented a proven infrastructure for school division operations.

FINDING

WPS has an informative and user-friendly Web site for the school division. The Web site contains links for parents, students, staff, board members, city residents, and other stakeholders.

Informative links are provided to attendance zones, calendars, school hours, menus, bus schedules, school Web sites, school supply lists, the Handley Trust Fund, school construction updates, and information on the City of Winchester. The Web site also contains School Board dates, agendas, and highlights. The Superintendent has a special link to frequently asked questions about the school division along with an "Ask the Superintendent" interactive section where the public can submit questions.

The Web site also contains links to information on the Standards of Learning by grade level, complete with scores by school.

COMMENDATION

Winchester Public Schools is commended for having an informative and user-friendly Web site.

10.3 *Planning, Policies, and Procedures*

FINDING

The WPS Technology Department has created and implemented an effective disaster recovery system. The school division uses a system that incorporates the following:

- automatic off-site backup;
- redundant hardware;
- large capacity; and
- centralized administration.

All backups are full backups and require only one tape for full restoration of content to a user. Each evening servers run opposite scripts that back up a different subset of servers, with the exception of same site servers. Same site servers are always backed up to a particular site because they are remote and provide automatic off-site backup.

The school division retains a vendor for a full catalog of disaster recovery procedures for each kind of system that is in place within WPS. Anticipation time for a full and complete restoration would take less than four hours.

COMMENDATION

Winchester Public Schools has implemented an efficient and effective disaster recovery system for the school division.

FINDING

The WPS Technology Department has created a comprehensive manual containing the division's organizational chart, roles of the department, job descriptions, the Technology Plan, general guidelines and procedures, and technical notes.

The general guidelines section of the manual contains the following essential information for technology staff:

- materials to be carried by computer and network technicians;
- work order procedures;
- parts ordering procedures;
- maintenance to be performed on computers; and
- school news coordinator guidelines.

This particular section includes steps on building a server from scratch, backup procedures, using different keyboards and printers, and student record input.

The manual is well organized and includes a table of contents to assist with staff use.

According to staff interviews, this manual is helpful but has not been updated on a regular basis.

COMMENDATION

Winchester Public Schools has created a comprehensive standard operating procedure manual for the Technology Department staff.

RECOMMENDATION

Recommendation 10-5:

Review and update the standard operating procedures manual for the WPS Technology Department annually.

The school division should schedule an annual review of all standard operating procedures within the Technology Department. Procedures are essential for staff to work both efficiently and effectively, especially when a function is not routinely needed. Current procedures should also assist the school division in continuing to operate effectively when staff are absent or leave unexpectedly.

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources using current technology staff in the school division.

10.4 *Software and Hardware*

School divisions must select and employ software and hardware to meet both instructional and administrative objectives. While computers in the classroom are primarily an instructional resource, they also serve an administrative function in most school systems. Moreover, adequate administrative technology must be present to support schools in meeting instructional goals. One of the primary tenets of *No Child Left Behind* is that school corporations will make data-driven decisions. The data to make those decisions can only come from sufficient administrative software and hardware.

In hardware, costs have been declining over the past decade, due to greater mass production of computers and peripherals. While the price of hardware is generally declining, the cost of software is increasing. The primary reason for this increase in cost is that software actually translates into personnel costs (i.e., software development is usually a labor-intensive activity that requires skilled technicians who earn relatively high salaries). As a result, the task of selecting software for use in any organization is becoming more difficult. This is particularly true for educational systems because the types of software used are more diverse than those found in most other organizations.

FINDING

The school division does not have an equipment replacement policy or use written specifications when purchasing technology-related equipment.

According to staff interviews and documentation provided during MGT's on-site visit, equipment specifications have not been written to assist the school division in purchasing new equipment.

Documentation provided by the school division stated that a rather informal process is used for technology-related equipment replacement. The information provided stated, "most computer equipment is replaced on an approximate four-year cycle." While the school division is currently undergoing renovations that include $2.2 million over several years for new and replacement technology at the middle and high schools, equipment needs at the elementary level for on-line SOL testing must also be addressed.

If the school division continues to purchase without the use of written specifications and a formal equipment replacement policy, their purchases may be inconsistent with the specific need of each school.

According to the ISTE Technology Support Index, school divisions should optimize equipment cycles at a minimum of satisfactory efficiency level, which is to have a formal policy to replace equipment every four to five years. ISTE further states that for equipment standards, school divisions need brand and model selection specifications for efficient technology practices.

RECOMMENDATION

Recommendation 10-6:

Create and maintain a formal technology-related equipment replacement policy using formal specifications and incorporate it into the Technology Plan for Winchester Public Schools.

WPS should create a formal equipment replacement policy in accordance to the ISTE Technology Support Index. This formal equipment replacement policy should be incorporated into the division's Technology Plan to ensure that committee members realize the need for updating technology-related equipment. Furthermore, the school division should write formal specifications using selected brands with a range of three to five models for each piece of equipment to have a best practice for other school divisions to duplicate.

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING

Winchester Public Schools performs physical inventories for technology-related hardware on an annual basis. Reports provided to MGT team members by the school

division included an inventory summary by product type, which enables counts of technology-related assets for the division.

Reports were also provided by school, location within the school, the teacher's name where appropriate, serial numbers, manufacturer, model, year of installation, and comments. MGT team members also spot-checked technology-related assets and found proper asset identification tags on the equipment throughout the school division.

COMMENDATION

Winchester Public Schools is commended for performing regularly scheduled inventories for technology-related assets.

FINDING

Documentation was not provided for a division-wide policy on prohibiting food and drink in computer labs located at the schools.

According to staff interviews, teachers have been using computer labs to host social parties for staff. Staff further reported having to clean and dry keyboards that had drinks spilled on them, which is a safety hazard, since this activity can cause electrical shock to students or staff trying to use the computer.

During on-site observations, MGT team members noticed a lack of signs prohibiting food or drink for anyone entering computer labs.

This practice can cost the school division unwarranted expenses due to technology labor for repair or even for the replacement of ruined equipment, since warranties generally do not cover this type of misuse.

Most school divisions ban any food or drinks in computer labs and impose this ban on staff too in order to send a consistent message to users.

RECOMMENDATION

Recommendation 10-7:

Enact a policy banning food or drinks in all computer labs throughout Winchester Public Schools.

While the school division is fortunate not to have had any serious accidents due to this practice, WPS should write a policy that is approved by the school board, which prohibits food or drinks in computer labs. This policy should be enforced by school and central office administrators since this practice will damage computers, monitors, keyboards, and printers or even worse, cause electrical shock to students or staff.

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING

One of the high school computer labs is cluttered and not being used as intended. During the on-site visit to Handley High School, the MGT team asked to see computer labs and found that Room 231 was so cluttered that there was no real way to use it as a lab. There were four mobile computer carts in the middle of the room, which also contained old, non-working computers, textbooks, old calculators, and a flower arrangement.

MGT realizes that the school is under construction. Still, the condition of this room is not conducive to a computer lab for technology integration. While there was clearly an attempt to set the room up as a lab, MGT team members found so much clutter that it was not safe for students or staff to be using the room for anything except as storage area.

RECOMMENDATION

Recommendation 10-8:

Clean the computer lab at Handley High School to enable appropriate use.

In order for computers to run effectively, they should be placed in a clean and clutter-free environment. Books, papers, trash, dust, and other airborne particles can destroy the fans in a computer, causing the computer to overheat and fail, resulting in unnecessary costs to the school division for replacement.

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING

WPS does not enforce the number of appliances plugged into outlets or power strips that are shared with computers in the classroom.

According to staff interviews and on-site observations, several computers in classrooms throughout the school division had multiple appliances plugged into the power strip or outlet that was shared with the computer. Appliances used by the same outlet included portable heaters, coffee makers, microwaves, and small refrigerators.

This practice causes computers to run slower, dim the display screens, and can even start a fire. Common fire safety tips state that users can prevent fires if they do not overload electrical outlets and use only one major (high-wattage) appliance on the same circuit at any one time. Therefore, staff who plug any appliance into the same outlet with a computer can cause damage or possibly start a fire.

Many school divisions consider fire threat a viable risk and prohibit the practice of running appliances in a classroom, especially while using the same outlet.

RECOMMENDATION

Recommendation 10-9:

Require mandatory compliance of staff to ensure computer outlets are not shared with any other appliances throughout the school division.

The school division should notify all staff immediately that noncompliance will not be tolerated for sharing outlets or power strips with computers in central administration or schools. The School Board should require a division-wide policy that provides stiff penalties, up to dismissal of staff for violating this policy, since the dangers this practice presents could cause loss of life to students and staff.

Subsequent documents were provided showing that a directive was sent out to staff in January 2006.

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources and should reduce costs associated with computer repairs.

FINDING

WPS teachers are allowing students to access their assigned computers in the classroom using teacher network login information.

According to staff interviews and corroboration with some teachers, MGT team members found that students are able to use their teachers' computers. While this precise practice is not recommended as a best practice, it does provide an avenue for technology integration in the classroom without having to relocate students to a lab.

A more effective way for students to use a teacher's computer would be to allow multiple logons to the network. Teachers would need to initiate these privileges in order to control the use of this practice. Student logons would be created using a different set of security and user privileges that would allow access to network files, and the Internet while not allowing access to the teacher's files.

RECOMMENDATION

Recommendation 10-10:

Create and implement a policy and process for multiple logons in classrooms where teachers allow students access to their computer.

A multiple logon policy and process would enable students to use teacher computers when computer labs are busy or not convenient for a particular circumstance. The Technology Department should create and implement a way for teachers to initiate a request for students so they may log on to the network and Internet yet not gain access to teacher files.

This practice would assist teachers who are not able to send one or more students to computer labs and create another avenue for technology use in the classroom.

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING

Currently, the technology staff within WPS evaluates hardware and software when such items are requested for purchase approval. While it is clear that all staff are not working through the Director of Technology for hardware and software purchases, those who do can be certain that the requested purchase is evaluated to ensure its compatibility with the school division technology plans and infrastructure. This evaluation process is a best practice among school divisions. While this report recommends an enforced policy for prior approval on all technology-related purchases, the school division is commended for performing evaluations where such approval is requested.

COMMENDATION

The WPS Technology Department performs thorough evaluations on technology-related items that are requested for approval by the school division.

FINDING

There is no documentation available to support all software purchased in the school division by the Technology Department, other central administrative staff, school administrators, teachers, or Technology Resource Teachers.

MGT requested a comprehensive inventory on software used throughout the school division. Documentation provided included a summary of volume licenses for main operating applications and a spreadsheet that listed antivirus, accounting, school grading, and attendance types of software. No documentation was provided for all the software used in each of the schools.

By not creating and maintaining a comprehensive inventory for software, the school division is risking legal action from software vendors. Software companies are able to seek damages when a school division does not renew licenses for their software yet continue to use the application. This practice creates a risk for the school system.

Other school systems have created a database that lists each software, vendor information, licensure dates, and the number of licenses or users entitled to use the software. The database has a mechanism that prompts technology staff when a license is in need of renewal six months prior to expiration.

RECOMMENDATION

Recommendation 10-11:

Develop a database that provides a comprehensive inventory for all software used throughout Winchester Public Schools.

By developing a database that captures each software license used in the school division, WPS will ensure that all licenses are in agreement with vendors and remove the risk of using software illegally. The database should produce a comprehensive list by location and be set to trigger an alert six months prior to expiration.

FISCAL IMPACT

The implementation of this recommendation can be accomplished using current division technology staff.

10.5 *Staff Development*

There is no accountability mechanism in place for staff development regarding technology integration within the school division, though a variety of training by user levels is offered and provided by the Department of Technology, particularly the Technology Resource Teachers.

Comprehensive course descriptions for technology-related training are available on the school division's Web site. The descriptions provide staff with the course name, description, classification, target audience by grade level, if required or not, class availability, dates, times, and the instructor's name.

While the school division is commended for the training offered, there is no accountability system in place to ensure that teachers are taking the training and using what has been learned in the classroom.

Best practices for staff development with regards to technology integration provide a mechanism to track training completed by each teacher. Teacher training is also followed up by classroom observations to verify that staff are using the learned activities in the delivery of lessons to students. Data are also kept and tracked to ensure that all staff are attending technology-related training for technology integration.

RECOMMENDATION

Recommendation 10-12:

Create a mechanism to track and report technology-related training data to instructional staff.

The school division should create and implement a tracking report for staff. Providing this mechanism for technology-related training should enable staff to become more efficient in technology.

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented using existing technology staff currently creating and maintaining databases for the school division.

FINDING

According to staff interviews, WPS does not provide adequate training when implementing a new application throughout the school division.

Staff stated that as the Internet became a more valuable tool and they were able to access it from their classroom, they were told they could use this resource; however, training was not provided. Staff further stressed the importance of being trained on smart boards as they were being purchased for classroom use.

An efficient practice that the school division could implement would be to add an additional phase to each technology-related initiative that focused on training staff.

RECOMMENDATION

Recommendation 10-13:

Add a phase to technology-related initiatives that includes staff training.

The school division is trying to implement 12 different initiatives related to technology and should add a phase to each initiative that schedules and provides training to all staff. This will be very important as WPS implements the new e-mail system throughout the school division.

This recommendation should enable staff to use new technology as it is implemented throughout the school division.

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented using the school division's existing Technology Resource Teachers and other Technology Department staff.

11.0 FOOD SERVICES

This chapter provides observations regarding operations of the Food Services Department of Winchester Public Schools (WPS). The four major sections in this chapter are:

11.1   Organization and Management
11.2   Planning, Policies, and Procedures
11.3   Student Participation
11.4   Financial Performance

CHAPTER SUMMARY

The school food program in WPS is administered through the division's Food Services Department. The Food Services Department operates breakfast and lunch programs in all division schools for over 3,670 students with 41 employees, including three within central administration.

The division does not use staffing plans or analyses to ensure that the appropriate levels are used according to the meals served. This chapter provides a method and fiscal impact for the school to implement such a plan.

Winchester Public Schools uses a process to ensure that equipment in school kitchens is budgeted for replacement, which is rare in school division management; however, specifications have not been developed for this process. WPS also involves food services staff in construction or renovation work, which is essential to keeping costs low in school kitchens.

Transportation and school scheduling causes low breakfast participation, and there are no formal strategies in place to increase student participation in breakfast or lunch in each school. WPS uses direct certification for free and reduced-priced meals, has substantially improved its cash balance, and uses an innovative approach for commodities.

While this report finds that WPS exceeds best practice levels for labor and food costs, this chapter provides the fiscal impact to provide substantial savings in these areas. This chapter contains several commendations as well as recommendations on food service operations for Winchester Public Schools.

INTRODUCTION

Good nutrition is a vital component in a child's ability to learn. For many children across the country, the food provided in school breakfast and lunch programs comprises the major portion of their nutrition.

School meal programs began when the Child Nutrition Act of 1946 authorized the National School Lunch Program to "safeguard the health and well-being of the nation's children." The program, administered by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), is open to all public and nonprofit private schools and all residential childcare institutions.

Lunch is available to all children in participating schools and must meet specific nutritional requirements to qualify for federal funds.

In 1975, Congress extended the National School Breakfast Program, begun as a pilot program, making breakfast "available in all schools where it is needed to provide adequate nutrition for children in attendance." Congress further expanded the program in 1989 by requiring the Secretary of Agriculture to provide funds to states to support the costs of starting school breakfast programs in low-income areas. USDA administers the National School Breakfast Program.

For the 2003-04 school year, federal spending totaled $6.5 billion for the National School Lunch Program. This federal support comes in the form of a cash reimbursement for each meal served, depending on the economic status of the student. The poorest students qualify for free lunches, while others qualify for reduced price lunches. The 2005-06 school year basic federal reimbursement rates for breakfast and lunch are shown in Exhibit 11-1. With the exception of the reimbursement rate for paid breakfast meals, all of these rates represent an increase over the reimbursement rates of 2004-05.

EXHIBIT 11-1
NATIONAL SCHOOL LUNCH AND BREAKFAST REIMBURSEMENT RATES
2005-06 SCHOOL YEAR

STUDENT CATEGORY	LUNCH	BREAKFAST
Free Meal	$2.32	$1.27
Reduced-Price Meal	$1.92	$0.97
Paid Meal	$0.22	$0.23

Source: http://www.fns.usda.gov, November 2005.

MGT conducted a survey of WPS administrators, principals, and teachers as part of this review. Two of the survey items are related to food services. Exhibit 11-2 provides the results for the first. As the exhibit shows, a majority of all three employee groups *agree* or *strongly agree* that the Food Services Department provides nutritious and appealing meals and snacks. Of the three groups, administrators were the most in agreement, at 84 percent, while teachers were the least in agreement, at just 49 percent.

EXHIBIT 11-2
COMPARISON SURVEY RESPONSES
ON FOOD SERVICE DELIVERY

SURVEY ITEM	(%A + SA) / (%D + SD)[1]		
	ADMINISTRATORS	PRINCIPALS	TEACHERS
The food services department provides nutritious and appealing meals and snacks.	84/0	64/27	49/24

Source: MGT survey of Winchester Public Schools, November 2005.
[1] Percent responding *Agree* or *Strongly Agree*/Percent responding *Disagree* or *Strongly Disagree*

When WPS administrators, principals, and teachers were surveyed about the overall program delivery of food service, results were varied among staff. Among central administration staff, 100 percent of respondents stated that the Food Services program is *adequate or outstanding*. Only 36 percent of principals and 24 percent of teachers were in agreement with central administration on this issue.

Exhibit 11-3 shows total food service costs for Winchester Public Schools as well as the per pupil costs among the comparison school divisions. As shown, WPS spends $57,251 above the comparison division average for food service operations. This total equates to WPS spending an average of $31 more per pupil than the comparison school divisions in this area.

EXHIBIT 11-3
FOOD SERVICE DISBURSEMENTS
PEER SCHOOL DIVISIONS
2003-04 SCHOOL YEAR

SCHOOL DIVISION	FOOD SERVICES	PER PUPIL COST
Winchester	**$1,295,705**	**$364**
Fredericksburg	$906,700	$381
Charlottesville	$1,354,722	$320
Manassas Park	$708,079	$314
Manassas	$1,837,427	$275
Salem	$1,328,088	$340
Division Average	**$1,238,454**	**$332**

Source: Virginia Department of Education, Web site, 2005.

11.1 *Organization and Management*

Organization and management of food service operations is essential to the effectiveness of the program. Leadership is needed to coordinate planning, implement policies, and ensure proper procedures are followed by cafeteria staff while ensuring students receive nutritious meals on a daily basis.

FINDING

The Commonwealth of Virginia performed a Federal Program Monitoring Review (FPM) of the School Breakfast Program and the National School Lunch Program in 2002. The review included the central office, Daniel Morgan Middle School and Garland R. Quarles Elementary School.

According to a letter from the Director of School Nutrition Programs for the Department of Education in the Commonwealth of Virginia, the school division records were found to have noted and substantial compliance in all areas for the central office and the two schools.

COMMENDATION

Winchester Public Schools is commended for receiving noted and substantial compliance in the central office and two elementary schools during the Commonwealth of Virginia's Federal Program Monitoring Review for Food Services.

11.2 *Planning, Policies, and Procedures*

Food service planning, policies, and procedures provide important information to drive internal operations, but are also important in the overall communication to stakeholders. An absence of formal policies and procedures creates the potential for misinterpretations and omissions with regards to food service operations. Furthermore, planning documents, policies, and procedures allow for a more thorough understanding of compliance with regulations in food service departments.

FINDING

The school division does not use a staffing plan or analysis, such as Meals Per Labor Hour, to determine the efficiency of the current organizational structure with regard to hourly personnel for the Food Services Department. MGT was provided documentation that attempts were made in the past to analyze staffing hours during a budgeting exercise several years ago.

The organizational chart provided in Exhibit 11-4 shows the current structure of staff used for food service operations in WPS. As shown, there are 30 cafeteria workers excluding managers for the seven schools.

EXHIBIT 11-4
WINCHESTER PUBLIC SCHOOLS
FOOD SERVICES CAFETERIA ORGANIZATION STRUCTURE
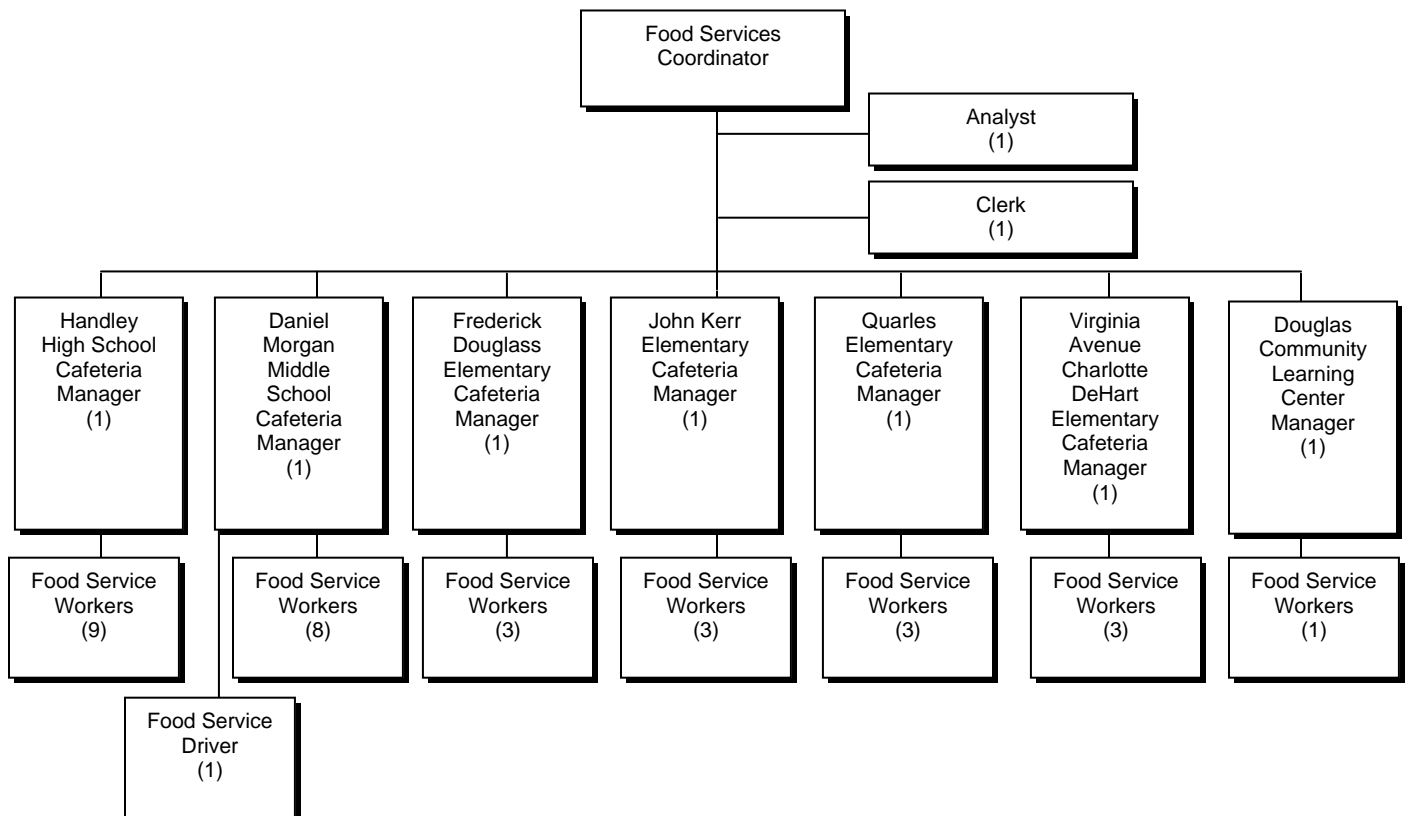
Source: Winchester Public Schools, Food Services Department, 2005.

Meals Per Labor Hour (MPLH) measures the average number of full meals and meal equivalents served divided by the number of employee hours worked. Benchmark levels were used to compare with the data provided by school division.

Exhibit 11-5 shows the MPLH analysis for September 2005, the most recent data available, based on the meals served by school and staff hours scheduled for the same period.

EXHIBIT 11-5
WPS MEALS PER LABOR HOUR ANALYSIS BY SCHOOL*
SEPTEMBER 2005

SCHOOL	NUMBER OF MEALS SERVED	LABOR HOURS BUDGETED PER DAY	MEALS PER LABOR HOUR CALCULATION
Handley High	527	58	9
Daniel Morgan Middle	686	64	11
Virginia Avenue Elementary	482	23	21
Frederick Douglass Elementary	404	23	18
John Kerr Elementary	310	20	16
Garland Quarles Elementary	488	26.5	18
Douglas Community Learning Center	83	11	8

Source: Winchester Public Schools, Food Services Department, 2005.
* Excludes lunches provided for the Northwestern Regional Education Program since hourly assignments were not provided.

Exhibit 11-6 shows the benchmark levels that the school division would need to use when comparing conventional and convenience systems in school divisions to the meals served by hour in WPS.

EXHIBIT 11-6
BENCHMARK MEALS PER LABOR HOUR

MEALS SERVED	CONVENTIONAL SYSTEM	CONVENIENCE SYSTEM
Up to 100	10	12
101 - 150	11	13
151 - 200	12	14
201 - 250	14	15
251 - 300	15	16
301 - 400	16	18
401 - 500	17	19
501 - 600	17	19
601 - 700	18	20
701 - 800	19	22
801 - 900	20	23
901 - Up	21	23

Source: *Controlling Costs for School Food Services*, Third Edition, 2000.

RECOMMENDATION

Recommendation 11-1:

Establish a policy on MPLH to implement benchmark staffing levels on an annual basis.

Staffing levels should be based on the number of meals served by kitchen type. These levels are shown in Exhibit 11-7.

The implementation of this recommendation should ensure that enough staff are available to serve students yet should prevent the overstaffing of school kitchens. This practice should provide cost savings for WPS in schools that are currently overstaffed. Specific cost savings for labor can be found in the fiscal impact for Recommendation 11-2.

EXHIBIT 11-7
WINCHESTER PUBLIC SCHOOLS
MEALS PER LABOR HOUR ANALYSIS COMPARED TO BENCHMARK LEVELS
SEPTEMBER 2005

SCHOOLS	AVERAGE NUMBER OF MEALS SERVED PER DAY*	STAFFING HOURS ALLOCATED PER DAY	MEALS PER LABOR HOUR (MPLH)	INDUSTRY BENCHMARK ON MEALS SERVED PER LABOR HOUR	STAFF HOURS (OVER) UNDER BENCHMARK
Handley High	25	58	0.43	10	(9.57)
Daniel Morgan Middle	33	64	0.52	10	(9.48)
Virginia Avenue Elementary	23	23	1.00	10	(9.00)
Frederick Douglass Elementary	19	23	0.83	10	(9.17)
John Kerr Elementary	15	20	0.75	10	(9.25)
Garland Quarles Elementary	23	27	0.85	10	(9.15)
Douglas Community Learning Center	4	11	0.36	10	(9.66)

Source: Created by MGT of America based on data provided by the school division and *Controlling Costs for School Food Services*, Third Edition, 2000.
* Based on total number of meals served divided by 21 school days.

FISCAL IMPACT

The implementation of this recommendation can be accomplished using existing central office staff in Food Services to analyze the data. As shown in Exhibit 11-7, hourly labor reduction would provide a substantial savings to the school division. MGT has provided cost savings related to labor in the fiscal impact for Recommendation 11-2.

FINDING

Labor costs for WPS food service staff are above best practice averages.

While the school division has shown strides in reducing labor costs, as shown in Exhibit 11-8, costs are still above best practice levels. As shown in the exhibit, labor costs have increased by nearly $33,000; revenue has increased by $164,792; and the percentage of labor costs to revenue has declined by four percent. According to interviews, the Food Services Coordinator has been trying to increase revenue and reduce labor costs, yet labor costs are still above the 40 percent of total revenue benchmark level.

The school division only reports on the four schools that serves as cooking kitchens for the other satellite campuses; however, in order to determine how labor costs are impacting the school division, it would be better to show these costs for each school.

EXHIBIT 11-8
WINCHESTER PUBLIC SCHOOLS
LABOR COST ANALYSIS
2003-04 AND 2004-05 SCHOOL YEARS

SCHOOL	2003-04			2004-05		
	TOTAL* LABOR COSTS	TOTAL REVENUE	PERCENTAGE OF LABOR COSTS TO REVENUE	TOTAL* LABOR COSTS	TOTAL REVENUE	PERCENTAGE OF LABOR COSTS TO REVENUE
Handley High	$161,559	$314,136	51.4%	$165,015	$354,770	46.5%
Daniel Morgan Middle	$343,221	$626,480	54.8%	$361,486	$711,760	50.8%
Virginia Avenue Elementary	$74,179	$148,031	50.1%	$79,123	$169,490	46.7%
Frederick Douglass Elementary	$75,204	$134,385	56.0%	$81,428	$151,804	53.6%
Total	**$654,163**	**$1,223,032**	**53.5%**	**$687,052**	**$1,387,824**	**49.5%**

Source: Winchester Public Schools, Food Services Department, 2005.

* Data only provided for the four schools listed.

By reporting labor costs and revenue for every school and keeping labor costs below 40 percent of total revenue, WPS would be better aligned with best practices for the school division and have an opportunity to increase the Food Services Fund Balance.

RECOMMENDATION

Recommendation 11-2:

Reduce labor costs to best practice levels of 40 percent of revenue and expand reporting by each school for better staffing analyses.

By reducing labor costs, Winchester Public Schools should allow for a more effective staff and possibly increase the Fund Balance to use for replacement of older equipment, as discussed later in this chapter. The division should also report all financial data by each individual school to ensure that decisions are not reached on the more generalized approach but rather by the specific school.

The implementation of this recommendation should provide for a more effective and efficient delivery of food services to the school division.

FISCAL IMPACT

By reducing labor costs to 40 percent of revenue, WPS should see a cost savings of $131,922 per year. This savings is the result of taking $1,387,824 x 40 percent = $555,130. The net difference is $687,052 current labor costs less $555,130 = $131,922.

Recommendation	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11
Reduce Labor Costs	$131,922	$131,922	$131,922	$131,922	$131,922

FINDING

The Food Services Coordinator for WPS works closely with the school division's maintenance staff to review past work orders on school kitchen equipment during the budget process in order to determine equipment needs for the next school year. Furthermore, WPS uses the Food Services Fund Balance to replace kitchen equipment that is outdated or no longer repairable.

This practice exemplifies the efficient use of fund balances for food service operations and is considered a best practice in school divisions.

COMMENDATION

Winchester Public Schools is commended for establishing a process to review food service operation equipment on an annual basis to determine replacement needs and the available monies in the Fund Balance.

FINDING

Buses are not dropping students off in time to allow for more participation in the breakfast program at Quarles Elementary School.

During the on-site visit, MGT observed over 50 students still trying to eat quickly after the bell had rung and announcements were made. According to staff interviews, this is a regular occurrence at this particular elementary school. MGT observed school buses arriving just as the bell rang and some students being told to quickly get to class. MGT was not able to determine if these students were part of the free or reduced-priced breakfast program; however, these students were not given the opportunity to eat breakfast that day.

The practice of dropping off students within 20 minutes of school starting does not allow the opportunity for breakfast participation, and the school division loses federal reimbursement funding for every child not able to participate.

Other school divisions make arrangements with transportation and school administrators prior to the beginning of each school year to ensure that all students are picked up at a reasonable time and then dropped off at school with enough time to have a proper breakfast.

WPS needs to better coordinate the scheduling of bus transportation and school start times to ensure that every student has the opportunity to eat a nutritious breakfast before class on a daily basis. This practice is particularly important for students who have not eaten since lunch at school the previous day, and it makes perfect financial sense with the federal reimbursement rates that are provided to the school division.

RECOMMENDATION

Recommendation 11-3:

Schedule bus transportation and school start times to allow all students the opportunity to have breakfast each day.

This recommendation should be implemented in conjunction with the recommendations provided in the Education Delivery and Transportation chapters of this report. WPS should review each school's schedule to ensure that a minimum of 20 minutes is provided for students to eat breakfast.

FISCAL IMPACT

The implementation of this recommendation can be accomplished with existing staff and should provide additional revenue through federal reimbursements to the school division due to the increase in student participation rates.

The Superintendent should also explain the importance of student participation in the federal meal programs to all staff and parents since the greater the participation, the greater the federal reimbursement. These reimbursement dollars can then assist the school division in providing additional funds to the food service operations, including the replacement of kitchen equipment.

FINDING

Construction plans are under way for the renovation of the school kitchen in Handley High School. However, the recently remodeled middle school kitchen might be better for meal preparation.

The middle school kitchen is large enough to handle cooking for the high school, with the exception of the pizza brought in for students. The pizza can continue to be brought in, but there was no discussion about having the new middle school kitchen and staff prepare meals.

WPS currently uses cooking kitchens to assist satellite school kitchens and needs to consider having the middle school prepare meals for the high school.

RECOMMENDATION

Recommendation 11-4:

Use Daniel Morgan Middle School's expansive kitchen as the cooking school for Handley High.

WPS should use the middle school's newly renovated kitchen to support the cooking needs of the high school. This would provide for a greater labor savings at the high school while still allowing for some meals, such as pizza, to be brought in by vendors. This practice would allow for a more efficient use of Daniel Morgan Middle School's newly renovated kitchen.

FISCAL IMPACT

The implementation of this recommendation would allow for a possible reduction of kitchen equipment needs and reduce the number of labor hours at the high school.

FINDING

WPS does not have specifications for equipment used in food service operations.

Food service equipment specifications allow for a more efficient use of purchasing and maintenance for school divisions since they provide manufacturer names, sizes, and fuel types. School divisions can then use these equipment specifications to reduce timely research on product costs when trying to budget or purchase items. Specifications also ensure the stability of division operations staff capabilities for routine maintenance since staff are already familiar with the equipment.

RECOMMENDATION

Recommendation 11-5:

Create specifications for all equipment located within the school division's kitchens.

Food service equipment such as ovens, stoves, and freezers are rather unique and usually require immediate installation when a replacement is needed. Equipment specifications are an efficient way for school divisions to order and replace equipment quickly. This practice allows for current maintenance staff to handle situations without costing the school division additional expense to hire an outside service.

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING

WPS Food Services staff are involved in discussions on renovation work at schools when a kitchen or cafeteria is included in the construction. The involvement of food services staff in renovation work is a best practice among school divisions since cafeteria managers may know what is working and what might help due to their expertise in this area. For example, it is important for managers to provide ideas on the location of point-of-sale drop as well as the height or length of serving lines. This practice reduces the amount of post-construction costs when work is completed but not useful to staff or students.

COMMENDATION

Winchester Public Schools is commended for involving food service staff in discussions involving renovation work when kitchens are cafeterias are part of the construction plans.

11.3 *Student Participation*

Maximizing student meal participation has two important benefits to school divisions:

- Students who eat nutritious meals each day can learn more effectively. Students are more receptive to learning if they have eaten a nutritious meal.

- Cash sales of food and federal reimbursement for meals served are two significant sources of revenue for school divisions.

FINDING

WPS does not have student participation goals in order to strategically increase participation and federal reimbursement revenue.

Established plans and goals help staff to know targeted goals in order to achieve higher participation rates. High levels of participation result in increased reimbursement from the federal government. For example, WPS had a 15.76 percent for total average daily percentage rate for breakfast according to the September 2005 Monthly ADP Report for the division. If the school division were to increase overall participation to 25 percent, it would experience a substantial increase in federal reimbursement revenue. This same type of scenario would hold true for increasing lunch participation in the school division.

RECOMMENDATION

Recommendation 11-6:

Implement strategies to raise student participation rates for breakfast.

If the Food Services Department can meet targeted goals of 25 percent for breakfast, the reimbursement from the federal government will increase substantially. A strategy should also be implemented to continually increase student participation in the lunch program.

If a school is not meeting targeted goals, the Food Services Coordinator can then meet with the cafeteria manager to help implement further strategies to increase student participation.

FISCAL IMPACT

Winchester Public Schools should see an annual increase of $14,940 for breakfast based on projected revenue of $176,660 - current revenue for breakfast of $161,720 = $14,940. These figures are based on current 2005 breakfast revenue. The

implementation of this recommendation might take one year to fully implement, and the fiscal impact has been adjusted to one-half for the first year of implementation.

Recommendation	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11
Raise Student for Breakfast Participation Rates	$14,940	$14,940	$14,940	$14,940	$14,940

FINDING

Parents are allowed to bring in sweets such as cakes, cookies, and cupcakes for their child's birthday during lunch periods, which conflicts with the type of items allowed to be served in the school division's cafeterias.

MGT observed a parent bringing in cupcakes at an elementary school for their son's birthday. There were approximately 20 cupcakes, yet over 75 students were eating lunch in the cafeteria at that particular period. The cupcakes were only to be distributed to students at one or two tables.

Additional concerns were sited during interviews dealing with PTO and classes selling candy grams. While the actual candy is not delivered during lunch, students are still able to consume the candy as part of their lunch. MGT also found that teachers have spur of the moment pizza parties for their class and order in pizza and sodas. This practice competes with food services in WPS.

The food service operations only allows for fruit and ice cream to be sold in the cafeteria due to higher nutritional values in these items when compared to cakes, cookies, and cupcakes. This practice promotes a form of competition for cafeterias since students will not be purchasing fruit or ice cream. This practice also sets an example that it is okay not to share with others, which may also foster bad feelings between students.

Other school systems have implemented a policy that allows for cafeterias to select and prepare special dessert options that fall under the USDA nutrition guidelines. These policies allow for all students to partake while keeping participation rates high.

RECOMMENDATION

Recommendation 11-7:

Create and enforce a non-competitive food service policy for Winchester Public Schools according to best practices in school divisions across the country.

The Food Services Coordinator should create a non-competitive food service policy for WPS. This policy should be approved and enforced by the Superintendent, principals, and cafeteria managers. The Food Services Coordinator should also work with the school principals and cafeteria managers to develop a special dessert falling under the USDA guidelines for such occasions as birthdays and holidays.

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented using existing resources and should allow for an increase in the daily participation rates for school lunches in the division.

FINDING

The Food Services Department staff use direct certification (using the TAN database) for ensuring that students who might be eligible for free or reduced-priced meals are automatically entered into the point-of-sale system for the division. Staff continue to monitor students and use the direct certification for students entering the division once the school year has already started.

This practice ensures that each student who may possibly be eligible for free or reduced-priced meals is given the opportunity to participate in the program without having to fill out a lot of paperwork that may seem overwhelming to some parents.

COMMENDATION

Winchester Public Schools is commended for using direct certification and following up on all students that may be eligible for free or reduced-price meals.

FINDING

The process for school lunch provisions for students on field trips is not handled consistently within Winchester Public Schools. Some teachers will notify their cafeteria manager within a few days of a scheduled field trip to allow for lunch preparation, which enables student participation percentages to remain relatively constant. While this is a commendable practice, this process is not consistent among the schools or teachers within the school division.

Other school systems have incorporated a field trip policy that requires teachers to notify cafeteria managers within one week of field trips. This practice can be incorporated into teacher planning by adding a single step to notify the cafeteria manager when the lesson plan has been submitted.

RECOMMENDATION

Recommendation 11-8:

Create and incorporate a field trip process to ensure student participation rates and federal reimbursement rates are consistent.

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources and should provide the school division with increased federal reimbursement rates.

FINDING

Winchester Public Schools has seen an increase in revenue for breakfast participation when serving hot breakfast, yet a plan to increase the number of hot breakfast days per week has not been created. Number of meals served or participation rates could not be provided to MGT for a proper analysis; however, all food service personnel interviewed provided the same responses regarding these increases on days that a hot breakfast is served. Documentation could not be provided to calculate if labor costs were higher on these days to further analyze the impact of providing more hot breakfasts to students.

A more effective approach to increasing student participation in breakfast would be for the school division to analyze the financial impacts of serving more hot breakfasts.

RECOMMENDATION

Recommendation 11-9:

Analyze the fiscal impact of serving additional hot breakfasts to students for increased participation rates and reimbursement revenue for Winchester Public Schools.

The school division should develop an analysis to calculate the increased revenue received when serving hot breakfasts. An analysis should then be performed to see if there is an increased cost to prepare hot breakfasts. The additional revenue should then be offset with any additional costs that may exist in order for WPS to determine if more hot breakfasts served would create additional funding for the school division.

If the school division breaks even with the recommended analysis, a decision should be made to serve hot breakfasts so students can benefit emotionally and nutritiously before starting classes each day.

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources and could create additional revenue once the analysis has been completed.

FINDING

Surveying students is a productive practice that helps participation rates since students actually can provide input into menu selection; however, WPS has not implemented this practice.

MGT spoke with students about menu selections during the on-site visit. Students at the elementary school appeared to be happy with the selections offered, yet the middle and high school students were rather disappointed with the menu options. At the middle school, the lines for food selection moved quickly and over 150 students were served within 10 minutes; however some students chose not to eat lunch. MGT consultants ate with students and spoke to other students to ask for reasons why they were not eating, since wait time would not be an issue. The reasons provided were similar and related to

having the same options every day. Options existed, but since they were always the same, students were bored with them.

A best practice among school divisions allows for the input of student preferences through surveys. Survey data are collected and analyzed by these school divisions to boost student participation rates at the secondary levels.

RECOMMENDATION

Recommendation 11-10:

Survey students at the secondary level to determine what offerings the students would prefer as menu selections.

Providing menu items that the students want will boost participation. Adjusting menus based on student preference is appropriate, but when the same offerings are made on a daily basis, participation rates tend to decline. Winchester Public Schools should create a database to analyze trends in student surveys then adjust menu selection, within reason, to accommodate student preferences. The implementation of this recommendation would create an effective and best practice for the school division.

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources and should increase revenue by improving student participation rates.

11.4 *Financial Performance*

Financial performance is important to any school business operation. School divisions must adhere to proper financial practices related to food service operations as well since there are implications from a local, Commonwealth, and federal perspective due to funding sources associated with school nutrition.

FINDING

For the 2003-04 school year, food services ended with a cash balance of $109,078, which included a loss at the high school of $22,076. For the 2004-05 school year, WPS had a $305,631 cash balance, and the high school showed a profit of $7,326.

The cash balance improved by over $112,553, which is more than a 58 percent increase. Of the four schools reported on the profit and loss statement, none reported a loss that would have required a transfer from the Fund Balance.

COMMENDATION

Winchester Public Schools is commended for dramatically improving its cash balance during the 2004-05 school year.

FINDING

WPS buys ready-made pizza from a national chain to serve in the schools throughout the division. The pizza is made with cheese that the school division receives from the United States Commodities. A rebate is provided to WPS from the pizza chain on a monthly basis according to the value assigned by the USDA on the cheese commodity. The national chain is an approved processor with the USDA and the school benefits by having a nationally recognized vendor that provides their modified product for student consumption.

COMMENDATION

Winchester Public Schools is commended for the innovative use of commodities that produces rebates based on commodity values assigned by the USDA.

FINDING

While WPS has decreased food costs during the past three years, these costs are still above best practice levels. Exhibit 11-9 shows the food costs for WPS over the past three years. As shown, food costs have decreased by over $59,000, yet are still nearly 40 percent of revenue.

Other school divisions keep food costs to 36 percent of revenue by maximizing commodities, keeping menu selections similar among all schools, and using purchasing cooperatives to limit specialized vendor spending. The *School Business Insider* also provides this threshold to food expenditures for school divisions as a best practice.

EXHIBIT 11-9
FOOD COSTS ANALYSIS
2002-03 THROUGH 2004-05 SCHOOL YEARS

2002-03			2003-04			2004-05		
FOOD COSTS	**REVENUE**	**PERCENTAGE OF FOOD COSTS TO REVENUE**	**FOOD COSTS**	**REVENUE**	**PERCENTAGE OF FOOD COSTS TO REVENUE**	**FOOD COSTS**	**REVENUE**	**PERCENTAGE OF FOOD COSTS TO REVENUE**
$506,985	$1,141,096	44.4%	$519,613	$1,253,655	41.4%	$566,471	$1,425,703	39.7%

Source: Winchester Public Schools, Food Services Department, Financial Summary Report, 2005.

RECOMMENDATION

Recommendation 11-11:

Reduce food costs to 36 percent of revenue, which is according to best practices, in Winchester Public Schools.

Limiting menu options, increasing the use of commodities, and surveying students on preferences as previously recommended should assist the school division in implementing this recommendation. The Food Services Coordinator should decrease spending levels for food costs over the next school year. Menus should be planned to keep food costs at 36 percent of projected revenue as indicated in the *School Business Insider.*

FISCAL IMPACT

Winchester Public Schools should have a cost savings of $53,218 annually based on 2004-05 revenue of $1,425,703 ($1,425,703 x 36 percent = $513,253). The 2004-05 food costs were $566,471 and $566,471 - $513,253 = $53,218. The five-year projected cost savings are $266,090 based on 2004-05 school year revenue.

Recommendation	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11
Reduce Food Costs	$53,218	$53,218	$53,218	$53,218	$53,218

FINDING

WPS cafeteria managers record daily cash receipts based on cash drawer counts, yet signatures are not required on sign deposit sheets or daily meal count reports.

Cafeteria managers validate meal counts to the cash collected on a daily basis and the Clerk II position in central administration validates deposits to the reports and bank statements. MGT collected sample deposits and reconciliation reports for food service operations and found that the cafeteria manager is not required to sign off on the deposit slip.

While WPS has not experienced any fraudulent activities associated with this process, it does present a risk for such activities. Generally accepted accounting principles state that for cash transactions, two signatures should be provided on documentation, including deposit slips. This step is critically important when point-of-sale systems have not been implemented in all cafeterias.

RECOMMENDATION

Recommendation 11-12:

Enforce a cash counting policy that requires two signatures on each cash deposit.

The recommendation requires that WPS create and enforce a policy to ensure that two persons per cafeteria count the cash tendered for the bank deposit. Staff should sign

both the deposit slip and the meals served report. The Food Services Coordinator should monitor the process to ensure that the process is performed on a daily basis.

FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

FINDING

Meal prices in WPS are similar to those at comparison school division and throughout Virginia. Exhibit 11-10 shows meal prices for the 2004-05 school year for WPS, the comparison school divisions, and the average for all Virginia school divisions. As shown in this exhibit, WPS is at or above breakfast and lunch meal price averages.

COMMENDATION

Winchester Public Schools is commended for keeping meal prices in step with both peer division averages and prices throughout the Commonwealth of Virginia.

FINDING

Currently, the Food Services Clerk II position for WPS produces the monthly profit and loss statements in the division by looking up data from several financial sources, which is a manually intensive process. The process requires staff to retrieve data from multiple sources including:

- general ledger;
- monthly journal entries regarding payroll for location codes;
- catering revenue;
- point-of-sale reports;
- inventory entries;
- accounts payable; and
- accounts receivable.

Once staff retrieves data, a subsequent review is performed by the Food Services Coordinator. Upon approval of this review, the monthly profit and loss statements are produced and finalized; however, statements are not provided by each school within the division.

A more efficient way for WPS to produce monthly profit and loss statements would be to use internal technology staff to develop a program to extract data from the different sources and integrate into one spreadsheet or profit and loss template with the appropriate criteria and drill down capabilities. Drill down capabilities would allow for profit and loss statements by each school cafeteria.

RECOMMENDATION

Recommendation 11-13:

Produce an automated program to create monthly profit and loss statements for food service operations.

The technology staff should create a program to pull monthly data from each source. Data should be imported into a profit and loss template that allows for drill downs to each school within the division as well as provide for a consolidated profit and loss statement for WPS. This recommendation would provide for a more efficient process and alleviate the manually intensive process currently used for the school division.

FISCAL IMPACT

The current manually intensive process takes several days to produce monthly reports and this recommendation should decrease the time frame to less than four hours per month, which should produce a cost savings in labor hours for Winchester Public Schools.

EXHIBIT 11-10
WINCHESTER MEAL COSTS
2004-05

DIVISION NAME	ELEMENTARY STUDENT BREAKFAST	MIDDLE STUDENT BREAKFAST	HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT BREAKFAST	ELEMENTARY REDUCED BREAKFAST	MIDDLE REDUCED BREAKFAST	HIGH SCHOOL REDUCED BREAKFAST	ELEMENTARY STUDENT LUNCH	MIDDLE STUDENT LUNCH	HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT LUNCH	ELEMENTARY REDUCED LUNCH	MIDDLE REDUCED LUNCH	HIGH SCHOOL REDUCED LUNCH
Winchester	**$0.90**	**$0.90**	**$1.00**	**$0.30**	**$0.30**	**$0.30**	**$1.55**	**$1.75**	**$1.85**	**$0.40**	**$0.40**	**$0.40**
Fredericksburg	$0.80	$0.80	$0.80	$0.30	$0.30	$0.30	$1.50	$1.50	$1.60	$0.40	$0.40	$0.40
Charlottesville	$1.00	$1.00	$1.00	$0.30	$0.30	$0.30	$1.50	$1.75	$1.75	$0.40	$0.40	$0.40
Manassas Park	$1.35	$1.35	$1.35	$0.30	$0.30	$0.30	$1.85	$1.85	$1.85	$0.40	$0.40	$0.40
Manassas	$1.00	*	*	$0.30	*	*	$1.75	$1.85	$1.85	$0.40	$0.40	$0.40
Salem	$0.90	$0.90	$0.90	$0.30	$0.30	$0.30	$1.55	$1.65	$1.75	$0.40	$0.40	$0.40
Division Average	**$0.99**	**$0.99**	**$1.01**	**$0.30**	**$0.30**	**$0.30**	**$1.62**	**$1.73**	**$1.78**	**$0.40**	**$0.40**	**$0.40**
VIRGINIA AVERAGE	**$0.82**	**$0.85**	**$0.86**	**$0.29**	**$0.28**	**$0.29**	**$1.43**	**$1.57**	**$1.57**	**$0.39**	**$0.39**	**$0.39**

Source: Virginia Department of Education Web site, 2005.
*Indicates Combined Schools or Non-Program Participation.

12.0 SUMMARY OF POTENTIAL SAVINGS AND COSTS

Based on the analyses of data obtained from interviews, surveys, community input, state and division documents, and first-hand observations in Winchester Public Schools (WPS), the MGT team developed 44 commendations and 110 recommendations in this report. Nineteen (19) recommendations have fiscal implications.

As shown below in Exhibit 12-1, full implementation of the recommendations in this report would generate a gross savings of over $2.3 million over five years with a net cost of about $1.7 million. It is important to note that many of the recommendations MGT made without specific fiscal impacts are expected to result in a net cost savings to the division, depending on how the division elects to implement them. It is also important to note that costs and savings presented in this report are in 2004-05 dollars and do not reflect increases due to salary or inflation adjustments.

Exhibit 12-1 shows the total costs and savings for all recommendations.

EXHIBIT 12-1
SUMMARY OF ANNUAL SAVINGS AND COSTS

CATEGORY	YEARS					TOTAL FIVE-YEAR SAVINGS (COSTS)
	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	
TOTAL SAVINGS	$417,504	$486,020	$486,020	$486,020	$486,020	$2,361,584
TOTAL (COSTS)	($281,061)	($352,502)	($352,502)	($352,502)	($352,502)	($1,691,069)
TOTAL NET SAVINGS (COSTS)	$136,443	$133,518	$133,518	$133,518	$133,518	$670,515
ONE-TIME SAVINGS (COSTS)						($328,711)
TOTAL FIVE-YEAR NET SAVINGS (COSTS) INCLUDING ONE-TIME SAVINGS (COSTS)						$341,804

Exhibit 12-2 provides a chapter by chapter summary for all costs and savings. Exhibit 12-3 and Exhibit 12-4 provide costs and savings by operating and capital funds, respectively.

It is important to keep in mind that only recommendations with fiscal impact are identified in this chapter. Many additional recommendations to improve the efficiency of Winchester Public Schools are included in Chapters 2 through 11.

MGT recommends that WPS give each of these recommendations serious consideration and develop a plan to proceed with implementation and a system to monitor subsequent progress.

EXHIBIT 12-2
WINCHESTER PUBLIC SCHOOLS
CHAPTER-BY-CHAPTER SUMMARY OF POTENTIAL SAVINGS (COSTS)

CHAPTER REFERENCE		Annual Savings (Costs)					Total Five-Year Savings (Costs)	One-Time Savings (Costs)
		2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11		
CHAPTER 3: PERSONNEL AND HUMAN RESOURCES								
3-4	Intensify Minority Applicant Recruitment Efforts (p. 3-15)	($3,000)	($3,000)	($3,000)	($3,000)	($3,000)	($15,000)	$0
CHAPTER 3 SUBTOTAL (COSTS)/SAVINGS		**($3,000)**	**($3,000)**	**($3,000)**	**($3,000)**	**($3,000)**	**($15,000)**	**$0**
CHAPTER 4: FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT								
4-2	Conduct Labor Market Survey (p. 4-11)	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	($25,000)
CHAPTER 4 SUBTOTAL (COSTS)/SAVINGS		**$0**	**$0**	**$0**	**$0**	**$0**	**$0**	**($25,000)**
CHAPTER 5: PURCHASING AND WAREHOUSING								
5-1	Hire Director of Purchasing and Risk Management and Generate Savings from Purchasing Improvements (p. 5-8)	$28,000	$28,000	$28,000	$28,000	$28,000	$140,000	$0
5-4	Develop and Implement Cell Phone Policy (p. 5-11)	$4,100	$4,100	$4,100	$4,100	$4,100	$20,500	$0
CHAPTER 5 SUBTOTAL (COSTS)/SAVINGS		**$32,100**	**$32,100**	**$32,100**	**$32,100**	**$32,100**	**$160,500**	**$0**
CHAPTER 6: EDUCATIONAL SERVICE DELIVERY AND MANAGEMENT								
6-1	Hire an Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction and Fill Vacancy for Coordinator of Curriculum and Instruction (p.6-9)	($71,442)	($142,883)	($142,883)	($142,883)	($142,883)	($642,974)	$0
6-5	Add Two Administrative Assistant Supplements and Save Time with the Two Positions (6-16)	$15,084	$15,084	$15,084	$15,084	$15,084	$75,420	$0
CHAPTER 6 SUBTOTAL (COSTS)/SAVINGS		**($56,358)**	**($127,799)**	**($127,799)**	**($127,799)**	**($127,799)**	**($567,554)**	**$0**
CHAPTER 7: SPECIAL PROGRAMS								
7-5	Begin Billing for Medicaid Reimbursement (p. 7-11)	$0	$12,800	$12,800	$12,800	$12,800	$51,200	$0
CHAPTER 7 SUBTOTAL (COSTS)/SAVINGS		**$0**	**$12,800**	**$12,800**	**$12,800**	**$12,800**	**$51,200**	**$0**

EXHIBIT 12-2 (Continued)
WINCHESTER PUBLIC SCHOOLS
CHAPTER-BY-CHAPTER SUMMARY OF POTENTIAL SAVINGS (COSTS)

CHAPTER REFERENCE	Annual Savings (Costs)					Total Five-Year Savings (Costs)	One-Time Savings (Costs)
	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11		
CHAPTER 8: FACILITIES USE AND MANAGEMENT							
8-6 Back up Blueprints for Seven Sites (p. 8-9)	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	($14,000)
8-14 Use Automatic Dispensing Devices (p. 8-20)	$3,330	$5,730	$5,730	$5,730	$5,730	$26,250	$0
8-15 Hire 6.3 FTE Custodians (p. 8-22)	($202,419)	($202,419)	($202,419)	($202,419)	($202,419)	($1,012,095)	$0
8-16 Install Energy and Utility Savings Devices and Generate Utility Savings (p. 8-24)	$116,346	$116,346	$116,346	$116,346	$116,346	$581,730	($393,111)
8-18 Hire Half-time Resource Conservation Manager and Generate Utility Savings (p. 8-27)	$50,564	$50,564	$50,564	$50,564	$50,564	$252,820	$0
CHAPTER 8 SUBTOTAL (COSTS)/SAVINGS	**($32,179)**	**($29,779)**	**($29,779)**	**($29,779)**	**($29,779)**	**($151,295)**	**($407,111)**
CHAPTER 9: TRANSPORTATION							
9-1 Hire Contracted Substitute Driver (p. 9-11)	($4,200)	($4,200)	($4,200)	($4,200)	($4,200)	($21,000)	$0
9-8 Sell Two Excess Buses, Reduce Annual Bus Replacement Reduction, Eliminate Two Bus Driver Positions, and Purchase and Maintain	$0	$51,866	$51,866	$51,866	$51,866	$207,464	$90,000
9-11 Install Mobile Unit, Power Pack, and Outside Antenna (p. 9-25)	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	($1,600)
9-14 Sell Five Excess Buses and Continue Vehicle Maintenance (p. 9-32)	$0	$1,450	$1,450	$1,450	$1,450	$5,800	$15,000
CHAPTER 9 SUBTOTAL (COSTS)/SAVINGS	**($4,200)**	**$49,116**	**$49,116**	**$49,116**	**$49,116**	**$192,264**	**$103,400**
CHAPTER 11: FOOD SERVICES							
11-2* Reduce Labor Costs (p. 11-7)	$131,922	$131,922	$131,922	$131,922	$131,922	$659,610	$0
11-6* Raise Student for Breakfast Participation Rates (p. 11-11)	$14,940	$14,940	$14,940	$14,940	$14,940	$74,700	$0
11-11 Reduce Food Costs (p. 11-16)	$53,218	$53,218	$53,218	$53,218	$53,218	$266,090	$0
CHAPTER 11 SUBTOTAL (COSTS)/SAVINGS	**$200,080**	**$200,080**	**$200,080**	**$200,080**	**$200,080**	**$1,000,400**	**$0**

EXHIBIT 12-2 (Continued)
WINCHESTER PUBLIC SCHOOLS
CHAPTER-BY-CHAPTER SUMMARY OF POTENTIAL SAVINGS (COSTS)

CHAPTER REFERENCE	Annual Savings (Costs)					Total Five-Year Savings (Costs)	One-Time Savings (Costs)
	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11		
TOTAL SAVINGS	$417,504	$486,020	$486,020	$486,020	$486,020	$2,361,584	$105,000
TOTAL (COSTS)	($281,061)	($352,502)	($352,502)	($352,502)	($352,502)	($1,691,069)	($433,711)
TOTAL NET SAVINGS (COSTS)	$136,443	$133,518	$133,518	$133,518	$133,518	$670,515	($328,711)
TOTAL FIVE-YEAR NET SAVINGS (COSTS) INCLUDING ONE-TIME SAVINGS (COSTS)						$341,804	

*Reserve Fund for Food Service

EXHIBIT 12-3
WINCHESTER PUBLIC SCHOOLS
SUMMARY OF POTENTIAL OPERATING FUND SAVINGS (COSTS)

CHAPTER REFERENCE	Annual Savings (Costs)					Total Five-Year Savings (Costs)	One-Time Savings (Costs)
	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11		
CHAPTER 3: PERSONNEL AND HUMAN RESOURCES							
3-4 Intensify Minority Applicant Recruitment Efforts (p. 3-15)	($3,000)	($3,000)	($3,000)	($3,000)	($3,000)	($15,000)	$0
CHAPTER 3 SUBTOTAL (COSTS)/SAVINGS	**($3,000)**	**($3,000)**	**($3,000)**	**($3,000)**	**($3,000)**	**($15,000)**	$0
CHAPTER 4: FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT							
4-2 Conduct Labor Market Survey (p. 4-11)	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	($25,000)
CHAPTER 4 SUBTOTAL (COSTS)/SAVINGS	**$0**	**$0**	**$0**	**$0**	**$0**	**$0**	**($25,000)**
CHAPTER 5: PURCHASING AND WAREHOUSING							
5-1 Hire Director of Purchasing and Risk Management and Generate Savings from Purchasing Improvements (p. 5-8)	$28,000	$28,000	$28,000	$28,000	$28,000	$140,000	$0
5-4 Develop and Implement Cell Phone Policy (p. 5-11)	$4,100	$4,100	$4,100	$4,100	$4,100	$20,500	$0
CHAPTER 5 SUBTOTAL (COSTS)/SAVINGS	**$32,100**	**$32,100**	**$32,100**	**$32,100**	**$32,100**	**$160,500**	$0
CHAPTER 6: EDUCATIONAL SERVICE DELIVERY AND MANAGEMENT							
6-1 Hire an Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction and Fill Vacancy for Coordinator of Curriculum and Instruction (p.6-9)	($71,442)	($142,883)	($142,883)	($142,883)	($142,883)	($642,974)	$0
6-5 Add Two Administrative Assistant Supplements and Save Time with the Two Positions (6-16)	$15,084	$15,084	$15,084	$15,084	$15,084	$75,420	$0
CHAPTER 6 SUBTOTAL (COSTS)/SAVINGS	**($56,358)**	**($127,799)**	**($127,799)**	**($127,799)**	**($127,799)**	**($567,554)**	$0
CHAPTER 7: SPECIAL PROGRAMS							
7-5 Begin Billing for Medicaid Reimbursement (p. 7-11)	$0	$12,800	$12,800	$12,800	$12,800	$51,200	$0
CHAPTER 7 SUBTOTAL (COSTS)/SAVINGS	**$0**	**$12,800**	**$12,800**	**$12,800**	**$12,800**	**$51,200**	$0

EXHIBIT 12-3 (Continued)
WINCHESTER PUBLIC SCHOOLS
SUMMARY OF POTENTIAL OPERATING FUND SAVINGS (COSTS)

CHAPTER REFERENCE	Annual Savings (Costs)					Total Five-Year Savings (Costs)	One-Time Savings (Costs)
	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11		
CHAPTER 8: FACILITIES USE AND MANAGEMENT							
8-6 Back up Blueprints for Seven Sites (p. 8-9)	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	($14,000)
8-14 Use Automatic Dispensing Devices (p. 8-20)	$3,330	$5,730	$5,730	$5,730	$5,730	$26,250	$0
8-15 Hire 6.3 FTE Custodians (p. 8-22)	($202,419)	($202,419)	($202,419)	($202,419)	($202,419)	($1,012,095)	$0
8-16 Generate Utility Savings (p. 8-24)	$116,346	$116,346	$116,346	$116,346	$116,346	$581,730	
8-18 Hire Half-time Resource Conservation Manager and Generate Utility Savings (p. 8-27)	$50,564	$50,564	$50,564	$50,564	$50,564	$252,820	$0
CHAPTER 8 SUBTOTAL (COSTS)/SAVINGS	**($32,179)**	**($29,779)**	**($29,779)**	**($29,779)**	**($29,779)**	**($151,295)**	**($14,000)**
CHAPTER 9: TRANSPORTATION							
9-1 Hire Contracted Substitute Driver (p. 9-11)	($4,200)	($4,200)	($4,200)	($4,200)	($4,200)	($21,000)	$0
9-8 Eliminate Two Bus Driver Positions (p. 9-20)	$0	$51,866	$51,866	$51,866	$51,866	$207,464	($22,000)
9-11 Install Mobile Unit, Power Pack, and Outside Antenna (p. 9-25)	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	($1,600)
9-14 Continue Vehicle Maintenance (p. 9-32)	$0	$1,450	$1,450	$1,450	$1,450	$5,800	
CHAPTER 9 SUBTOTAL (COSTS)/SAVINGS	**($4,200)**	**$49,116**	**$49,116**	**$49,116**	**$49,116**	**$192,264**	**($23,600)**
CHAPTER 11: FOOD SERVICES							
11-2* Reduce Labor Costs (p. 11-7)	$131,922	$131,922	$131,922	$131,922	$131,922	$659,610	$0
11-6* Raise Student for Breakfast Participation Rates (p. 11-11)	$14,940	$14,940	$14,940	$14,940	$14,940	$74,700	$0
11-11 Reduce Food Costs (p. 11-16)	$53,218	$53,218	$53,218	$53,218	$53,218	$266,090	$0
CHAPTER 11 SUBTOTAL (COSTS)/SAVINGS	**$200,080**	**$200,080**	**$200,080**	**$200,080**	**$200,080**	**$1,000,400**	**$0**

EXHIBIT 12-3 (Continued)
WINCHESTER PUBLIC SCHOOLS
SUMMARY OF POTENTIAL OPERATING FUND SAVINGS (COSTS)

CHAPTER REFERENCE	Annual Savings (Costs)					Total Five-Year Savings (Costs)	One-Time Savings (Costs)
	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11		
TOTAL SAVINGS	$417,504	$486,020	$486,020	$486,020	$486,020	$2,361,584	($22,000)
TOTAL (COSTS)	($281,061)	($352,502)	($352,502)	($352,502)	($352,502)	($1,691,069)	($40,600)
TOTAL NET SAVINGS (COSTS)	$136,443	$133,518	$133,518	$133,518	$133,518	$670,515	($62,600)
TOTAL FIVE-YEAR NET SAVINGS (COSTS) INCLUDING ONE-TIME SAVINGS (COSTS)						$607,915	

*Reserve Fund for Food Service

EXHIBIT 12-4
WINCHESTER PUBLIC SCHOOLS
SUMMARY OF POTENTIAL CAPITAL EXPENSE FUND SAVINGS (COSTS)

CHAPTER REFERENCE	Annual Savings (Costs)					Total Five-Year Savings (Costs)	One-Time Savings (Costs)
	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11		
CHAPTER 8: FACILITIES USE AND MANAGEMENT							
8-16 Install Energy and Utility Savings Devices (p. 8-24)	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	($393,111)
CHAPTER 8 SUBTOTAL (COSTS)/SAVINGS	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	($393,111)
CHAPTER 9: TRANSPORTATION							
9-8 Sell Two Excess Buses, Reduce Annual Bus Replacement Reduction, and Purchase and Maintain Bus Routing Software (p. 9-20)	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$112,000
9-14 Sell Five Excess Buses (p. 9-32)	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$15,000
CHAPTER 9 SUBTOTAL (COSTS)/SAVINGS	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$127,000
TOTAL SAVINGS	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$127,000
TOTAL (COSTS)	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	($393,111)
TOTAL NET SAVINGS (COSTS)	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	($266,111)
TOTAL FIVE-YEAR NET SAVINGS (COSTS) INCLUDING ONE-TIME SAVINGS (COSTS)						($266,111)	

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APPENDIX A

EXHIBIT A-1
COMPARISON SURVEY RESPONSES
WITHIN WINCHESTER PUBLIC SCHOOLS

PART A OF SURVEY	ADMINISTRATOR RESPONSES (%)	PRINCIPAL RESPONSES (%)	TEACHER RESPONSES (%)
1. Overall quality of public education in the Winchester Public Schools is:			
Good or Excellent	100	100	87
Fair or Poor	0	0	12
2. Overall quality of education in the Winchester Public Schools is:			
Improving	83	100	47
Staying the Same	17	0	22
Getting Worse	0	0	27
Don't Know	0	0	4
3. Grade given to the Winchester Public Schools teachers:			
Above Average (A or B)	67	82	85
Below Average (D or F)	0	0	2
4. Grade given to the Winchester Public Schools school level administrators:			
Above Average (A or B)	84	100	62
Below Average (D or F)	0	0	11
5. Grade given to the Winchester Public Schools central office administrators:			
Above Average (A or B)	100	64	33
Below Average (D or F)	0	0	30

EXHIBIT A-2
COMPARISON SURVEY RESPONSES
WITHIN WINCHESTER PUBLIC SCHOOLS

PART B	(%A + SA) / (%D + SD)[1]		
	ADMINISTRATORS	PRINCIPALS	TEACHERS
1. The emphasis on learning in this school division has increased in recent years.	100/0	100/0	66/13
2. Our schools are safe and secure from crime.	83/0	90/0	65/20
3. Our schools effectively handle misbehavior problems.	50/17	54/18	37/36
4. Our schools have sufficient space and facilities to support the instructional programs.	100/0	45/45	41/41
5. Our schools have the materials and supplies necessary for instruction in basic skills programs such as writing and mathematics.	100/0	91/9	81/9
6. Our schools can be described as "good places to learn."	100/0	100/0	85/8
7. There is administrative support for controlling student behavior in our schools.	50/17	82/9	56/30
8. Most students in our schools are motivated to learn.	100/0	100/0	55/21
9. Lessons are organized to meet students' needs.	83/0	91/9	86/4
10. The curriculum is broad and challenging for most students.	100/0	91/0	78/11
11. There is little a teacher can do to overcome education problems due to a student's home life.	0/67	0/100	19/56
12. Teachers in our schools know the material they teach.	84/0	100/0	92/2
13. Teachers in our schools care about students' needs.	100/0	100/0	92/4
14. Teachers expect students to do their very best.	100/0	100/0	91/4
15. The school division provides adequate technology-related staff development.	84/17	63/18	71/16
16. Principals and assistant principals in our schools care about students' needs.	100/0	100/0	92/2
17. In general, parents take responsibility for their children's behavior in our schools.	67/0	64/9	29/47
18. Parents in this school division are satisfied with the education their children are receiving.	84/0	91/0	66/8
19. Most parents seem to know what goes on in our schools.	67/0	82/9	29/34
20. Parents play an active role in decision-making in our schools.	33/17	36/27	28/40
21. This community really cares about its children's education.	83/0	100/0	65/10
22. The food services department encourages student participation through customer satisfaction surveys.	17/17	9/18	15/25
23. The school division requests input on the long range technology plan.	83/0	45/18	27/28
24. Funds are managed wisely to support education in this school division.	84/17	91/0	49/18
25. Sufficient student services are provided in this school division (e.g., counseling, speech therapy, health).	100/0	91/9	69/16
26. School-based personnel play an important role in making decisions that affect schools in this school division.	83/0	55/27	36/40
27. The school division provides adequate technical support.	100/0	82/9	60/24
28. Students are often late arriving to and/or departing from school because the buses do not arrive to school on time.	17/66	0/72	10/61
29. The food services department provides nutritious and appealing meals and snacks.	84/0	64/27	49/24

[1] Percent responding *Agree* or *Strongly Agree*/Percent responding *Disagree* or *Strongly Disagree.* The *neutral* and *don't know* responses are omitted.

EXHIBIT A-3
COMPARISON SURVEY RESPONSES
WITHIN WINCHESTER PUBLIC SCHOOLS

PART C	(%G + E) / (%F + P)[1]		
	ADMINISTRATORS	PRINCIPALS	TEACHERS
1. Board of Education members' knowledge of the educational needs of students in Winchester Public Schools.	100/0	82/9	47/33
2. Board of Education members' knowledge of operations in Winchester Public Schools.	100/0	72/18	57/25
3. Board of Education members' work at setting or revising policies for Winchester Public Schools.	100/0	91/9	55/29
4. The School District Superintendent's work as the educational leader of Winchester Public Schools.	100/0	73/27	36/57
5. The School District Superintendent's work as the chief administrator (manager) of Winchester Public Schools.	80/20	64/36	44/47
6. Principals' work as the instructional leaders of their schools.	80/20	100/0	67/34
7. Principals' work as the managers of the staff and teachers.	100/0	100/0	67/34
8. Teachers' work in meeting students' individual learning needs.	80/20	100/0	84/15
9. Teachers' work in communicating with parents.	80/20	91/9	74/24
10. Teachers' attitudes about their jobs.	50/50	64/36	34/65
11. Students' ability to learn.	100/0	100/0	72/27
12. The amount of time students spend on task learning in the classroom.	80/0	91/9	78/20
13. Parents' efforts in helping their children to do better in school.	60/20	64/36	24/68
14. Parents' participation in school activities and organizations.	40/60	18/82	26/67
15. How well students' test results are explained to parents.	80/20	36/54	29/47
16. The cleanliness and maintenance of facilities in Winchester Public Schools.	100/0	73/27	73/27
17. How well relations are maintained with various groups in the community.	80/20	72/18	48/38
18. Staff development opportunities provided by Winchester Public Schools for teachers.	100/0	100/0	61/38
19. Staff development opportunities provided by Winchester Public Schools for school administrators.	80/20	72/27	21/10
20. The school district's job of providing adequate instructional technology.	100/0	91/9	58/40
21. The school district's use of technology for administrative purposes.	80/20	82/18	43/28

[1] Percent responding *Good* or *Excellent* / Percent responding *Fair* or *Poor.* The *don't know* responses are omitted.

EXHIBIT A-4
COMPARISON SURVEY RESPONSES
WITHIN WINCHESTER PUBLIC SCHOOLS

PART D: WORK ENVIRONMENT	(% A + SA) / (% D + SD)[1]		
	ADMINISTRATORS	PRINCIPALS	TEACHERS
1. I find Winchester Public Schools to be an exciting, challenging place to work.	80/0	90/0	68/17
2. The work standards and expectations in Winchester Public Schools are equal to or above those of most other school districts.	100/0	100/0	67/12
3. Winchester Public Schools officials enforce high work standards.	100/0	100/0	72/12
4. Most Winchester Public Schools teachers enforce high student learning standards.	80/0	100/0	90/1
5. Winchester Public Schools teachers and administrators have excellent working relationships.	60/0	63/18	47/27
6. <u>Teachers</u> who do not meet expected work standards are disciplined.	20/20	54/27	11/34
7. <u>Staff</u> who do not meet expected work standards are disciplined.	60/0	54/27	14/26
8. I feel that I have the authority to adequately perform my job responsibilities.	100/0	91/9	79/14
9. I have adequate facilities in which to conduct my work.	100/0	100/0	74/11
10. I have adequate equipment and computer support to conduct my work.	100/0	100/0	72/19
11. The workloads are equitably distributed among teachers and among staff members.	80/0	82/18	31/45
12. No one knows or cares about the amount or quality of work that I perform.	20/40	9/81	28/53
13. Workload is evenly distributed.	60/40	55/27	27/44
14. If there were an emergency in the schools, I would know how to respond appropriately.	80/0	100/0	87/5
15. I often observe other teachers and/or staff socializing rather than working while on the job.	0/60	18/82	10/76

[1] Percent responding *Agree* or *Strongly Agree*/Percent responding *Disagree11* or *Strongly Disagree.* The *neutral* and *don't know* responses are omitted.

EXHIBIT A-5
COMPARISON SURVEY RESPONSES
WITHIN WINCHESTER PUBLIC SCHOOLS

PART E: JOB SATISFACTION	(%A + SA) / (% D + SD)[1]		
	ADMINISTRATORS	**PRINCIPALS**	**TEACHERS**
1. I am very satisfied with my job in Winchester Public Schools.	80/0	82/0	56/30
2. I plan to continue my career in Winchester Public Schools.	80/20	82/9	58/12
3. I am actively looking for a job outside of Winchester Public Schools.	20/40	0/73	10/56
4. Salary levels in Winchester Public Schools are competitive.	80/0	45/36	36/43
5. I feel that my work is appreciated by my supervisor(s).	60/0	63/0	59/30
6. I feel that I am an integral part of Winchester Public Schools team.	100/0	72/9	53/23
7. I feel that there is no future for me in Winchester Public Schools.	20/80	18/64	12/68
8. My salary level is adequate for my level of work and experience.	80/20	45/27	22/56

[1] Percent responding *Agree* or *Strongly Agree*/Percent responding *Disagree* or *Strongly Disagree.* The *neutral* and *don't know* responses are omitted.

EXHIBIT A-6
COMPARISON SURVEY RESPONSES
WITHIN WINCHESTER PUBLIC SCHOOLS

PART F: ADMINISTRATIVE STRUCTURE/PRACTICES	(% A + SA) / (% D + SD)[1]		
	ADMINISTRATORS	**PRINCIPALS**	**TEACHERS**
1. Most administrative practices in Winchester Public Schools are highly effective and efficient.	80/20	73/27	29/43
2. Administrative decisions are made promptly and decisively.	40/20	45/54	26/36
3. Winchester Public Schools administrators are easily accessible and open to input.	80/0	73/18	44/37
4. Authority for administrative decisions is delegated to the lowest possible level.	40/40	9/45	13/32
5. Teachers and staff are empowered with sufficient authority to effectively perform their responsibilities.	60/0	80/0	49/29
6. Major bottlenecks exist in many administrative processes which cause unnecessary time delays.	40/40	45/27	30/26
7. The extensive committee structure in Winchester Public Schools ensures adequate input from teachers and staff on most important decisions.	40/20	27/9	26/40
8. Winchester Public Schools has too many committees.	20/40	45/27	52/11
9. Winchester Public Schools has too many layers of administrators.	0/100	18/64	49/19
10. Most of Winchester Public Schools administrative processes (e.g., purchasing, travel requests, leave applications, personnel, etc.) are highly efficient and responsive.	100/0	63/18	60/11
11. Central office administrators are responsive to school needs.	100/0	54/36	30/41
12. Central office administrators provide quality service to schools.	100/0	54/27	32/39

[1] Percent responding *Agree* or *Strongly Agree*/Percent responding *Disagree* or *Strongly Disagree.* The *neutral* and *don't know* responses are omitted.

EXHIBIT A-7
COMPARISON SURVEY RESPONSES
WITHIN WINCHESTER PUBLIC SCHOOLS

PART G: SCHOOL DISTRICT/PROGRAM FUNCTION	% NEEDS SOME IMPROVEMENT + NEEDS MAJOR IMPROVEMENT / % ADEQUATE [1] + OUTSTANDING		
	ADMINISTRATORS	PRINCIPALS	TEACHERS
a. Budgeting	0/100	9/82	28/45
b. Strategic planning	60/40	55/45	37/34
c. Curriculum planning	40/60	18/82	55/40
d. Financial management and accounting	0/100	18/82	11/45
e. Community relations	20/80	36/63	34/48
f. Program evaluation, research, and assessment	40/40	27/73	39/40
g. Instructional technology	20/80	27/72	36/58
h. Pupil accounting	20/80	18/73	26/46
i. Instructional coordination/supervision	20/80	18/82	45/46
j. Instructional support	20/80	27/73	52/45
k. Federal Programs (e.g., Title I, Special Education) coordination	0/100	18/82	27/58
l. Personnel recruitment	0/100	27/72	32/36
m. Personnel selection	0/100	18/81	36/39
n. Personnel evaluation	20/80	18/82	34/54
o. Staff development	20/80	0/100	49/46
p. Data processing	40/40	27/63	13/41
q. Purchasing	40/60	18/73	13/43
r. Plant maintenance	0/100	18/82	13/50
s. Facilities planning	0/100	9/82	18/45
t. Transportation	40/60	36/64	14/48
u. Food service	0/100	36/64	24/57
v. Custodial services	20/80	45/54	19/69
w. Risk management	40/20	18/45	10/41
x. Administrative technology	20/80	18/82	8/35
y. Grants administration	40/60	9/54	7/30

[1] Percent responding *Needs Some Improvement* or *Needs Major Improvement* / Percent responding *Adequate* or *Outstanding.* The *should be eliminated* and *don't know* responses are omitted.

EXHIBIT A-8
COMPARISON SURVEY RESPONSES
WITHIN WINCHESTER PUBLIC SCHOOLS

PART H: OPERATIONS	ADMINISTRATORS (%)	PRINCIPALS (%)	TEACHERS (%)
1. The overall operation of Winchester Public Schools is:			
Highly efficient	0	9	6
Above average in efficiency	80	45	24
Average in efficiency	20	36	54
Less efficient than most other school districts	0	9	12
Don't know	0	0	5
2. The operational efficiency of Winchester Public Schools could be improved by:			
Outsourcing some support services	17	27	9
Offering more programs	0	27	20
Offering fewer programs	50	0	6
Increasing the number of administrators	17	9	10
Reducing the number of administrators	17	0	24
Increasing the number of teachers	17	46	53
Reducing the number of teachers	0	0	0
Increasing the number of support staff	33	27	39
Reducing the number of support staff	17	0	1
Increasing the number of facilities	0	9	22
Reducing the number of facilities	0	0	2
Rezoning schools	17	18	13
Other	0	9	6

*Percentages may add up to over 100 percent due to rounding.

EXHIBIT A-9
COMPARISON SURVEY RESPONSES
WINCHESTER PUBLIC SCHOOLS ADMINISTRATORS AND
ADMINISTRATORS IN OTHER SCHOOL DISTRICTS

PART A OF SURVEY	WINCHESTER PUBLIC SCHOOLS ADMINISTRATORS (%)	OTHER SCHOOL DISTRICT ADMINISTRATORS (%)
1. Overall quality of public education in the school district is:		
Good or Excellent	100	85
Fair or Poor	0	14
2. Overall quality of education in the school district is:		
Improving	83	69
Staying the Same	17	20
Getting Worse	0	2
Don't Know	0	3
3. Grade given to teachers:		
Above Average (A or B)	67	78
Below Average (D or F)	0	1
4. Grade given to school administrators:		
Above Average (A or B)	84	77
Below Average (D or F)	0	3
5. Grade given to school district administrators:		
Above Average (A or B)	100	77
Below Average (D or F)	0	5

EXHIBIT A-10
COMPARISON SURVEY RESPONSES
WINCHESTER PUBLIC SCHOOLS ADMINISTRATORS AND
ADMINISTRATORS IN OTHER SCHOOL DISTRICTS

	(% A + SA) / (% D + SD)[1]	
PART B	**WINCHESTER PUBLIC SCHOOLS ADMINISTRATORS**	**OTHER SCHOOL DISTRICT ADMINISTRATORS**
1. The emphasis on learning in this school division has increased in recent years.	100/0	83/6
2. Our schools are safe and secure from crime.	83/0	65/16
3. Our schools effectively handle misbehavior problems.	50/17	54/24
4. Our schools have sufficient space and facilities to support the instructional programs.	100/0	26/62
5. Our schools have the materials and supplies necessary for instruction in basic skills programs such as writing and mathematics.	100/0	63/17
6. Our schools can be described as "good places to learn."	100/0	84/5
7. There is administrative support for controlling student behavior in our schools.	50/17	68/12
8. Most students in our schools are motivated to learn.	100/0	65/12
9. Lessons are organized to meet students' needs.	83/0	56/10
10. The curriculum is broad and challenging for most students.	100/0	70/8
11. There is little a teacher can do to overcome education problems due to a student's home life.	0/67	20/58
12. Teachers in our schools know the material they teach.	84/0	69/6
13. Teachers in our schools care about students' needs.	100/0	80/4
14. Teachers expect students to do their very best.	100/0	74/7
15. The school division provides adequate technology-related staff development.	84/17	n/a
16. Principals and assistant principals in our schools care about students' needs.	100/0	84/4
17. In general, parents take responsibility for their children's behavior in our schools.	67/0	42/34
18. Parents in this school division are satisfied with the education their children are receiving.	84/0	57/16
19. Most parents seem to know what goes on in our schools.	67/0	36/39
20. Parents play an active role in decision-making in our schools.	33/17	35/24
21. This community really cares about its children's education.	83/0	63/15
22. The food services department encourages student participation through customer satisfaction surveys.	17/17	n/a
23. The school division requests input on the long range technology plan.	83/0	n/a
24. Funds are managed wisely to support education in this school division.	84/17	67/18
25. Sufficient student services are provided in this school division (e.g., counseling, speech therapy, health).	100/0	57/26
26. School-based personnel play an important role in making decisions that affect schools in this school division.	83/0	48/24
27. The school division provides adequate technical support.	100/0	n/a
28. Students are often late arriving to and/or departing from school because the buses do not arrive to school on time.	17/66	8/56
29. The food services department provides nutritious and appealing meals and snacks.	84/0	62/14

[1] Percent responding *Agree* or *Strongly Agree*/Percent responding *Disagree* or *Strongly Disagree.* The *neutral* and *don't know* responses are omitted.

EXHIBIT A-11
COMPARISON SURVEY RESPONSES
WINCHESTER PUBLIC SCHOOLS ADMINISTRATORS AND
ADMINISTRATORS IN OTHER SCHOOL DISTRICTS

	(% G+ E) / (% F + P)[1]	
PART C	**WINCHESTER PUBLIC SCHOOLS ADMINISTRATORS**	**OTHER SCHOOL DISTRICT ADMINISTRATORS**
1. Board of Education members' knowledge of the educational needs of students in the school district.	100/0	40/51
2. Board of Education members' knowledge of operations in Winchester Public Schools.	100/0	36/58
3. Board of Education members' work at setting or revising policies for the school district.	100/0	44/48
4. The school district Superintendent's work as the educational leader of the school district.	100/0	78/18
5. The school district Superintendent's work as the chief administrator (manager) of the school district.	80/20	77/20
6. Principals' work as the instructional leaders of their schools.	80/20	70/29
7. Principals' work as the managers of the staff and teachers.	100/0	74/25
8. Teachers' work in meeting students' individual learning needs.	80/20	62/32
9. Teachers' work in communicating with parents.	80/20	49/41
10. Teachers' attitudes about their jobs.	50/50	44/47
11. Students' ability to learn.	100/0	74/20
12. The amount of time students spend on task learning in the classroom.	80/0	49/34
13. Parents' efforts in helping their children to do better in school.	60/20	29/56
14. Parents' participation in school activities and organizations.	40/60	27/59
15. How well students' test results are explained to parents.	80/20	36/44
16. The cleanliness and maintenance of facilities in the school district.	100/0	70/30
17. How well relations are maintained with various groups in the community.	80/20	60/35
18. Staff development opportunities provided by the school district for teachers.	100/0	63/32
19. Staff development opportunities provided by the school district for school administrators.	80/20	53/43
20. The school district's job of providing adequate instructional technology.	100/0	54/43
21. The school district's use of technology for administrative purposes.	80/20	53/46

[1] Percent responding *Good* or *Excellent* / Percent responding *Fair* or *Poor.* The *don't know* responses are omitted.

EXHIBIT A-12
COMPARISON SURVEY RESPONSES
WINCHESTER PUBLIC SCHOOLS ADMINISTRATORS AND
ADMINISTRATORS IN OTHER SCHOOL DISTRICTS

PART D: WORK ENVIRONMENT	(% A + SA) / (% D + SD)[1]	
	WINCHESTER PUBLIC SCHOOLS ADMINISTRATORS	OTHER SCHOOL DISTRICT ADMINISTRATORS
1. I find the school district to be an exciting, challenging place to work.	80/0	81/8
2. The work standards and expectations in the school district are equal to or above those of most other school districts.	100/0	75/7
3. School district officials enforce high work standards.	100/0	73/12
4. Most school district teachers enforce high student learning standards.	80/0	62/8
5. School district teachers and administrators have excellent working relationships.	60/0	54/14
6. Teachers who do not meet expected work standards are disciplined.	20/20	26/33
7. Staff who do not meet expected work standards are disciplined.	60/0	37/34
8. I feel that I have the authority to adequately perform my job responsibilities.	100/0	79/15
9. I have adequate facilities in which to do my work.	100/0	71/21
10. I have adequate equipment and computer support to do my work.	100/0	70/22
11. The workloads are equitably distributed among teachers and among staff members.	80/0	29/28
12. No one knows or cares about the amount or quality of work that I perform.	20/40	16/70
13. Workload is evenly distributed.	60/40	32/46
14. The failure of school district officials to enforce high work standards results in poor quality work.	80/0	78/7
15. I often observe other teachers and/or staff socializing rather than working while on the job.	0/60	16/58

[1] Percent responding *Agree* or *Strongly Agree* / Percent responding *Disagree* or *Strongly Disagree.* The *neutral* and *don't know* responses are omitted.

EXHIBIT A-13
COMPARISON SURVEY RESPONSES
WINCHESTER PUBLIC SCHOOLS ADMINISTRATORS AND
ADMINISTRATORS IN OTHER SCHOOL DISTRICTS

PART E: JOB SATISFACTION	(% A + SA) / (% D + SD)[1]	
	WINCHESTER PUBLIC SCHOOLS ADMINISTRATORS	**OTHER SCHOOL DISTRICT ADMINISTRATORS**
1. I am very satisfied with my job in the school district.	80/0	77/12
2. I plan to continue my career in the school district.	80/20	83/6
3. I am actively looking for a job outside of the school district.	20/40	8/78
4. Salary levels in the school district are competitive (with other school districts).	80/0	45/40
5. I feel that my work is appreciated by my supervisor(s).	60/0	75/13
6. I feel that I am an integral part of the school district.	100/0	74/11
7. I feel that there is no future for me in the school district.	20/80	10/77
8. My salary level is adequate for my level of work and experience.	80/20	42/45

[1] Percent responding *Agree* or *Strongly Agree* / Percent responding *Disagree* or *Strongly Disagree.* The *neutral* and *don't know* responses are omitted.

EXHIBIT A-14
COMPARISON SURVEY RESPONSES
WINCHESTER PUBLIC SCHOOLS ADMINISTRATORS AND
ADMINISTRATORS IN OTHER SCHOOL DISTRICTS

PART F: ADMINISTRATIVE STRUCTURE/PRACTICES	(% A + SA) / (% D + SD)[1]	
	WINCHESTER PUBLIC SCHOOLS ADMINISTRATORS	**OTHER SCHOOL DISTRICT ADMINISTRATORS**
1. Most administrative practices in the school district are highly effective and efficient.	80/20	54/23
2. Administrative decisions are made promptly and decisively.	40/20	44/33
3. School district administrators are easily accessible and open to input.	80/0	65/18
4. Authority for administrative decisions is delegated to the lowest possible level.	40/40	28/44
5. Teachers and staff are empowered with sufficient authority to effectively perform their responsibilities.	60/0	52/18
6. Major bottlenecks exist in many administrative processes which cause unnecessary time delays.	40/40	40/37
7. The extensive committee structure in the school district ensures adequate input from teachers and staff on most important decisions.	40/20	50/20
8. The school district has too many committees.	20/40	37/32
9. The school district has too many layers of administrators.	0/100	19/64
10. Most administrative processes (e.g., purchasing, travel requests, leave applications, personnel, etc.) are highly efficient and responsive.	100/0	54/25
11. Central office administrators are responsive to school needs.	100/0	76/8
12. Central office administrators provide quality service to schools.	100/0	77/6

[1] Percent responding *Agree* or *Strongly Agree* / Percent responding *Disagree* or *Strongly Disagree.* The *neutral* and *don't know* responses are omitted.

EXHIBIT A-15
COMPARISON SURVEY RESPONSES
WINCHESTER PUBLIC SCHOOLS ADMINISTRATORS AND
ADMINISTRATORS IN OTHER SCHOOL DISTRICTS

PART G: SCHOOL DISTRICT/PROGRAM FUNCTION	% NEEDS SOME IMPROVEMENT + NEEDS MAJOR IMPROVEMENT / % ADEQUATE + OUTSTANDING[1]	
	WINCHESTER PUBLIC SCHOOLS ADMINISTRATORS	OTHER SCHOOL DISTRICTS ADMINISTRATORS
a. Budgeting	0/100	47/45
b. Strategic planning	60/40	44/42
c. Curriculum planning	40/60	30/50
d. Financial management and accounting	0/100	36/53
e. Community relations	20/80	39/53
f. Program evaluation, research, and assessment	40/40	34/50
g. Instructional technology	20/80	48/41
h. Pupil accounting	20/80	25/48
i. Instructional coordination/supervision	20/80	30/50
j. Instructional support	20/80	32/51
k. Federal Programs (e.g., Title I, Special Education) coordination	0/100	24/52
l. Personnel recruitment	0/100	47/42
m. Personnel selection	0/100	46/48
n. Personnel evaluation	20/80	47/49
o. Staff development	20/80	48/49
p. Data processing	40/40	38/45
q. Purchasing	40/60	34/53
r. Plant maintenance	0/100	43/48
s. Facilities planning	0/100	38/48
t. Transportation	40/60	21/65
u. Food service	0/100	18/67
v. Custodial services	20/80	37/54
w. Risk management	40/20	20/54
x. Administrative technology	20/80	42/49
y. Grants administration	40/60	24/49

[1] Percent responding *Needs Some Improvement* or *Needs Major Improvement* / Percent responding *Adequate* or *Outstanding.*

EXHIBIT A-16
COMPARISON SURVEY RESPONSES
WINCHESTER PUBLIC SCHOOLS PRINCIPALS AND
PRINCIPALS IN OTHER SCHOOL DISTRICTS

PART A OF SURVEY	WINCHESTER PUBLIC SCHOOLS (%)	OTHER SCHOOL DISTRICTS (%)
1. Overall quality of public education in the school district is:		
Good or Excellent	100	89
Fair or Poor	0	11
2. Overall quality of education in the school district is:		
Improving	100	78
Staying the Same	0	15
Getting Worse	0	7
Don't Know	0	1
3. Grade given to teachers:		
Above Average (A or B)	82	85
Below Average (D or F)	0	1
4. Grade given to school administrators:		
Above Average (A or B)	100	91
Below Average (D or F)	0	1
5. Grade given to school district administrators:		
Above Average (A or B)	64	73
Below Average (D or F)	0	7

EXHIBIT A-17
COMPARISON SURVEY RESPONSES
WINCHESTER PUBLIC SCHOOLS PRINCIPALS AND
PRINCIPALS IN OTHER SCHOOL DISTRICTS

PART B	(% A + SA) / (% D + SD) [1]	
	WINCHESTER PUBLIC SCHOOLS	OTHER SCHOOL DISTRICTS
1. The emphasis on learning in this school division has increased in recent years.	100/0	89/4
2. Our schools are safe and secure from crime.	90/0	81/9
3. Our schools effectively handle misbehavior problems.	54/18	74/14
4. Our schools have sufficient space and facilities to support the instructional programs.	45/45	30/59
5. Our schools have the materials and supplies necessary for instruction in basic skills programs such as writing and mathematics.	91/9	75/14
6. Our schools can be described as "good places to learn."	100/0	92/3
7. There is administrative support for controlling student behavior in our schools.	82/9	89/6
8. Most students in our schools are motivated to learn.	100/0	77/12
9. Lessons are organized to meet students' needs.	91/9	86/6
10. The curriculum is broad and challenging for most students.	91/0	86/7
11. There is little a teacher can do to overcome education problems due to a student's home life.	0/100	19/69
12. Teachers in our schools know the material they teach.	100/0	90/4
13. Teachers in our schools care about students' needs.	100/0	92/3
14. Teachers expect students to do their very best.	100/0	89/4
15. The school division provides adequate technology-related staff development.	63/18	n/a
16. Principals and assistant principals in our schools care about students' needs.	100/0	98/1
17. In general, parents take responsibility for their children's behavior in our schools.	64/9	51/31
18. Parents in this school division are satisfied with the education their children are receiving.	91/0	73/9
19. Most parents seem to know what goes on in our schools.	82/9	43/36
20. Parents play an active role in decision-making in our schools.	36/27	60/20
21. This community really cares about its children's education.	100/0	72/14
22. The food services department encourages student participation through customer satisfaction surveys.	9/18	n/a
23. The school division requests input on the long range technology plan.	45/18	n/a
24. Funds are managed wisely to support education in this school division.	91/0	67/19
25. Sufficient student services are provided in this school division (e.g., counseling, speech therapy, health).	91/9	56/36
26. School-based personnel play an important role in making decisions that affect schools in this school division.	55/27	61/24
27. The school division provides adequate technical support.	82/9	n/a
28. Students are often late arriving to and/or departing from school because the buses do not arrive to school on time.	0/72	18/68
29. The food services department provides nutritious and appealing meals and snacks.	64/27	58/26

[1] Percent responding *Agree* or *Strongly Agree* / Percent responding *Disagree* or *Strongly Disagree.* The *neutral* and *don't know* responses are omitted.

EXHIBIT A-18
COMPARISON SURVEY RESPONSES
WINCHESTER PUBLIC SCHOOLS PRINCIPALS AND
PRINCIPALS IN OTHER SCHOOL DISTRICTS

PART C	(%G+ E) / (%F + P)[1]	
	WINCHESTER PUBLIC SCHOOLS	OTHER SCHOOL DISTRICTS
1. Board of Education members' knowledge of the educational needs of students in the school district.	82/9	39/57
2. Board of Education members' knowledge of operations in the school district.	72/18	41/56
3. Board of Education members' work at setting or revising policies for the school district.	91/9	50/47
4. The school district Superintendent's work as the educational leader of the school district.	73/27	81/17
5. The school district Superintendent's work as the chief administrator (manager) of the school district.	64/36	81/17
6. Principals' work as the instructional leaders of their schools.	100/0	89/11
7. Principals' work as the managers of the staff and teachers.	100/0	94/6
8. Teachers' work in meeting students' individual learning needs.	100/0	80/20
9. Teachers' work in communicating with parents.	91/9	68/32
10. Teachers' attitudes about their jobs.	64/36	64/36
11. Students' ability to learn.	100/0	84/16
12. The amount of time students spend on task learning in the classroom.	91/9	72/27
13. Parents' efforts in helping their children to do better in school.	64/36	35/64
14. Parents' participation in school activities and organizations.	18/82	33/66
15. How well students' test results are explained to parents.	36/54	51/47
16. The cleanliness and maintenance of facilities in the school district.	73/27	65/34
17. How well relations are maintained with various groups in the community.	72/18	66/32
18. Staff development opportunities provided by the school district for teachers.	100/0	68/31
19. Staff development opportunities provided by the school district for school administrators.	72/27	63/37
20. The school district's job of providing adequate instructional technology.	91/9	46/52
21. The school district's use of technology for administrative purposes.	82/18	54/45

[1] Percent responding *Good* or *Excellent* / Percent responding *Fair* or *Poor.* The *don't know* responses are omitted.

EXHIBIT A-19
COMPARISON SURVEY RESPONSES
WINCHESTER PUBLIC SCHOOLS PRINCIPALS AND
PRINCIPALS IN OTHER SCHOOL DISTRICTS

	(% A + SA) / (% D + SD)[1]	
PART D: WORK ENVIRONMENT	**WINCHESTER PUBLIC SCHOOLS**	**OTHER SCHOOL DISTRICTS**
1. I find the school district to be an exciting, challenging place to work.	90/0	88/5
2. The work standards and expectations in the school district are equal to or above those of most other school districts.	100/0	83/6
3. School district officials enforce high work standards.	100/0	81/9
4. Most school district teachers enforce high student learning standards.	100/0	81/7
5. School district teachers and administrators have excellent working relationships.	63/18	76/7
6. Teachers who do not meet expected work standards are disciplined.	54/27	48/31
7. Staff who do not meet expected work standards are disciplined.	54/27	54/25
8. I feel that I have the authority to adequately perform my job responsibilities.	91/9	80/13
9. I have adequate facilities in which to do my work.	100/0	74/19
10. I have adequate equipment and computer support to do my work.	100/0	65/27
11. The workloads are equitably distributed among teachers and among staff members.	82/18	68/21
12. No one knows or cares about the amount or quality of work that I perform.	9/81	19/68
13. Workload is evenly distributed.	55/27	45/35
14. The failure of school district officials to enforce high work standards results in poor quality work.	100/0	96/2
15. I often observe other teachers and/or staff socializing rather than working while on the job.	18/82	12/77

[1] Percent responding *Agree* or *Strongly Agree* / Percent responding *Disagree* or *Strongly Disagree*. The *neutral* and *don't know* responses are omitted.

EXHIBIT A-20
COMPARISON SURVEY RESPONSES
WINCHESTER PUBLIC SCHOOLS PRINCIPALS AND
PRINCIPALS IN OTHER SCHOOL DISTRICTS

PART E: JOB SATISFACTION	(% A + SA) / (% D + SD)[1]	
	WINCHESTER PUBLIC SCHOOLS	**OTHER SCHOOL DISTRICTS**
1. I am very satisfied with my job in the school district.	82/0	83/8
2. I plan to continue my career in the school district.	82/9	88/4
3. I am actively looking for a job outside of the school district.	0/73	8/78
4. Salary levels in the school district are competitive (with other school districts).	45/36	40/48
5. I feel that my work is appreciated by my supervisor(s).	63/0	74/15
6. I feel that I am an integral part of the school district.	72/9	74/12
7. I feel that there is no future for me in the school district.	18/64	8/81
8. My salary level is adequate for my level of work and experience.	45/27	32/58

[1] Percent responding *Agree* or *Strongly Agree* / Percent responding *Disagree* or *Strongly Disagree.* The *neutral* and *don't know* responses are omitted.

EXHIBIT A-21
COMPARISON SURVEY RESPONSES
WINCHESTER PUBLIC SCHOOLS PRINCIPALS AND
PRINCIPALS IN OTHER SCHOOL DISTRICTS

PART F: ADMINISTRATIVE STRUCTURE/PRACTICES	(% A + SA) / (% D + SD)[1]	
	WINCHESTER PUBLIC SCHOOLS	OTHER SCHOOL DISTRICTS
1. Most administrative practices in the school district are highly effective and efficient.	73/27	69/18
2. Administrative decisions are made promptly and decisively.	45/54	62/21
3. School district administrators are easily accessible and open to input.	73/18	71/15
4. Authority for administrative decisions is delegated to the lowest possible level.	9/45	36/38
5. Teachers and staff are empowered with sufficient authority to effectively perform their responsibilities.	80/0	77/12
6. Major bottlenecks exist in many administrative processes which cause unnecessary time delays.	45/27	40/39
7. The extensive committee structure in the school district ensures adequate input from teachers and staff on most important decisions.	27/9	60/21
8. The school district has too many committees.	45/27	35/34
9. The school district has too many layers of administrators.	18/64	27/57
10. Most administrative processes (e.g., purchasing, travel requests, leave applications, personnel, etc.) are highly efficient and responsive.	63/18	57/26
11. Central office administrators are responsive to school needs.	54/36	65/20
12. Central office administrators provide quality service to schools.	54/27	63/18

[1] Percent responding *Agree* or *Strongly Agree* / Percent responding *Disagree* or *Strongly Disagree.* The *neutral* and *don't know* responses are omitted.

EXHIBIT A-22
COMPARISON SURVEY RESPONSES
WINCHESTER PUBLIC SCHOOLS PRINCIPALS AND
PRINCIPALS IN OTHER SCHOOL DISTRICTS

PART G: SCHOOL DISTRICT/PROGRAM FUNCTION	% NEEDS SOME IMPROVEMENT + NEEDS MAJOR IMPROVEMENT / % ADEQUATE [1] + OUTSTANDING	
	WINCHESTER PUBLIC SCHOOLS	OTHER SCHOOL DISTRICTS
a. Budgeting	9/82	49/48
b. Strategic planning	55/45	38/53
c. Curriculum planning	18/82	40/59
d. Financial management and accounting	18/82	35/60
e. Community relations	36/63	37/61
f. Program evaluation, research, and assessment	27/73	32/65
g. Instructional technology	27/72	60/39
h. Pupil accounting	18/73	27/66
i. Instructional coordination/supervision	18/82	40/58
j. Instructional support	27/73	44/55
k. Federal Programs (e.g., Title I, Special Education) coordination	18/82	32/57
l. Personnel recruitment	27/72	47/48
m. Personnel selection	18/81	41/57
n. Personnel evaluation	18/82	40/58
o. Staff development	0/100	43/57
p. Data processing	27/63	39/51
q. Purchasing	18/73	37/58
r. Plant maintenance	18/82	55/43
s. Facilities planning	9/82	51/43
t. Transportation	36/64	43/54
u. Food service	36/64	35/65
v. Custodial services	45/54	47/52
w. Risk management	18/45	23/63
x. Administrative technology	18/82	48/49
y. Grants administration	9/54	34/49

[1] Percent responding *Needs Some Improvement* or *Needs Major Improvement* / Percent responding *Adequate* or *Outstanding.* The *should be eliminated* and *don't know* responses are omitted.

EXHIBIT A-23
COMPARISON SURVEY RESPONSES
WINCHESTER PUBLIC SCHOOLS TEACHERS AND
TEACHERS IN OTHER SCHOOL DISTRICTS

PART A OF SURVEY	WINCHESTER PUBLIC SCHOOLS (%)	OTHER SCHOOL DISTRICTS (%)
1. Overall quality of public education in the school district is:		
Good or Excellent	87	74
Fair or Poor	12	25
2. Overall quality of education in the school district is:		
Improving	47	53
Staying the Same	22	27
Getting Worse	27	16
Don't Know	4	4
3. Grade given to teachers:		
Above Average (A or B)	85	83
Below Average (D or F)	2	1
4. Grade given to school administrators:		
Above Average (A or B)	62	59
Below Average (D or F)	11	11
5. Grade given to school district administrators:		
Above Average (A or B)	33	38
Below Average (D or F)	30	21

EXHIBIT A-24
COMPARISON SURVEY RESPONSES
WINCHESTER PUBLIC SCHOOLS TEACHERS AND
TEACHERS IN OTHER SCHOOL DISTRICTS

	(% A + SA) / (% D + SD) [1]	
PART B	**WINCHESTER PUBLIC SCHOOLS**	**OTHER SCHOOL DISTRICTS**
1. The emphasis on learning in this school division has increased in recent years.	66/13	71/13
2. Our schools are safe and secure from crime.	65/20	53/28
3. Our schools effectively handle misbehavior problems.	37/36	37/48
4. Our schools have sufficient space and facilities to support the instructional programs.	41/41	28/62
5. Our schools have the materials and supplies necessary for instruction in basic skills programs such as writing and mathematics.	81/9	54/31
6. Our schools can be described as "good places to learn."	85/8	74/11
7. There is administrative support for controlling student behavior in our schools.	56/30	55/29
8. Most students in our schools are motivated to learn.	55/21	55/29
9. Lessons are organized to meet students' needs.	86/4	79/9
10. The curriculum is broad and challenging for most students.	78/11	77/11
11. There is little a teacher can do to overcome education problems due to a student's home life.	19/56	35/46
12. Teachers in our schools know the material they teach.	92/2	88/4
13. Teachers in our schools care about students' needs.	92/4	91/3
14. Teachers expect students to do their very best.	91/4	88/4
15. The school division provides adequate technology-related staff development.	71/16	n/a
16. Principals and assistant principals in our schools care about students' needs.	92/2	83/7
17. In general, parents take responsibility for their children's behavior in our schools.	29/47	27/53
18. Parents in this school division are satisfied with the education their children are receiving.	66/8	53/14
19. Most parents seem to know what goes on in our schools.	29/34	29/50
20. Parents play an active role in decision-making in our schools.	28/40	36/38
21. This community really cares about its children's education.	65/10	49/27
22. The food services department encourages student participation through customer satisfaction surveys.	15/25	n/a
23. The school division requests input on the long range technology plan.	27/28	n/a
24. Funds are managed wisely to support education in this school division.	49/18	28/46
25. Sufficient student services are provided in this school division (e.g., counseling, speech therapy, health).	69/16	53/34
26. School-based personnel play an important role in making decisions that affect schools in this school division.	36/40	35/33
27. The school division provides adequate technical support.	60/24	n/a
28. Students are often late arriving to and/or departing from school because the buses do not arrive to school on time.	10/61	17/60
29. The food services department provides nutritious and appealing meals and snacks.	49/24	43/34

[1] Percent responding *Agree* or *Strongly Agree* / Percent responding *Disagree* or *Strongly Disagree.* The *neutral* and *don't know* responses are omitted.

**EXHIBIT A-25
COMPARISON SURVEY RESPONSES
WINCHESTER PUBLIC SCHOOLS TEACHERS AND
TEACHERS IN OTHER SCHOOL DISTRICTS**

PART C	(%G+ E) / (%F + P)[1]	
	WINCHESTER PUBLIC SCHOOLS	**OTHER SCHOOL DISTRICTS**
1. Board of Education members' knowledge of the educational needs of students in the school district.	47/33	24/64
2. Board of Education members' knowledge of operations in the school district.	57/25	29/55
3. Board of Education members' work at setting or revising policies for the school district.	55/29	27/58
4. The school district Superintendent's work as the educational leader of the school district.	36/57	49/40
5. The school district Superintendent's work as the chief administrator (manager) of the school district.	44/47	50/38
6. Principals' work as the instructional leaders of their schools.	67/34	63/36
7. Principals' work as the managers of the staff and teachers.	67/34	67/32
8. Teachers' work in meeting students' individual learning needs.	84/15	79/20
9. Teachers' work in communicating with parents.	74/24	75/24
10. Teachers' attitudes about their jobs.	34/65	50/49
11. Students' ability to learn.	72/27	64/35
12. The amount of time students spend on task learning in the classroom.	78/20	60/37
13. Parents' efforts in helping their children to do better in school.	24/68	21/76
14. Parents' participation in school activities and organizations.	26/67	23/75
15. How well students' test results are explained to parents.	29/47	38/52
16. The cleanliness and maintenance of facilities in the school district.	73/27	52/47
17. How well relations are maintained with various groups in the community.	48/38	43/44
18. Staff development opportunities provided by the school district for teachers.	61/38	61/38
19. Staff development opportunities provided by the school district for school administrators.	21/10	32/22
20. The school district's job of providing adequate instructional technology.	58/40	47/51
21. The school district's use of technology for administrative purposes.	43/28	45/31

[1] Percent responding *Good* or *Excellent* / Percent responding *Fair* or *Poor.* The *don't know* responses are omitted.

EXHIBIT A-26
COMPARISON SURVEY RESPONSES
WINCHESTER PUBLIC SCHOOLS TEACHERS AND
TEACHERS IN OTHER SCHOOL DISTRICTS

	(% A + SA) / (% D + SD)[1]	
PART D: WORK ENVIRONMENT	**WINCHESTER PUBLIC SCHOOLS**	**OTHER SCHOOL DISTRICTS**
1. I find the school district to be an exciting, challenging place to work.	68/17	69/12
2. The work standards and expectations in the school district are equal to or above those of most other school districts.	67/12	63/14
3. School district officials enforce high work standards.	72/12	63/15
4. Most school district teachers enforce high student learning standards.	90/1	78/8
5. School district teachers and administrators have excellent working relationships.	47/27	45/26
6. Teachers who do not meet expected work standards are disciplined.	11/34	25/39
7. Staff who do not meet expected work standards are disciplined.	14/26	23/36
8. I feel that I have the authority to adequately perform my job responsibilities.	79/14	81/12
9. I have adequate facilities in which to do my work.	74/11	69/23
10. I have adequate equipment and computer support to do my work.	72/19	54/36
11. The workloads are equitably distributed among teachers and among staff members.	31/45	40/43
12. No one knows or cares about the amount or quality of work that I perform.	28/53	24/58
13. Workload is evenly distributed.	27/44	36/43
14. The failure of school district officials to enforce high work standards results in poor quality work.	87/5	87/7
15. I often observe other teachers and/or staff socializing rather than working while on the job.	10/76	18/66

[1] Percent responding *Agree* or *Strongly Agree* / Percent responding *Disagree* or *Strongly Disagree*. The *neutral* and *don't know* responses are omitted.

EXHIBIT A-27
COMPARISON SURVEY RESPONSES
WINCHESTER PUBLIC SCHOOLS TEACHERS
AND TEACHERS IN OTHER SCHOOL DISTRICTS

	(% A + SA) / (% D + SD)[1]	
PART E: JOB SATISFACTION	**WINCHESTER PUBLIC SCHOOLS**	**OTHER SCHOOL DISTRICTS**
1. I am very satisfied with my job in the school district.	56/30	70/15
2. I plan to continue my career in the school district.	58/12	76/8
3. I am actively looking for a job outside of the school district.	10/56	11/74
4. Salary levels in the school district are competitive (with other school districts).	36/43	33/53
5. I feel that my work is appreciated by my supervisor(s).	59/30	65/21
6. I feel that I am an integral part of the school district.	53/23	59/20
7. I feel that there is no future for me in the school district.	12/68	12/73
8. My salary level is adequate for my level of work and experience.	22/56	20/69

[1] Percent responding *Agree* or *Strongly Agree* / Percent responding *Disagree* or *Strongly Disagree.* The *neutral* and *don't know* responses are omitted.

EXHIBIT A-28
COMPARISON SURVEY RESPONSES
WINCHESTER PUBLIC SCHOOLS TEACHERS AND
TEACHERS IN OTHER SCHOOL DISTRICTS

PART F: ADMINISTRATIVE STRUCTURE/PRACTICES	(% A + SA) / (% D + SD)[1]	
	WINCHESTER PUBLIC SCHOOLS	**OTHER SCHOOL DISTRICTS**
1. Most administrative practices in the school district are highly effective and efficient.	29/43	34/36
2. Administrative decisions are made promptly and decisively.	26/36	36/36
3. School district administrators are easily accessible and open to input.	44/37	39/35
4. Authority for administrative decisions is delegated to the lowest possible level.	13/32	15/29
5. Teachers and staff are empowered with sufficient authority to effectively perform their responsibilities.	49/29	55/27
6. Major bottlenecks exist in many administrative processes which cause unnecessary time delays.	30/26	45/19
7. The extensive committee structure in the school district ensures adequate input from teachers and staff on most important decisions.	26/40	29/39
8. The school district has too many committees.	52/11	43/13
9. The school district has too many layers of administrators.	49/19	53/15
10. Most administrative processes (e.g., purchasing, travel requests, leave applications, personnel, etc.) are highly efficient and responsive.	60/11	35/28
11. Central office administrators are responsive to school needs.	30/41	27/34
12. Central office administrators provide quality service to schools.	32/39	27/31

[1] Percent responding *Agree* or *Strongly Agree* / Percent responding *Disagree* or *Strongly Disagree.* The *neutral* and *don't know* responses are omitted.

EXHIBIT A-29
COMPARISON SURVEY RESPONSES
WINCHESTER PUBLIC SCHOOLS TEACHERS AND
TEACHERS IN OTHER SCHOOL DISTRICTS

PART G: SCHOOL DISTRICT/PROGRAM FUNCTION	% NEEDS SOME IMPROVEMENT + NEEDS MAJOR IMPROVEMENT	**/** % ADEQUATE [1] + OUTSTANDING
	WINCHESTER PUBLIC SCHOOLS	OTHER SCHOOL DISTRICTS
a. Budgeting	28/45	65/16
b. Strategic planning	37/34	47/24
c. Curriculum planning	55/40	52/41
d. Financial management and accounting	11/45	49/23
e. Community relations	34/48	53/38
f. Program evaluation, research, and assessment	39/40	42/38
g. Instructional technology	36/58	53/40
h. Pupil accounting	26/46	29/39
i. Instructional coordination/supervision	45/46	38/48
j. Instructional support	52/45	48/45
k. Federal Programs (e.g., Title I, Special Education) coordination	27/58	36/40
l. Personnel recruitment	32/36	40/35
m. Personnel selection	36/39	42/37
n. Personnel evaluation	34/54	41/48
o. Staff development	49/46	42/52
p. Data processing	13/41	21/34
q. Purchasing	13/43	33/30
r. Plant maintenance	13/50	41/37
s. Facilities planning	18/45	41/28
t. Transportation	14/48	32/46
u. Food service	24/57	41/47
v. Custodial services	19/69	44/49
w. Risk management	10/41	22/32
x. Administrative technology	8/35	24/34
y. Grants administration	7/30	21/32

[1] Percent responding *Needs Some Improvement* or *Needs Major Improvement* / Percent responding *Adequate* or *Outstanding.* The *neutral* and *don't know* responses are omitted.