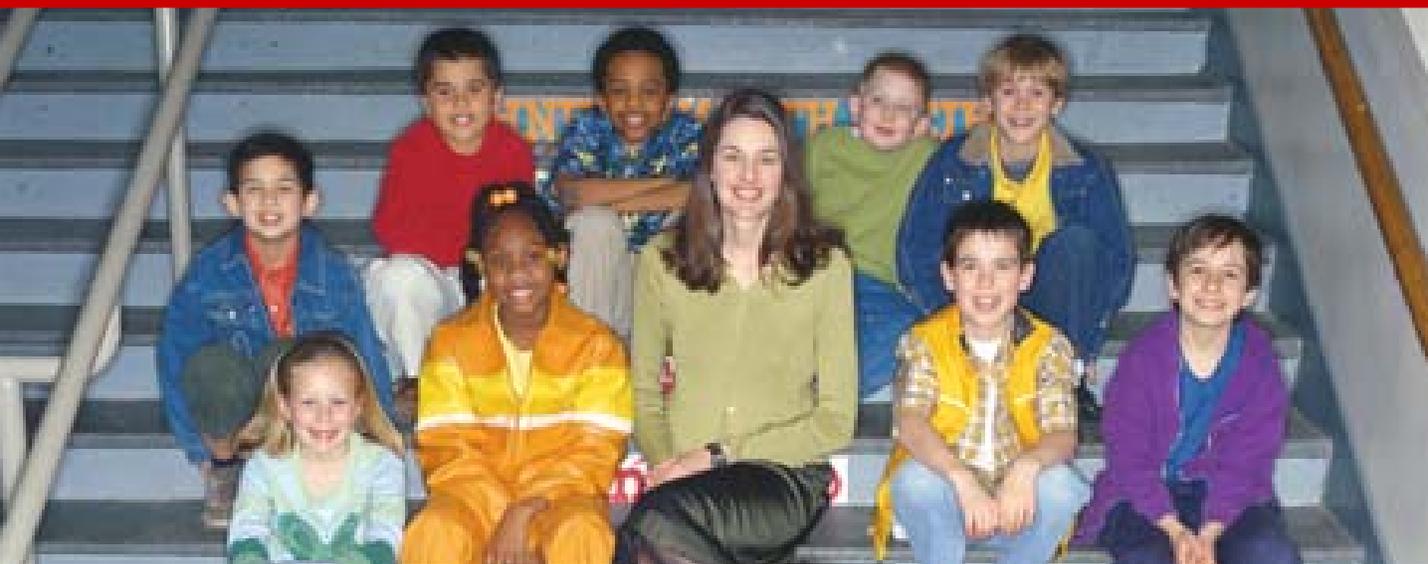


# DINWIDDIE COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS SCHOOL DIVISION EFFICIENCY REVIEW

## FINAL REPORT



**Submitted by:**



**March 23, 2006**

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## **Final Report**

**Submitted by:**



**2123 Centre Pointe Boulevard  
Tallahassee, Florida 32308-4930**

**March 23, 2006**

## **TABLE OF CONTENTS - Dinwiddie County Public Schools (Continued)**

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### **PAGE**

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY.....	i
1.0 INTRODUCTION.....	1-1
1.1 Overview of Dinwiddie County Public Schools.....	1-1
1.2 Methodology.....	1-1
1.3 Comparisons to Other School Divisions.....	1-6
1.4 Overview of Final Report.....	1-10
2.0 DIVISION ADMINISTRATION.....	2-1
2.1 School Board Governance.....	2-3
2.2 Policies and Procedures.....	2-14
2.3 Legal Services.....	2-20
2.4 Organization and Management.....	2-21
3.0 PERSONNEL AND HUMAN RESOURCES.....	3-1
3.1 Organization and Personnel Records.....	3-3
3.2 Personnel Policies and Procedures.....	3-7
3.3 Recruitment, Hiring, and Retention.....	3-11
3.4 Job Classifications, Job Descriptions, and Employee Compensation....	3-15
3.5 Teacher Certification, Evaluation, and Professional Development.....	3-19
4.0 FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT.....	4-1
4.1 Staffing and Organization.....	4-3
4.2 Finance and Purchasing Systems.....	4-6
4.3 Budgeting and Fiscal Operations.....	4-13
4.4 Fixed Asset and Textbook Controls.....	4-18
4.5 Accounting for School Activity Funds.....	4-21
5.0 EDUCATIONAL SERVICE DELIVERY AND MANAGEMENT.....	5-1
5.1 Organization and Management of Curriculum and Instruction.....	5-3
5.2 Curriculum and Instructional Services.....	5-6
5.3 Program Evaluation.....	5-21
5.4 Instructional Technology.....	5-22
5.5 Instructional Staffing.....	5-24
5.6 School Improvement.....	5-26
5.7 Instructional Staff Development.....	5-32
5.8 Alternative/Remedial Education.....	5-34

## **TABLE OF CONTENTS - Dinwiddie County Public Schools (Continued)**

---

	<b>PAGE</b>
6.0 SPECIAL PROGRAMS .....	6-1
6.1 Special Education .....	6-2
6.2 Professional Development Related to Special Education .....	6-14
6.3 Program Expenses and Receipts for Medicaid and Related Services...	6-15
6.4 Testing of Students with Special Needs.....	6-17
6.5 Guidance Services .....	6-18
7.0 FACILITIES USE AND MANAGEMENT.....	7-1
7.1 Management of Facilities Operations.....	7-2
7.2 Capital Improvement Planning .....	7-4
7.3 Maintenance and Operations .....	7-12
7.4 Custodial Services .....	7-14
7.5 Energy Management.....	7-16
8.0 TRANSPORTATION .....	8-1
8.1 Organization and Staffing.....	8-6
8.2 Planning, Policies, and Procedures .....	8-7
8.3 Routing and Scheduling .....	8-17
8.4 Training and Safety .....	8-23
8.5 Vehicle Maintenance.....	8-24
9.0 TECHNOLOGY MANAGEMENT.....	9-1
9.1 Planning, Policies, and Procedures .....	9-3
9.2 Software, Hardware, and Infrastructure .....	9-10
9.3 Staff Development.....	9-18
10.0 FOOD SERVICE .....	10-1
10.1 Organization and Management.....	10-2
10.2 Policy, Procedures, and Compliance with Regulations.....	10-9
10.3 Financial Performance .....	10-16
11.0 SUMMARY OF POTENTIAL COSTS AND SAVINGS .....	11-1
APPENDIX A: SURVEY RESULTS	

## **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 Dinwiddie County Public School Division. 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 DPS could realize cost savings in non-instructional areas in order to redirect those funds towards classroom activities.

### **Dinwiddie County Public School Division**

Established in 1752, Dinwiddie County is named for Robert Dinwiddie, lieutenant governor of Virginia from 1751-1758. The county is located approximately 20 miles from Petersburg in Southeast Virginia. DCPS has seven schools to serve over 4,500 students from a general population of about 24,500. The division serves 660 students with special education needs. Approximately 43 percent of students are minority and over 37 percent are economically disadvantaged. The division has a high average of 95 percent daily attendance for elementary students, and 92 percent daily attendance rate for secondary students.

DCPS third and fifth grade students perform higher than the state average for Mathematics on the Standards of Learning tests. Third and eighth graders perform less than the state average on the Standards of Learning for English. DCPS has a slightly higher dropout percentage than the state average.

Dinwiddie's expenditure budget for all funds for the 2005-06 school year is \$43.9 million, an increase of almost 14 percent from the previous year. In addition, the division increased its budgeted spending for instruction in 2005-06 to \$28.9 million, an increase of over 6 percent. Other categories of increase include capital project, operations and maintenance, and pupil transportation.

### **Review Methodology**

The methodology MGT used to prepare for and conduct the Dinwiddie County 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 Dinwiddie County Public School Division.

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

### **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, division staff were given the opportunity to express their views about the management and operations of the Dinwiddie County 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.

The survey results 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**

A team of eight consultants conducted the formal on-site review of the Dinwiddie County Public School Division during the week of November 7, 2005. As part of our on-site review, we examined the following DCPS systems and operations:

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

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

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

### **Comparison Summary**

When comparing data on the Dinwiddie County School Division to the other specified school divisions within the Commonwealth of Virginia, Dinwiddie has the lowest number of teacher aides and principals/assistant principals per 1,000 students; an above average number of technology instructors and guidance counselors and librarians per 1,000 students; and the second-lowest number of teachers per 1,000 students. Dinwiddie has a higher student/teacher ratio for grades kindergarten through seventh than the division and state averages, but a lower student/teacher ratio for grades eight through twelve than both the division and state averages. The Dinwiddie County School Division reports the third-lowest administration disbursements per pupil. In regard to receipts by fund source, the division reports that most of their funds come from state funds and when compared to the peer divisions, Dinwiddie also receives a higher percentage of state funds than the peer division. Dinwiddie is slightly above average for local funds and below the peer division average for federal funding.

In terms of student demographics, Dinwiddie has the third-lowest student population and has the highest student population per 1,000 general population. Dinwiddie has the second-lowest number of schools and the second-lowest percentage of economically disadvantaged students.

### **Fiscal Impact**

Based on the analyses of data obtained from interviews, surveys, community input, state and division documents, and first-hand observations in Dinwiddie County Public Schools (DCPS), the MGT team developed 36 commendations and 110 recommendations in this report. Eighteen (18) 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 \$8 million over five years, with a net cost of approximately \$292,000. 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  
SUMMARY OF ANNUAL SAVINGS AND COSTS**

CATEGORY	YEARS					TOTAL FIVE-YEAR SAVINGS (COSTS)
	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	
<b>TOTAL SAVINGS</b>	\$1,115,076	\$1,757,739	\$1,757,739	\$1,787,739	\$1,787,739	\$8,206,032
<b>TOTAL (COSTS)</b>	<b>(\$66,500)</b>	<b>(\$18,500)</b>	<b>(\$32,500)</b>	<b>(\$32,500)</b>	<b>(\$32,500)</b>	<b>(\$182,500)</b>
<b>TOTAL NET SAVINGS (COSTS)</b>	\$1,048,576	\$1,739,239	\$1,725,239	\$1,755,239	\$1,755,239	\$8,023,532
<b>ONE-TIME SAVINGS (COSTS)</b>						<b>(\$109,500)</b>
<b>TOTAL FIVE-YEAR NET SAVINGS (COSTS) INCLUDING ONE-TIME SAVINGS (COSTS)</b>						<b>\$7,914,032</b>

**Major Commendations**

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

- The Dinwiddie County Public Schools School Board and administration are commended for approving specific measures designed to ensure a cost-effective method for maintaining a current policy manual.
- Dinwiddie County Public Schools School Board and administration are commended for containing legal expenses.
- The Dinwiddie County Public Schools Superintendent, administration, staff, and School Board are commended for the production of a widely circulated series of reports containing valuable school division information.
- Dinwiddie County Public Schools is commended for having a system of keeping track of records as they are moved and processed that is well-organized and allows for ease in locating specified documents and reduces the likelihood of lost or misplaced personnel files.
- Dinwiddie County Public Schools is commended for its formal mentoring program for first-year teachers and teachers new to the division that includes training for mentors and a formal schedule of mentoring activities.
- The Dinwiddie County Public Schools Human Resources Department is commended for developing a comprehensive appraisal system that is research-based and focused on student outcomes, and has a specified schedule for implementation.

- The Dinwiddie County Public Schools is commended for its on-line training registration system.
- The division is to be commended for improving the accountability of the Fiscal Operations Department and for more appropriately aligning the fiscal functions in the department.
- DCPS has implemented a mandatory direct deposit policy that has resulted in cost and efficiency savings for the division.
- The DCPS has instituted processes at the elementary level that have moved data analysis to the school and classroom level and provided teacher support and a level of monitoring to ensure follow-through.
- Dinwiddie is cognizant of the need to maintain low pupil: teacher ratios at the same time teachers learn and apply new skills and knowledge and taking a long-range approach to meeting those needs.
- With an escalating intrusion of drugs into the community that has been manifested in student suspensions and expulsions, the DCPS has joined with local agencies to examine root causes in each community to develop a plan most likely to succeed.
- Dinwiddie County Public Schools demonstrate commitment to full inclusion with creation of a Collaborative Task Force and planned research to develop an effective plan for division-wide implementation.
- DCPS is commended for participating in the Family Assessment Planning Team to provide community support for its families.
- The Dinwiddie County School Division is commended for taking a leadership role in examining possible alternative sources of capital funding.
- The Dinwiddie County School Division is commended for instituting an on-line work order system that is not often seen in divisions of this size.
- The Dinwiddie County School Division is commended for instituting a regular program of maintenance and custodial staff training.
- Dinwiddie County Public Schools is commended for cultivating a high level of department employee morale and retaining a stable crew of bus drivers.
- The Dinwiddie County Public Schools Transportation Department is commended for its safe operation of school buses.
- The Dinwiddie County Public Schools Transportation Department mechanics are commended for the outstanding service they provide in maintaining the fleet.

- The Dinwiddie County Public Schools is commended for having a sound infrastructure and equipment specifications related to the infrastructure for the school division.
- Dinwiddie County Public Schools is commended for purchasing a laptop for every school teacher within the division and providing teachers with important care and performance information.
- The Office of Technology is commended for using staff resources to save the school division over \$150,000 for technology upgrades.
- Dinwiddie County Public Schools DCPS Nutrition Services is commended for maintaining food cost to a standard of 36 percent of revenue or less.

### **Major Findings and Recommendations**

Although this Executive Summary briefly highlights key efficiency issues in DCPS, 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:

- Correct the technical difficulties with the division's Web site and continue placing the regular School Board meeting agenda and approved minutes on the Web site thus making important information readily available to the public **(Chapter 2, Recommendation 2-1)**.
- Develop and implement a local new School Board member orientation program **(Chapter 2, Recommendation 2-4)**.
- Develop and implement an annual School Board self-assessment system including a review of the legally constituted role of board members **(Chapter 2, Recommendation 2-6)**.
- Create a policy provision containing a listing of existing procedural manuals, handbooks, and planning documents and create a series of hot links from the manual to the cited documents or procedures on the Web site **(Chapter 2, Recommendation 2-8)**.
- Reorganize the Superintendent's Cabinet to include the following seven positions: Director of Planning, Accountability, and Technology, Executive Director for Administrative Services, Director of Business Services, Assistant Superintendent for Instruction, Executive Assistant to the Superintendent, and two principal representatives **(Chapter 2, Recommendation 2-11)**.
- Eliminate one assistant principal position, create two behavior management specialists, or deans, and convert one assistant principal position to an assistant principal for curriculum **(Chapter 2, Recommendation 2-15)**.
- Update and reorganize the Dinwiddie County Public Schools Web site **(Chapter 3, Recommendation 3-4)**.

- Continue sending division representatives to the Great Virginia Teach-In **(Chapter 3, Recommendation 3-5)**.
- Pay the license renewal fees for its teachers, as an additional employee benefit **(Chapter 3, Recommendation 3-10)**.
- Redistribute some of the accounting and payroll functions to improve internal controls in the division's Fiscal Operations Department **(Chapter 4, Recommendation 4-1)**.
- Develop a comprehensive, user-friendly budget document **(Chapter 4, Recommendation 4-5)**.
- Develop and implement asset tracking procedures **(Chapter 4, Recommendation 4-6)**.
- Develop formal processes that provide accountability for curriculum planning and data analysis and usage across grade levels between elementary and secondary levels and include special education and ESL personnel **(Chapter 5, Recommendation 5-1)**.
- Continue development and augmentation of the curriculum map that is the foundation for instructional and related student performance improvements at the elementary level and expand it through the secondary level **(Chapter 5, Recommendation 5-4)**.
- Systematically extend the data analysis and benchmark testing replication processes from the elementary level through the middle and high school levels **(Chapter 5, Recommendation 5-8)**.
- Examine exit interviews of middle school teachers and ESL teachers to uncover a pattern that would inform school or division actions to ameliorate the issues underlying high turnover rates **(Chapter 5, Recommendation 5-14)**.
- Consider requiring attendance at trainings relative to interventions and eligibility and placement practices so that all staff across the division have a fundamental understanding that will ensure appropriate referral and placement of students **(Chapter 6, Recommendation 6-2)**.
- Provide principals time and research on scheduling alternatives to help them carve out time in their school schedules for at least periodic collaborative planning between regular and special education teachers **(Chapter 6, Recommendation 6-5)**.
- Conduct an evaluation of time that counselors actually spend on testing responsibilities and consider offering a stipend to other personnel for assuming testing responsibilities at each school **(Chapter 6, Recommendation 6-9)**.
- Re-evaluate custodial staffing to assure that assignments are based on a square footage basis to the degree possible **(Chapter 7, Recommendation 7-6)**.

- Expand the Dinwiddie County Public Schools policy regarding student transportation to include more detailed reporting requirements **(Chapter 8, Recommendation 8-4)**.
- Modify procedures to allow the transportation schedule to determine the opening and closing times for Dinwiddie County Public Schools **(Chapter 8, Recommendation 8-8)**.
- Require that the Office of Technology approve all potential software and hardware purchases by administrators and staff prior to the issue of a purchase order **(Chapter 9, Recommendation 9-2)**.
- Update and revise Technology Department Web site to include a greater breadth of information **(Chapter 9, Recommendation 9-6)**.
- Change the agreement so that only the Technology Office can load software and withhold teacher pay until laptops have been returned when staff terminate or resign **(Chapter 9, Recommendation 9-9)**.
- Implement a process to track teacher-training attendance **(Chapter 9, Recommendation 9-13)**.
- Maximize cafeteria space for student dining **(Chapter 10, Recommendation 10-5)**.
- Develop a comprehensive school board policy for Nutrition Services **(Chapter 10, Recommendation 10-8)**.

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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 Dinwiddie County Public Schools (DCPS). The review focused on the financial, organizational, and operational effectiveness of Dinwiddie County Public Schools. 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 Dinwiddie County Public Schools**

Dinwiddie County Public Schools consists of one high school, one middle school, and five elementary schools. Division administrative functions are housed in the Pamplin Administration Building.

Nearly 400 teachers, staff, and support personnel work together to meet the educational needs of nearly 5,000 students. Forty-three percent (43%) of DCPS students are minorities, and thirty-eight percent (38%) qualify for free or reduced lunch. All of the DCPS schools are fully accredited, except for Dinwiddie Middle School which is accredited with a warning.

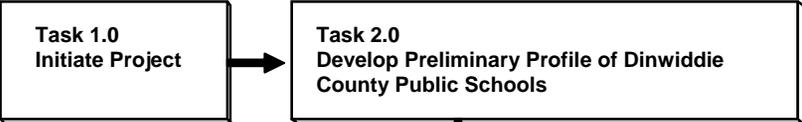
### **1.2 Methodology**

The methodology MGT used to prepare for and conduct the DCPS 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;

**EXHIBIT 1-1  
OVERVIEW OF THE WORK PLAN FOR THE EFFICIENCY REVIEW  
OF DINWIDDIE COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS**

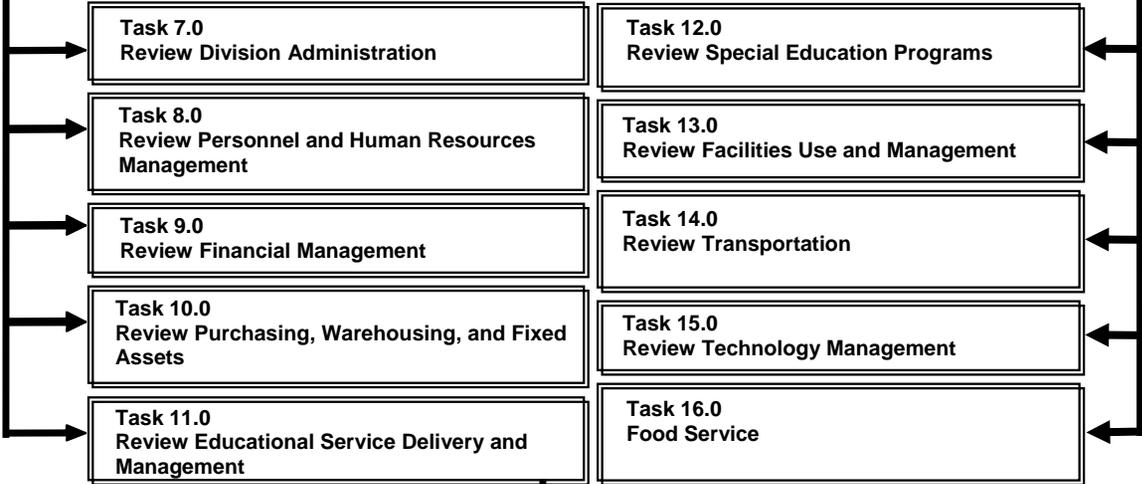
**PHASE I - PROJECT INITIATION**



**PHASE II - STAKEHOLDER INVOLVEMENT AND DIAGNOSTIC REVIEW**



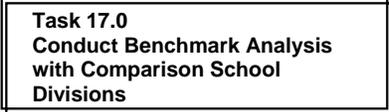
**PHASE III - IN-DEPTH EFFICIENCY STUDY**



**PHASE V -  
PROJECT REPORTING**



**PHASE IV -  
COMPARISON TO OTHER  
SCHOOL DIVISIONS**



**EXHIBIT 1-2  
TIMELINE FOR THE EFFICIENCY REVIEW OF  
DINWIDDIE COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS**

TIME FRAME	ACTIVITY
September 2005	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Finalized contract with the Commonwealth of Virginia.</li> <li>■ Conducted initial meeting with Dinwiddie County Public Schools officials.</li> <li>■ Designed tailor-made, written surveys for central office administrators, principals, and teachers.</li> </ul>
September 2005	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Collected and analyzed existing and comparative data available from the school division.</li> <li>■ Produced profile tables of Dinwiddie County Public Schools.</li> <li>■ Disseminated surveys to administrators and teachers.</li> </ul>
October 3, 2005	<p>On-site visit with Dinwiddie County Public Schools.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Conducted diagnostic review.</li> <li>■ Collected data.</li> <li>■ Interviewed School Board members and City and County officials.</li> <li>■ Interviewed central office administrators.</li> <li>■ Interviewed business and community leaders.</li> </ul>
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 November 7, 2005	Conducted formal on-site review, including school visits.
November–December 2005	Requested additional data from the school division and analyzed data.
December 2005–January 2006	Prepared Draft Final Report.
January 2006	Submitted Draft Final Report.
January–February 2006	Revised the Draft Report.
March 2006	Submitted Final Report.

- 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 Dinwiddie County Public Schools.

More than 100 documents were requested from DCPS. 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 Dinwiddie County Public Schools was conducted on October 3, 2005. MGT consultants interviewed central office administrators, community leaders, school board members, and county commissioners concerning the management and operations of Dinwiddie County Public Schools.

### **Employee Surveys**

To secure the involvement of central office administrators, principals/assistant principals, and teachers in the focus and scope of the efficiency review, three on-line surveys were prepared and disseminated in 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 Dinwiddie County Public Schools. These surveys were similar in format and content to provide a database for determining how the opinions and perceptions of central office administrators, principals/assistant principals, and teachers vary.

DCPS staff was given from October 3, 2005 through October 11, 2005 to respond. The DCPS response rates for the three surveys were good. Seventy-three (73) percent of central office administrators returned a survey, as did 61 percent of principals and assistant principals, and 59 percent of teachers. MGT compared all survey responses among the three employee groups and compared all DCPS administrators and teachers to those in the more than 30 districts where we have conducted similar surveys.

The survey results 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**

A team of seven consultants conducted the formal on-site review of Dinwiddie County Public Schools during the week of November 7, 2005. As part of our on-site review, we examined the following DCPS systems and operations:

- Division Administration
- Personnel and Human Resources Management
- Financial Management Systems
- Education Service Delivery and Management
- Special Programs
- Facilities Use and Management
- Transportation
- Technology Management
- Food Services

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

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

### **1.3 Comparisons to Other School Divisions**

To effectively facilitate ongoing, systemic improvement and to overcome the continual challenges of a changing environmental and fiscal landscape, a school division must have a clear understanding of the status of its internal systems and processes. One way to achieve this understanding is to compare the operations of one school division to others with similar characteristics. MGT has found that such comparisons with other school divisions 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 comparison school divisions must be chosen carefully. Ideally, a school division should be compared with others that are not only similar in size and demographics, but also similar 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 measure comparative operating performance and identify best practices.

With this in mind, MGT initiated a benchmarking comparison of the Dinwiddie County Public Schools to provide a common foundation from which to compare systems and processes within the school division with those of other similar systems. As comparisons are made, 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 self-reported data 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. Dinwiddie County Public Schools is identified in Cluster 4. MGT in conjunction with the Governor's Office and the DCPS leadership, selected a set of school divisions from Cluster 4 to try to capture the characteristics of comparable school divisions. The Virginia public school divisions chosen for comparison were:

- Caroline County Public Schools Division;
- Isle of Wight County Public Schools Division;
- Lee County Public Schools Division;
- Mecklenburg County Public Schools Division; and,
- Pulaski County Public Schools Division.

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

- DCPS (4,530) has more than the average student population of 4,479;
- With 184 students per 1,000 people in the general population, DCPS has the highest student to general population ratio;

- DCPS' percent of economically disadvantaged students (37.1%) is seven percentage points lower than the peer division average (44.1%); and
- DCPS, with seven schools, has two fewer schools than the peer division average of nine schools.

**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
Dinwiddie County	4	4,530	184	37.1%	7
Caroline County	4	3,928	177	39.0%	6
Pulaski County	4	4,939	140	37.5%	9
Mecklenburg County	4	4,931	152	57.3%	11
Isle of Wight County	4	5,167	173	31.0%	8
Lee County	4	3,380	143	63.0%	13
<b>PEER SCHOOL DIVISION AVERAGE</b>	<b>N/A</b>	<b>4,479</b>	<b>162</b>	<b>44.1%</b>	<b>9</b>

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

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

- DCPS has fewer teachers per 1,000 students, at 77.7, than the peer school average of 83.8, and the state average of 81.45;
- In grades K through 7, DCPS has a ratio of 16.8 students per classroom teaching position, the highest of all the peer divisions and higher than the state average of 13.1; and
- In grades 8 through 12, DCPS has a ratio of 9.3 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**

<b>SCHOOL DIVISION</b>	<b>TOTAL TEACHERS PER 1,000 STUDENTS</b>	<b>RATIO OF PUPILS TO CLASSROOM TEACHING POSITIONS FOR GRADES K-7*</b>	<b>RATIO OF PUPILS TO CLASSROOM TEACHING POSITIONS FOR GRADES 8-12</b>
<b>Dinwiddie County</b>	<b>77.7</b>	<b>16.8</b>	<b>9.3</b>
Caroline County	77.0	13.7	12.0
Pulaski County	88.7	10.8	12.3
Mecklenburg County	86.8	11.9	11.2
Isle of Wight County	75.7	12.8	13.6
Lee County	97.0	10.5	9.8
<b>PEER SCHOOL DIVISION AVERAGE</b>	<b>83.8</b>	<b>12.8</b>	<b>11.4</b>
<b>COMMONWEALTH AVERAGE</b>	<b>81.45</b>	<b>13.1</b>	<b>11.2</b>

Source: 2003 Superintendent's Annual Report for Virginia, Virginia Department of Education, Web site, 2005.

\*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:

- DCPS received a higher percentage of its funds, 32 percent, from local sources, than the peer division average of 28 percent;
- DCPS, at 60 percent, received the third lowest percentage of its funds from state sources than its peer divisions, and was two percentage points lower than the peer average; and
- DCPS received a slightly lower percentage of its funds, seven and a half from federal sources, than the peer division average of nine percent.

**EXHIBIT 1-5  
RECEIPTS BY FUND SOURCE  
PEER SCHOOL DIVISIONS  
2003 FISCAL YEAR**

SCHOOL DIVISION	LOCAL	STATE	FEDERAL
<b>Dinwiddie County</b>	<b>32.34%</b>	<b>60.08%</b>	<b>7.58%</b>
Caroline County	28.55%	61.63%	9.82%
Pulaski County	33.31%	59.17%	7.52%
Mecklenburg County	25.88%	64.77%	9.35%
Isle of Wight County	40.08%	53.30%	6.62%
Lee County	9.91%	73.24%	16.85%
<b>PEER SCHOOL DIVISION AVERAGE</b>	<b>28.34%</b>	<b>62.03%</b>	<b>9.62%</b>

Source: Virginia Department of Education, School Division Cluster Database, 2005.

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

- On regular operating-related items, DCPS spent \$6,123 per student, which was less than the peer division average of \$6,344.
- On administration-related items, DCPS spent \$134 per student, which was less than the peer division average of \$157.

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

SCHOOL DIVISION	TOTAL COST OF OPERATING REGULAR SCHOOL DAY, PER PUPIL	ADMINISTRATION, PER PUPIL
<b>Dinwiddie County</b>	<b>\$6,123.88</b>	<b>\$134.37</b>
Caroline County	\$6,235.99	\$130.35
Pulaski County	\$6,221.78	\$165.39
Mecklenburg County	\$6,130.97	\$174.89
Isle of Wight County	\$6,502.65	\$220.00
Lee County	\$6,849.84	\$118.50
<b>PEER SCHOOL DIVISION AVERAGE</b>	<b>\$6,344.19</b>	<b>\$157.25</b>

Source: Virginia Department of Education, School Division Cluster Database, 2005.

#### **1.4 Overview of Final Report**

MGT's final report is organized into 11 chapters. Chapters 2 through 10 present the results of the School Division Efficiency Review of Dinwiddie County 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 each function within the school division based on the current organizational structure. The following data on each component are included:

- description of the current situation in Dinwiddie County Public Schools;
- a summary of our study findings:
  - findings from report and data sources which we obtained
  - 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 11.

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## **2.0 DIVISION ADMINISTRATION**

In this chapter the findings and recommendations for the overall organization of Dinwiddie County Public Schools (DCPS) are presented. 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**

Dinwiddie County Public Schools is lead and managed by a Superintendent who served for two months in an interim capacity and was officially appointed and assumed the position in September 2004. Three of his cabinet team members, composed of an Assistant Superintendent for Instruction and three executive directors, are new to their positions. Recommendations contained in this chapter are essentially focused on assisting the Superintendent and his cabinet team in responding for the need to accredit the middle school, resolve significant shared services issues with the County Board of Supervisors, and ensuring the success of all students. Among these recommendations are the following key suggestions that should assist the Superintendent and School Board as they continue to consider all aspects of improving the school division:

- establish a School Board governance structure that provides for effective School Board accountability and enhances the Board/Administrative working relationship with the County Board of Supervisors;
- reorganize, to a limited extent, Dinwiddie County Public Schools central office and align functions with appropriate units and departments;
- provide for a Superintendent's Cabinet or Leadership Team composed of the following seven positions: Director of Planning, Accountability, and Technology, Director of Business Services, Executive Director for Administrative Services, Assistant Superintendent for Instruction, Executive Assistant to the Superintendent, and two principal representatives; and
- develop a middle school administrative and support plan focused on improving student learning.

### **INTRODUCTION**

The heart of an organization is its overall organization and management. The health of the organization is determined in a number of ways including a review of the organization's structure and its management.

Conditions in Dinwiddie County Public Schools of importance to this review include:

- a Superintendent focused on total schools' accreditation and supporting improving student learning;
- increasing costs for educational programs and, particularly, escalating facilities development costs;
- a shared concern among the School Board and the Superintendent for identifying means to conserve resources that could be reallocated to support improved instruction; and
- the effective development and use of technology to support increasing administrative productivity.

The Superintendent, in interviews with MGT, emphasized the challenges created when an organization is fiscally dependent upon an external source. DCPS is fiscally dependent upon the County Board of Supervisors since the Commonwealth of Virginia, Code of Virginia, Title 22.1, and other controlling regulations assign final budget approval and appropriations authority to the County.

The Superintendent, administrative staff, and School Board members stated in interviews with MGT that the most significant challenges are related to facilities construction and planning for future infrastructure needs.

Jack Welch, retired Chief Executive Officer of the General Electric Corporation, says “values are what enable people to guide themselves through ... change.” Additionally, William E. Fulmer in his recent book, *Shaping the Adaptive Organization*, continues this sentiment by stating that an adaptive organization “has four core values: external focus, diversity, responsible risk taking, and openness.” Fulmer believes that “complex adaptive systems function best at the edge of chaos” (not to be confused with disorganization or disorientation). Thus employees are prevented from becoming completely satisfied with their current level of production and in turn becoming complacent. When the right structure is applied, much can be achieved. As Mr. Fulmer states, the “right” structure must “be relatively decentralized, have high but effective spans of control, make extensive use of temporary structures, have a powerful information system and constantly evolve.”

The Welch and Fulmer contentions guide numerous MGT recommendations, particularly those in Section 2.5, Organization and Management.

The primary state laws controlling the governance and operation of schools in Virginia are found in the Code of Virginia, Title 22.1 that implements the Constitution of Virginia (1971), Article VIII mandate. Specifically, Chapter 7 of Title 22.1 details the general powers and duties of School Boards. These laws give the Board of Education powers to adopt policies, fix contracts, approve the appointment of personnel, develop a budget for further review and approval by the Dinwiddie County Board of Supervisors, and other actions designed to ensure secure, safe, and proper schools for the citizens.

**2.1 School Board Governance**

There are numerous school system governance configurations in the United States. Hawaii represents a highly centralized system with all public schools controlled by a single School Board with the state serving as single school division. Florida, with 67 county school divisions each with elected School Boards of from five to nine members, and Texas and Illinois, each with approximately 1,000 school divisions and School Boards, provide examples of the wide range of governance variation. Virginia with city, county, and other division configurations presents yet another variation.

The educational system in Dinwiddie County Public Schools is the result of Commonwealth of Virginia legislation authorizing the establishment of city and county school divisions. The five-member School Board is elected, representing divisions within the county for four-year terms, all with the same expiration date. The terms' expiration date is identical to that for all of the County Board of Supervisors.

Exhibit 2-1 provides an overview of the members of the DCPS School Board.

**EXHIBIT 2-1  
DINWIDDIE COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS  
SCHOOL BOARD  
NOVEMBER 2005**

NAME	TITLE	DIVISION	TERM EXPIRES	YEARS OF SERVICE AS OF END OF 2005-06	OCCUPATION
Harrison, Sr. James E.	Chairman	3	12/07	6	Produce Mgr.
Friedl, Charles	Vice-Chairman	5	12/07	2	Retired Principal
Hamilton, Legert	Member	4	12/07	2	Retired Educator
Haney, William R.	Member	2	12/07	2	Retired Federal Investigator
Maitland, James C.	Member	1	12/07	12	Farmer

Source: DCPS Superintendent's Office and the School Board Clerk, November 2005.

Regular School Board meetings are held on the second Tuesday of each month; regular and closed meeting locations, dates and times are advertised as required by law. Regular open meetings are held at 7:00 p.m. at the Dinwiddie County Meeting room in the central office building unless otherwise noted.

The public is welcome to attend all meetings and citizens wishing to address the School Board are provided an opportunity to do so.

In addition to regular meetings, the School Board holds closed meetings prior to the regular meeting for certain purposes. These include:

- discussion of individual personnel;
- student matters;

- negotiations of material terms for purchase of property or a specific contract for employment;
- attorney-client privilege as relates to litigation preparation and execution; and
- other matters as permitted under Commonwealth of Virginia law.

If scheduled, School Board committee meetings may be scheduled prior to the regular meeting. The School Board conducts work sessions on various scheduled topics, typically following a regular meeting.

Minutes of all regular meetings are recorded by the School Board Clerk, transcribed and Board approved at the next regular meeting. Minutes are not maintained for closed meetings; rather, the School Board Clerk prepares a record of motions and related votes. Minutes and supplementary data are stored in secured, fireproof file cabinets.

## **FINDING**

The meeting agenda is comprehensive and provides for public, administrative, and board member input. Approximately three weeks prior to the School Board meeting the School Board Clerk/Executive Assistant to the Superintendent begins developing the agenda in collaboration with the Superintendent, board members, and executive staff, compiling all information to be included in each School Board meeting agenda and supporting agenda packet. The School Board meeting agenda is generally organized into the following 12 sections:

- Closed Session (as necessary)
- Regular Session
- Invitation to Participate in Pledge of Allegiance
- Amendments to the Agenda and Adoption
- Citizens' Comments on Agenda and Non-Agenda Items
- Closed session Report
- Recognition
- Consent Agenda Items
- Board Matters
- Superintendent Matters
- Board Comments
- Adjournment

Following preparation of a proposed or draft agenda, and organization of supporting documents, the agenda is either delivered to or picked up by School Board members on the Wednesday or Thursday prior to the Tuesday meeting. Prior to the Tuesday meeting any additional support information that becomes available is delivered to the School Board. Members report that packet information provided to them is comprehensive and that the Superintendent and administrative staff are available to respond to questions that may arise. MGT's review of meeting documents confirms this assertion.

## **COMMENDATION**

**The Dinwiddie County Public Schools School Board, Superintendent, administration, and staff are commended for developing a comprehensive meeting agenda information packet.**

## **FINDING**

The DCPS School Board meeting agenda and approved meeting minutes from January 2005 through September 2005 are posted on the division's Web site, which provides the public a convenient way to view topics under consideration by the School Board. At the time of the on-site review; however, current - October - November - plans had not been posted because of technical difficulties. As of December 2006 this situation had not been remedied.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

### **Recommendation 2-1:**

**Correct the technical difficulties with the division's Web site and continue placing the regular School Board meeting agenda and approved minutes on the Web site thus making important information readily available to the public.**

Implementation of this recommendation should reestablish an important means for notifying the public of important scheduled School Board activity and the results of their meetings. The Superintendent should instruct the coordinators of technology to proceed with implementation and ensuring that the Web site is fully operational.

## **FISCAL IMPACT**

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

## **FINDING**

School Board policy BCE limits the establishment of standing committees with the consequence that the entire board meets for extended periods of time. A review of meeting minutes shows that in excess of 51 hours was spent in meetings over a two-month period.

Policy BCE states:

*There shall be no standing committees of the Dinwiddie County School Board, except, at the School Board's option, a Student Disciplinary Committee. Special committees may be appointed by the chairman or created by School Board action. These committees shall be appointed or created for a specific purpose and shall expire upon completion of the assigned task unless School Board action authorizes temporary continuance of such committees.*

This practice results in an excessive number of other meetings of the full board and many additional hours of meetings that involve not only the members but many administrative staff personnel. For example, a survey of various months' meeting times and lengths showed that in April 2005 on three different days for a total of 19.6 hours, on seven days in March 2005 for a total of 32.6 hours, and in July-August 2005 on five days for a total of 15.0 hours. As a result the Superintendent, Executive Assistant/Board Clerk, Executive Director for Administrative services, and other staff members were diverted from other responsibilities for more than a total of 37.5 hours during the regular work day and another 29.7 hours after the regular work day.

These time calculations do not address the amount of preparation time that administration and support staff personnel must commit. However, experience has shown that for each hour in meetings minimally two to four hours of preparation time by staff is involved. Consequently, it can be estimated that for these 67 hours of meetings staff was involved in approximately an additional 134 to 268 hours of preparation time.

In addition to these meetings, board members are assigned liaison responsibilities to other committees or activities. These include such committees as the Gifted Advisory Board, Safe and Drug Free Advisory Board, School Health Advisory Board, Special Education Advisory Committee, Collaborative Task Force, and Career and Technical Education Advisory Council. At the time of the on-site visit, a task group on gangs had been assembled and was meeting.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

### **Recommendation 2-2:**

**Amend policy BCE to authorize standing committees and establish committees for Budget and Finance, Policy, and Planning and reduce time spent in full-board meetings.**

The implementation of this recommendation should result in the establishment of three standing committees. Establishment of these standing committees should provide the School Board with a means for studying important issues and having recommendations prepared for full-board review and approval without the lengthy full-board meetings that are the current practice.

Consideration should be given to including community representation on each committee and one representative of the Dinwiddie County Board of Supervisors on two of the proposed committees -- the Strategic Planning Committee and the Budget Committee. This latter action should serve to reinforce a positive communications link with the Dinwiddie County Board of Supervisors and should ultimately provide a means to ensure that they have adequate information to support approval of important annual budget initiatives that may require additional fiscal commitments.

The first step in this process should include the development and adoption of a policy to govern the establishment and operation of each committee. This policy should address the following areas:

- committee membership, composition, numbers, and length of terms;
- responsibilities for School Board members;

- guidelines for community members;
- relationship with the Board of Supervisors;
- scope of responsibilities; and
- administrative support.

Exhibit 2-2, Proposed Dinwiddie County Public School Board Committee Structure, provides the suggested number of persons for committee membership and the DCPS administrative position to serve as liaison. As shown, it is recommended that each committee include two School Board members and one or two community members. This structure ensures that opportunities exist for each School Board member to serve.

**EXHIBIT 2-2  
PROPOSED DINWIDDIE COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS  
SCHOOL BOARD COMMITTEE STRUCTURE**

RECOMMENDED BOARD COMMITTEE	MEMBERSHIP		STAFF LIAISON POSITION
	NUMBER OF BOARD MEMBERS	NUMBER OF COMMUNITY MEMBERS	
Budget & Finance	2	2	Executive Director of Fiscal Operations *
Policy	2	1	Superintendent and School Board Clerk
Planning	2	2	Proposed Director of Planning, Accountability, Technology & Communications *

\* It is to be understood that the Superintendent can be involved at any time.  
Source: Created by MGT of America, November 2005.

The responsibilities for the School Board should include:

- selecting School Board and community membership, and identifying County Board of Supervisors representation, if included;
- establishing the committee work plan and meeting agendas in concert with the administration;
- determining committee chairs who will facilitate the meetings;
- permitting any School Board member to attend any committee meeting (however, if more than two are to be present the meeting must be properly advertised); and
- ensuring that committee chairs make certain that all board members and other impacted parties are apprised of committee activity.

Guidelines for community committee members should include that members are:

- experienced, open-minded, and interested in topics that come before the specific committee on which they serve;
- available to attend at least three-quarters of the scheduled meetings;

- willing to provide input and offer recommendations to the committee for the full School Board review and decision; and
- able to attend an orientation for serving on committees.

The staff liaison should be required to:

- ensure that appropriate training is provided to all committee members and assigned staff;
- record minutes, develop executive summaries of meetings, and provide for distribution to committee members and the School Board promptly following meetings;
- work with committee chair(s) to form committee agenda; and
- provide materials to the committee for review, approval, or work/study.

A brief description of each proposed committee is provided below:

- a Budget Committee provides the School Board important input into budgeting and assists in providing full credibility in the development processes and final document. The Budget Committee may find it advantageous to invite representation from the County Board of Supervisors so that they all may understand the unique needs of the school division.
- the establishment of a Policy Committee should serve to provide systematic board input to updating and maintaining the policy manual. The many changes in federal laws and rules that arise continually such as *No Child Left Behind (NCLB)* and the *Individual with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)* as well as Commonwealth of Virginia Code require that the policy manual be updated on a regular basis.
- In Subsections 2.5.1 (Division Organization) and 2.5.3 (Planning and Accountability) of this chapter, emphasis is placed on developing the DCPS capacity for strategic planning and accountability. Consistent with this is the need for the School Board to bring the board's strategic planning activities to focus within one primary standing committee. The accomplishment of this recommendation should provide the School Board and the administration with the overall framework within which to develop all long- and short-term plans to support division goals.

### **FISCAL IMPACT**

This recommendation can be accomplished with existing personnel and at no additional cost to the division.

## **FINDING**

The School Board Chairman position requires additional time commitments and provides School Board members opportunities for unique insights into the management and operation of the division. Policy BCA, *School Board Organizational Meeting*, provides for the selection of the chairman of the board. Policy and procedures do not provide for the rotation of the chairman position and on occasions the same person has filled the role of chairman for consecutive years.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

### **Recommendation 2-3:**

**Consider establishing a policy to annually rotate the School Board Chairman position.**

Implementation for this recommendation should provide board member with the opportunity to serve in a board leadership position. Amending of policy could involve assigning the chairmanship to selected divisions in rotation. For example, Division 1, beginning in January 2006, Division 2 in January 2007, and soon with the rotation to reoccur with Division 1 again starting in 2011.

## **FISCAL IMPACT**

This recommendation can be accomplished at no additional cost to the division.

## **FINDING**

New School Board members are not provided a comprehensive orientation to acquaint them with local division organization, board role and responsibilities, and the many details associated with carrying out their responsibilities. School Board members are provided opportunities to attend meetings of the Virginia School Boards Association (VSBA) which does provide various orientation sessions. These sessions focus primarily on Commonwealth related matters rather than local issues.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

### **Recommendation 2-4:**

**Develop and implement a local new School Board member orientation program.**

Implementation of this recommendation should result in the development of a comprehensive local new School Board member orientation program that, minimally, should cover the following topics:

- organization of the School Board, rules of order, procedures for obtaining information, establishment of the meeting agenda, and other operations matters;

- organization of the school division including key administrative personnel that can provide assistance to board members upon request;
- the role of the board member as reflected in Commonwealth of Virginia law and by best practices. The National School Boards Association (NSBA) and VSBA can provide valuable information for this portion of the orientation;
- a review of important documents including (but not necessarily limited to) the policy and procedures manual, employee handbooks, student code of conduct, and pupil progression plans or like documents describing division and state student matriculation requirements;
- a review of the division's planning documents and related processes for their development;
- a review of the division's budget and associated development and adoption time-lines;
- the calendar of important dates and deadlines for board actions including approval of employee contracts for employment, establishment of the staffing plan for each year, review of the student code of conduct, and other required matters; and
- other local items that are deemed important to include.

The orientation program should be implemented over a scheduled series of meetings allowing the participants to assimilate information in an orderly and systematic fashion – avoid overloading participants with too much information at any one session.

Accomplishment of this recommendation should lead to the establishment of a Board Development Program. Such a program can be developed in conjunction with the VSBA. An additional resource for board development can be secured from NSBA and the Florida School Boards Association, Dr. Wayne Blanton, Executive Director, Tallahassee, Florida.

### **FISCAL IMPACT**

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

### **FINDING**

The DCPS School Board and the County Board of Supervisors do not have an adopted policy or letter/memorandum of agreement governing shared services. As a result, when the issue of shared services is brought up there are no mutually agreed upon guiding principles that could ensure effective results. Recent efforts to implement shared services in the area of technology failed to realize the potential benefits that were

originally envisioned by the respective governing boards. A review of the actions shows that many of the conflicting issues could have been anticipated and the School Board and Board of Supervisors developed a policy or an agreement designed to guide a process that studies the advantages and disadvantages of a specific shared service and provides a means of solving conflicts.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

### **Recommendation 2-5:**

**Establish (with the Dinwiddie County Board of Supervisors) a collaboratively developed policy or Memorandum of Agreement on shared services.**

Implementation of this recommendation should result in the drafting of a policy adopted by each body or a jointly developed memorandum of agreement for guiding the development, assessment, and implementation of joint or shared services. This in turn should result in a systematic review of potential shared services to determine ultimate feasibility. The types of services that should be examined should include the following:

- building maintenance;
- legal services;
- capital projects management;
- grounds services;
- courier and mail services;
- technology applications;
- grounds maintenance;
- records management;
- risk management including related training;
- staff development;
- surplus property/storage;
- vehicle maintenance;
- Workers' Compensation;
- purchasing/procurement;
- human resources; and
- possibly others.

Such a policy or memorandum of agreement should address the following considerations:

- protocol for the review of potential shared services including team member selection, requirements to identify all pros and cons (factors supporting and constraining factors), and process for resolving conflict;
- development of a realistic plan of action with thoroughly developed procedures for implementation and management of shared services;
- process for resolving disputes that may arise during the implementation of a shared service and during the term of its existence by an outside neutral party;

- requirements for evaluation of those shared services that are developed including time-lines and benchmarks for assessment; and
- other considerations as deemed necessary.

### **FISCAL IMPACT**

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources and at no additional cost. The development of shared services could result in improved governmental efficiencies and cost savings.

### **FINDING**

The School Board does not conduct self-assessments of their performance, which results in no formal method for determining their effectiveness and a process for establishing board performance goals. In 1998 the board adopted Policy AFA, *Evaluation of School Board Operation Procedures* providing for an annual review of board operations and the establishment of goals. MGT consultants could not identify that this policy or comprehensive board self-evaluation is taking place as required.

Interviews with board members, principals, other school-level staff, and central office personnel consistently report questions regarding the role of some of the School Board members versus expectations of the duties to be performed by employees. The implication is that some board members may be getting involved in the day-to-day administration of the schools.

### **RECOMMENDATION**

#### **Recommendation 2-6:**

**Develop and implement an annual School Board self-assessment system including a review of the legally constituted role of board members.**

Providing feedback, both formally and informally, is fundamental in 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. Implementing this recommendation can be a significant step toward supporting board accountability, providing a medium for reporting governance activity, and setting governance improvement goals. The self-assessment should address the role of board members in the establishment and execution of policy, contracts, and the actual administration of the division and its schools.

Exhibit 2-3, Sample Board Self-Assessment Instrument, provides one example of a self-assessment instrument used by some boards of control.

### **FISCAL IMPACT**

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

**EXHIBIT 2-3  
SAMPLE BOARD SELF-ASSESSMENT INSTRUMENT**

**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 for improvement.***

Adequate	Needs Improvement	
_____	_____	Our meeting was businesslike, 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 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 suggestion for improving our next meeting is...

Source: Created by MGT of America, 2005.

## **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 the administration out of trouble;
- establishing an essential division between policy making and administration roles;
- creating guidelines within which people operate;
- providing reasonable assurances of consistency and continuity in decisions;
- providing legal basis for the allocation of funds, facilities, and other resources;
- facilitating and guiding the orientation of the School Board members and employees; and
- acquainting the public with, 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**

Commonwealth of Virginia law (22.1-253.13:7) contains specific provisions governing School Board policy. The law requires that policies be up-to-date and reviewed at least every five years and revised as needed. The policies must address the following eight overall areas:

- a system of two-way communication between employees and the local School Board and its administrative staff;
- the selection and evaluation of all instructional materials purchased by the division, with clear procedures for handling challenged controversial materials;
- standards of student conduct and attendance, and related enforcement procedures;
- school-community communications and involvement;
- guidelines to encourage parents to provide instructional assistance to their children;

- information about procedures for addressing school division concerns with defined recourse for parents;
- a cooperatively-developed procedure for personnel evaluation; and
- grievance, dismissal procedures, and other procedures as prescribed by the General Assembly and School Board.

Each division school and the public library has a copy of the DCPS policy manual, and the policy manual has been placed on the Web site.

Policies are overseen and managed in the Superintendent's office by the School Board Clerk/Executive Assistant to the Superintendent. The official policy manual, is located in the Superintendent's office.

The policies have been codified using the National School Board Association's model with specific model policy language procured from the Virginia School Board Association (VSBA). The policy manual is composed of 12 chapters or major classifications denoted as sections with each section containing a detailed table of contents. Individual policies are coded within these A-L sections (chapters). The manual contains an alphabetical subject index in the front of the document and followed by a Table of Contents.

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

**EXHIBIT 2-4  
DINWIDDIE COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS  
POLICY HANDBOOK ORGANIZATION**

CLASSIFICATION	SECTION TITLES	POLICY CODES
A	Foundations and Basic Commitments	AA - AFA
B	School Board Governance and Operations	BB - BHE
C	General School Administration	CA - CM
D	Fiscal Management	DA - DO
E	Support Services	EA - ET
F	Facilities Development	FA - FG
G	Personnel	GA - GDQA
H *	Negotiations	None
I	Instructional Program	IA - INDC
J	Students	JB - JT
K	School-Community Relations	KA - KQ
L	Education Agency Relations	LA - LI

\* The Supreme Court of Virginia has stated that neither Virginia constitution or statutory authority exists for School Boards to enter into collective bargaining agreements with their employees.  
Source: DCPS School Board Policy Manual, November 2005.

Exhibit 2-5 shows the revision status of DCPS School Board policies.

**EXHIBIT 2-5  
REVISION/ADOPTION STATUS OF DCPS BOARD POLICIES  
NOVEMBER 2005**

CHAPTER	TITLE	NUMBER OF POLICIES EXAMINED	NUMBER OF POLICIES ADOPTED/UPDATED/RESTATED IN:			
			PRIOR to 2000	2000-01	2002-03	2004-05
A	Foundations and Basic Commitments	6	3	1	1	1
B	School Board Governance and Operations	29	12	2	10	5
C	General School Administration	12	8	1	1	2
D	Fiscal Management	17	14	1	2	
E	Support Services	30	24	1		5
F	Facilities Development	10	7	2		1
G	Personnel	57	37	7	3	10
H	Negotiations *	0				
I	Instructional Program	52	26	8	4	14
J	Students	46	18	5	12	11
K	School-Community Relations	23	10	4	5	4
L	Education Agency Relations	8	4	1		3
<b>TOTALS</b>		<b>290</b>	<b>163</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>56</b>

Source: DCPS Board Policy Manual, November 2005.

\* The Supreme Court of Virginia has stated that neither Virginia constitution or statutory authority exists for School Boards to enter into collective bargaining agreements with their employees.

The School Board has a contract with the VSBA for a policy updating service designed to assist the division in maintaining a current manual in compliance with Commonwealth of Virginia law. The annual cost for this update service is under \$1,000. This compares with outsource services fees that range from a low of \$4,000 to as high as \$12,000 or more annually.

VSBA provides updates three times each year. As these are received the School Board Clerk distributes them to the appropriate department for review, amending if appropriate, and submission to the Superintendent for approval. The Superintendent provides recommended policies and amendments to the School Board for their review and final adoption.

**COMMENDATION**

**The Dinwiddie County Public Schools School Board and administration are commended for approving specific measures designed to ensure a cost-effective method for maintaining a current policy manual.**

**FINDING**

School Board policies are codified in an alphabetical system. The Commonwealth of Virginia Statute 22.1-253.13:7 provides, as previously stated, a variety of policy provisions that the School Board must address and include in its policy manual. Exhibit 2-6 shows samples of required state provisions that are addressed in the updated policy manual along with the specific code.

**EXHIBIT 2-6  
SAMPLE COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA REQUIRED POLICY TOPICS  
AND RELATED DINWIDDIE COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS  
SCHOOL BOARD POLICY**

REQUIRED TOPIC	APPLICABLE POLICY
Selection and evaluation of all instructional materials	IM, IIA, IIAA, IIAB
Process for parents to address concerns related to the division	KL, KLB, GBLA
System of two-way communication between employees and School Board	BG, GBD
Cooperatively developed personnel evaluation procedures	GCN, GDN
Grievance, dismissal, and other procedures	GBM, GBMA, GCPD, GDPD
Standards of student conduct and attendance	JFC, JFG, JGD, JGE, EEACC
School-community communications and involvement	KA, KC, KM
Guidelines encouraging parents to provide instructional assistance to their children	IGBC, IKA
Procedures for handling challenged and controversial materials	KLB

Source: DCPS School Board Policy Manual, November 2005.

Additionally, federal law and related regulations require that local boards of education include other provisions. Some relate to IDEA, labor standards, *No Child Left Behind*, Family Medical Leave, and other topics; however, at present, School Board members and school division personnel cannot easily identify in the policy manual those policies that are a result of these requirements. If a School Board member or division staff is not specifically familiar with the state, federal or other requirements, they cannot easily refer to the policy manual to see if the particular policy or issue is included.

**RECOMMENDATION**

**Recommendation 2-7:**

**Code School Board policies that are required by Virginia law and other controlling regulations by assigning an identify asterisk.**

The implementation of this recommendation should result in placing an asterisk by the letter code of each policy that is required by Virginia statutes and other controlling regulations. This designation should enable School Board members, central office personnel and school-level employees, as well as other stakeholders, to know which policies must be developed and adopted by the School Board. Furthermore, this coding system should make it easier for staff to readily identify important provisions that must be kept up-to-date and consistent with all requirements, thus increasing employee efficiency in this process.

## **FISCAL IMPACT**

This recommendation can be accomplished with existing resources and at no additional cost.

## **FINDING**

The policy and procedures manual contains a number of references to procedural documents related to policy implementation, but it is difficult to obtain these when needed. For example, in policy AC the Superintendent is instructed to develop a procedure for implementing nondiscrimination/harassment policies; KG identifies a facilities use procedure and use fees document; DJA, purchasing controls; and CF, site management handbook. To obtain these documents, a person would have to visit several offices, consuming large quantities of valuable time and effort.

Requirements for student behavior, procedures related to drug testing, and other matters are included in this referencing process. While MGT consultants were able to review some of these documents, we were unable to identify a complete listing of all such materials. A central listing of all such referenced documents was unavailable. This situation suggests that neither the School Board nor various administrators and other employees could, if required, identify and review these documents in an expeditious manner.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

### **Recommendation 2-8:**

**Create a policy provision containing a listing of existing procedural manuals, handbooks, and planning documents and create a series of hot links from the manual to the cited documents or procedures on the Web site.**

Creating this document should provide DCPS with a compilation of important procedures and operation manuals, handbooks, and other materials. Also, this provision should serve as a valuable tool for the orientation of new School Board members as well as new school division personnel. Some school systems have included in their policy manual such a provision within the equivalent Section B, *School Board Governance and Operations*.

This provision may be phrased as follows:

### **SCHOOL BOARD AND SCHOOL SYSTEM PLANS AND PROCEDURES**

*The School Board has plans, manuals, handbooks and codes that outline procedures to be followed relative to stated topics. The plans, manuals, handbooks, and codes listed below may be adopted by reference as part of these policies when required by other Board provisions, Virginia laws, or other controlling requirements. These include, but are not limited to...*

Within this portion of the policy manual, the titles of various documents could be listed. This list should become an important resource for School Board members and employees to understand the extent of activity and responsibilities involved in managing a complex organization.

Exhibit 2-7 provides a partial listing of the types of documents often included in such a document. Upon development and adoption of the list of documents a series of hot links should be created between the policy manual and related documents. This action should result in providing the policy manual user easy access to other related information thus increasing user efficiency by reducing time required to locate needed documents.

**EXHIBIT 2-7  
SAMPLE LIST OF PROCEDURAL, OPERATIONAL, PLANNING  
AND OTHER DOCUMENTS**

<p><b><u>Administration</u></b></p> <p>Emergency Plan Strategic Plan Staff Development Plan Safety Plan General Outline of Revenue and Meal Accountability Procedures Human Resources Management Procedures Capital Project Priority List Transportation Procedures Manual Food Service Procedures</p> <p><b><u>Instructional &amp; Student Services</u></b></p> <p>After-School Child Care Program Manual Student Conduct Testing Procedures Manual Alternative Education Plan Instructional Material Manual Instructional Technology Plan Limited-English Proficient LEP Plan Manual for Admissions and Placement in Special Education Programs Student Graduation Requirements School Handbooks School Health Procedures Manual School Improvement Plans Special Programs and Procedures Manual Student Education Records Manual Student Services Plan Truancy Plan</p>
--

Source: Created by MGT of America, Inc., 2005.

**FISCAL IMPACT**

This recommendation could be accomplished with existing personnel and at no additional cost to DCPS.

### **2.3 Legal Services**

School division's costs for legal work have increased dramatically over the last three decades due to a number of factors. These factors 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 the relationship to local and state regulations coupled with the school system's need to maintain an orderly educational environment.

The Virginia Code (22.1-82) provides authority for the School Board to:

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

#### **FINDING**

Legal services are obtained through the cooperative use of Dinwiddie County Board of Supervisor's legal counsel and other private firms that are employed only when their specific expertise is required.

The city attorney's office has provided school law training to division personnel and offers legal orientation to new School Board members. Services for special education are obtained through a private firm, Reed Smith, LLP and as additional areas of expertise are necessary other outside firms are used.

The expenses as reported to MGT consultants for a three-year period are as follows:

- 2003 - \$44,751
- 2004 - \$47,518
- 2005 - \$8,657

The 2005 figures are for January through August and all calculations include a substantial cost for litigation related to the Dinwiddie Elementary renovation project. Comparison figures were not available from the peer divisions; however, MGT consultants have maintained data related to cost per enrolled pupil for many school systems, the majority much larger than DCPS. When viewed as a cost per pupil DCPS cost for legal services are very competitive and less than MGT consultants usually find. With a 2005-06 enrollment of 4,572 students and a three-year cost average of \$33,642 the average peer student cost for services is \$7.36. With the elimination of the facilities' litigation the average for 2005 is likely to not exceed \$13,000 or approximately \$2.84 per student, a very low figure.

## **COMMENDATION**

**Dinwiddie County Public Schools School Board and administration are commended for containing legal expenses.**

## **FINDING**

The School Board has adopted Policy BCG, *Board Attorney*, which as permitted by Virginia Code, states that the board may employ counsel and have an attorney at meetings. However, the policy does not address criteria for selection, use or evaluation of legal services. Additionally, there is no record of the School Board having evaluated legal services.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

### **Recommendation 2-9:**

**Develop and implement a policy governing the selection, use, and assessment of legal services.**

Implementation of this recommendation should provide the School Board with valuable information to determine the effectiveness of legal services. Developing and adopting a selection and use policy should provide the administration with specific guidelines in preparing recommendations for use of outside counsel when the Board of Supervisor's legal services cannot meet the division's needs.

## **FISCAL IMPACT**

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

## **2.4 Organization and Management**

Section 2.4 reviews the DCPS organization, decision making, management, planning and accountability, public information, and school organization and management functions.

### **2.4.1 Division Organization**

The executive and administrative functions of DCPS are managed through a system that is organized into line and staff relationships that define official spans of authority and communication channels. School systems are typically pyramidal organizations with clear lines of authority leading from the School Board and its Chief Executive Officer (Superintendent) down through departments, offices, and schools.

The organization chart of the school system is developed to graphically depict this scheme. School systems may have multiple layers within the organization from superintendent to associate superintendents to executive directors to coordinators and

supervisors, to managers and specialists, and on to school levels; perhaps as many as four to eight authority layers.

Dinwiddie County Public Schools has two primary layers within the central office. These minimum layers facilitate ensuring effective and efficient communication of information and decisions through the system and to its public; however, they create special challenges because of some broad spans of control. Maintaining a minimum number of layers requires the system to address issues related to span of control and to take actions to preclude the development of a large, bureaucratic-type central administration. The Superintendent and his executive staff has been reorganizing the central office and this review has taken recent reorganization actions into consideration.

As is reported in this section, DCPS is a relatively traditional organization as shown in Exhibits 2-8 and 2-9. Exhibit 2-8 shows the organization as it existed during the on-site review. Exhibit 2-9 shows the current assignment of functions within the central office organization. As shown in Exhibit 2-8, two primary layers of central office authority under the Superintendent are shown: the Assistant Superintendent for Instruction and executive directors; and directors and coordinators.

Exhibit 2-9 shows the current assignment of functions to each of the major departments. As shown, the following assignment/alignment issues exist:

- school nutrition, a business function, is assigned to Administrative Services;
- staff training is assigned among the various departments; and
- student services related functions are distributed within two departments.

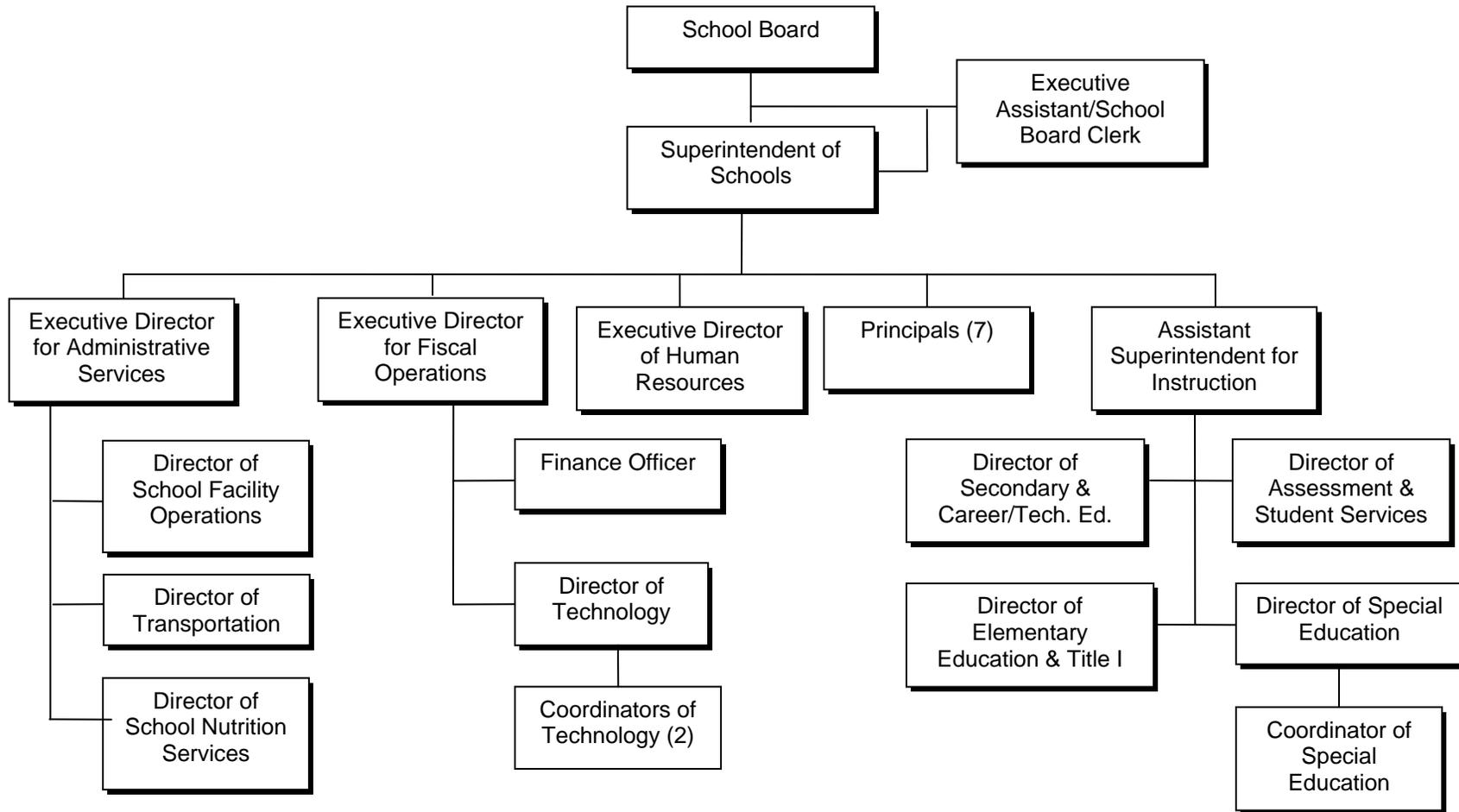
## **FINDING**

The Superintendent has reorganized various departments of the central office since his appointment resulting in focusing on improving services to schools and other issues; however, the Superintendent has a total of 12 direct reports including the Executive Assistant, three executive director positions, an assistant superintendent, and seven principals. Additionally, there is no organizational provision for institutionalizing the planning and accountability functions.

The Human Resources Department is headed by an Executive Director position reporting directly to the Superintendent while in many school systems of this size a lesser position would administer the function and report to an assistant superintendent or director. A similar situation exists for the Fiscal Services and Administrative Services Departments which are frequently combined under the direction of executive position.

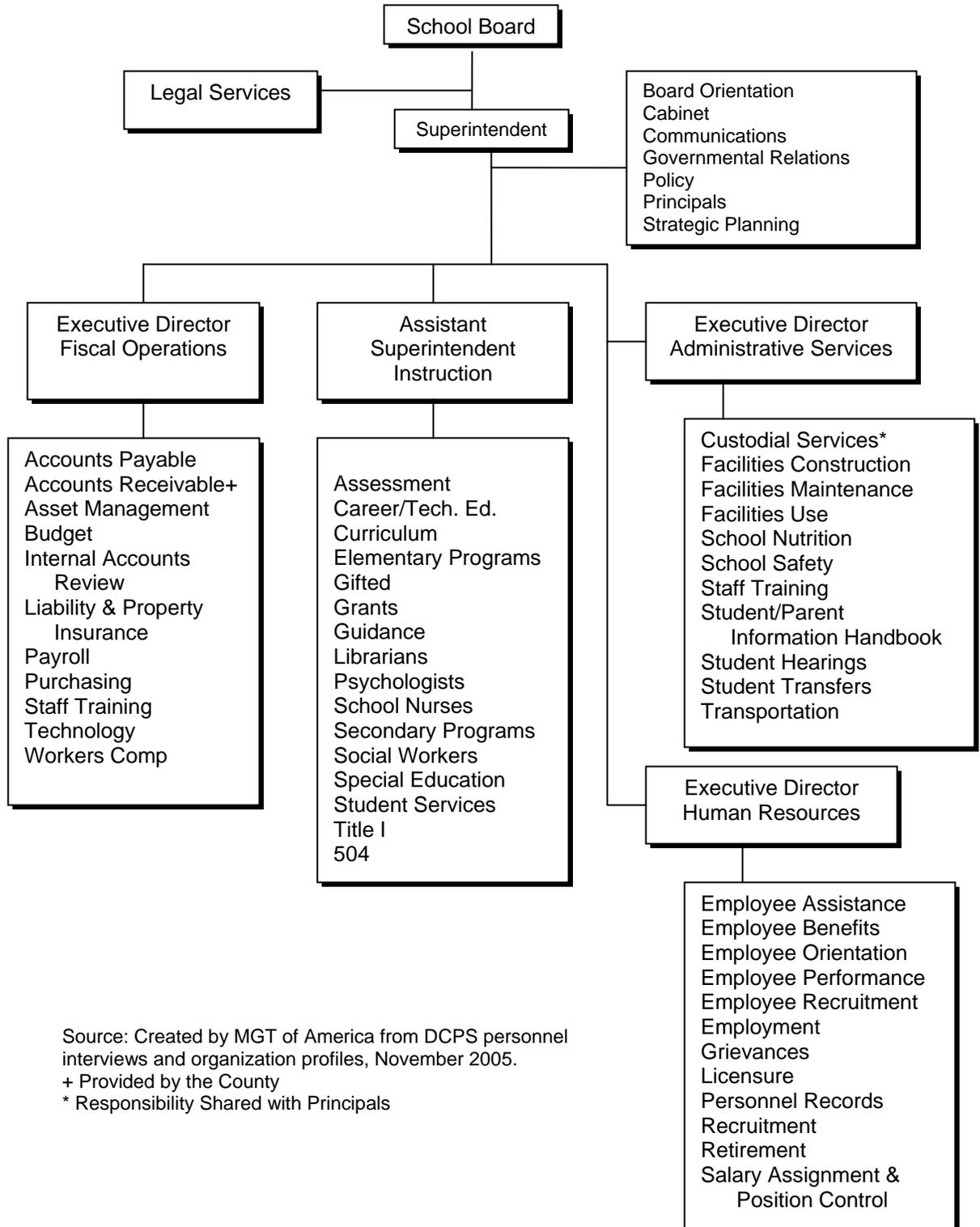
The Assistant Superintendent for Instruction, with four primary administrative direct reports coordinates all activity with the exception of the student services functions that are assigned to Administrative Services. These student services functions include student/parent information handbook, student hearings, and student transfers.

**EXHIBIT 2-8  
DINWIDDIE COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS  
ORGANIZATION  
NOVEMBER 2005**



Source: DCPS Office of Superintendent, November 2005.

**EXHIBIT 2-9  
DINWIDDIE COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS  
FUNCTION ASSIGNMENTS  
NOVEMBER 2005**



Source: Created by MGT of America from DCPS personnel interviews and organization profiles, November 2005.  
 + Provided by the County  
 \* Responsibility Shared with Principals

## **RECOMMENDATION**

### **Recommendation 2-10:**

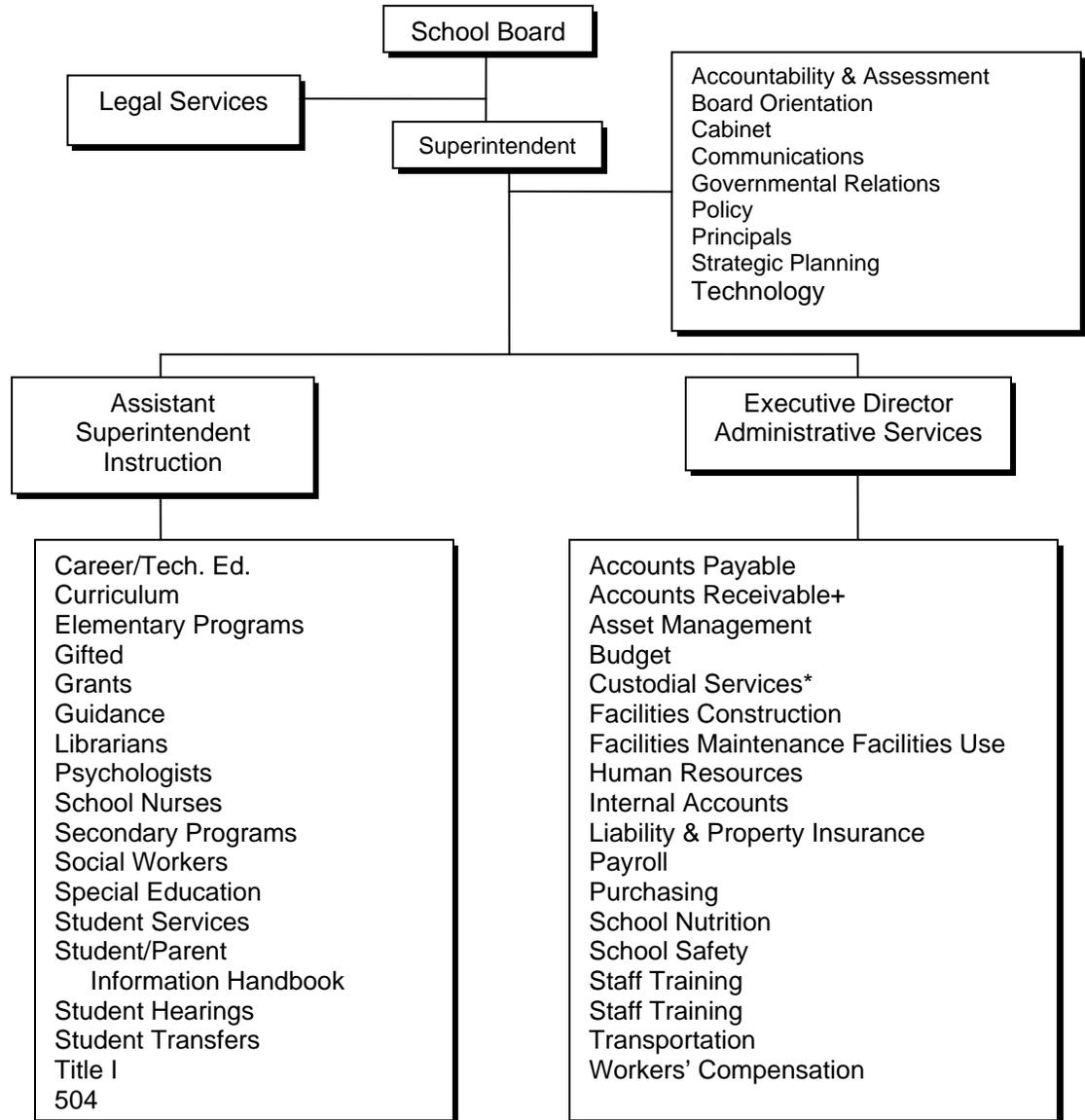
#### **Reorganize Dinwiddie County Public Schools central office administration.**

Implementation of this recommendation should result in the following modifications to the current organizational plan and be consistent with the Superintendent's overall goals:

- reducing the direct reports to the Superintendent from 12 to 11 which includes the seven principals with much of their activity coordinated by the Assistant Superintendent for Instruction and the proposed Executive Director for Administrative Services;
- elimination of the Executive Director of Human Resources reporting to the Superintendent and assignment of management of human resources to a proposed supervisor position reporting to the Executive Director for Administrative Services;
- consolidation of planning, accountability, and technology in one department reporting to the Superintendent;
- assignment of the student services function that are now within the Administrative Services Department to the director of Student Services;
- elimination of the Executive Director for Fiscal Operations and assignment of the functions to a Director of Business Services reporting to the Executive Director for Administrative Services;
- reassign the Director of School Nutrition from the Executive Director for Administrative Services to the proposed Director of Business Services;
- assign the Finance Officer to the Director of Business Services;
- delete the Director of Technology and create a Director of Planning, Accountability, and Technology position reporting to the Superintendent;
- Create a new title of Director of Student Services and assign the assessment function to the proposed Planning, Accountability, and Technology Department; and
- Change the title of the Director of Elementary Education & Title I to Director of Elementary Education.

Exhibit 2-10 shows the recommended assignment of functions and Exhibit 2-11 shows the proposed organization structure. Exhibit 2-12 provides a summary of and rationale for the recommended changes and refers to other chapters/sections for additional discussions.

**EXHIBIT 2-10  
DINWIDDIE COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS  
RECOMMENDED FUNCTION ASSIGNMENTS  
NOVEMBER 2005**

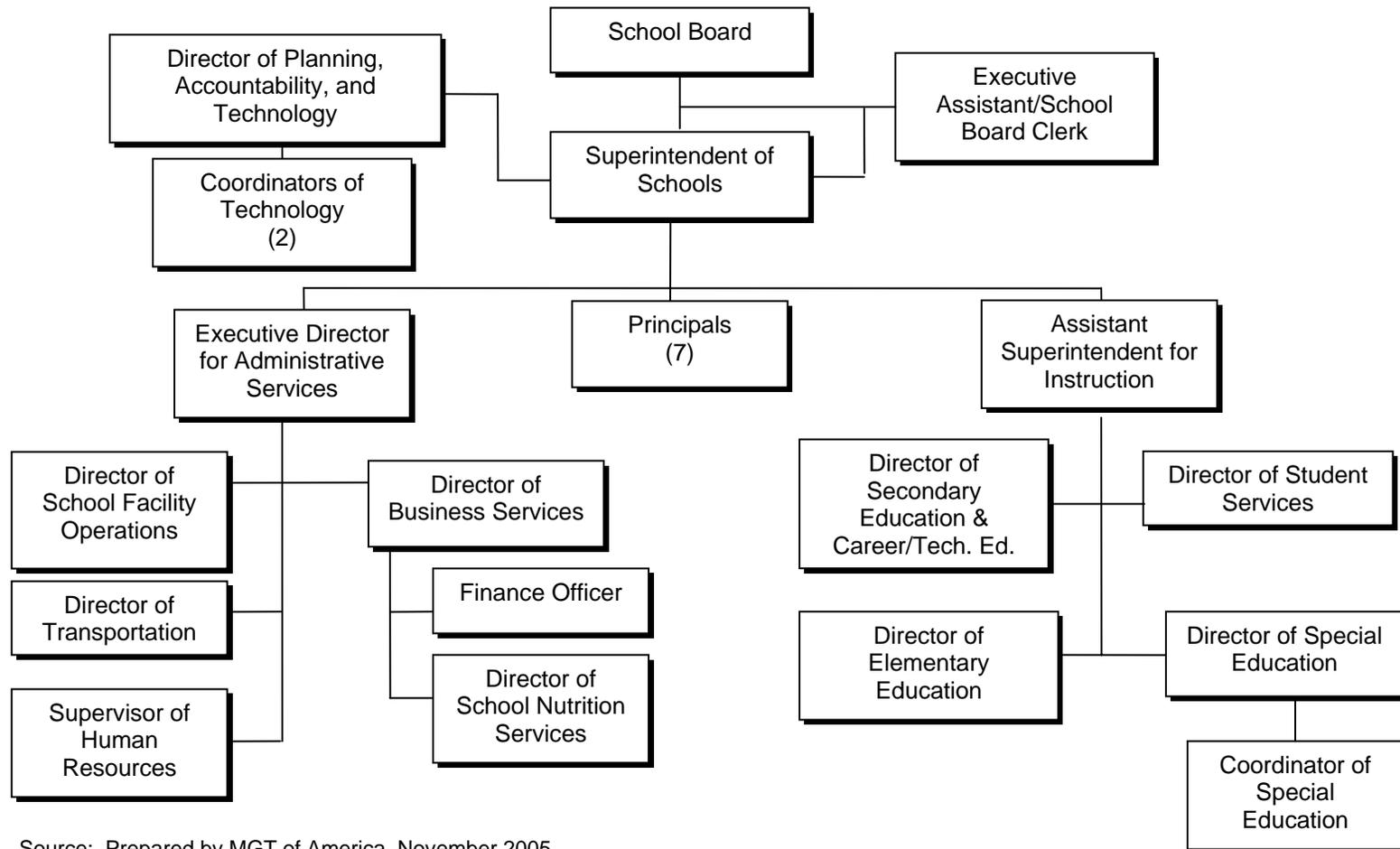


Source: Prepared by MGT of America , November 2005.

+ Provided by the County

\* Responsibility Shared with Principals

**EXHIBIT 2-11  
DINWIDDIE COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS  
PROPOSED ORGANIZATION  
NOVEMBER 2005**



Source: Prepared by MGT of America, November 2005.

As can be seen the recommendation accomplishes the actions as shown in Exhibit 2-12.

**EXHIBIT 2-12  
SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDED  
POSITION ASSIGNMENTS/CLASSIFICATIONS  
AND RATIONALE**

<b>CURRENT POSITION</b>	<b>ACTION</b>	<b>RATIONALE</b>
Executive Director for Fiscal Operations	Eliminate	Division enrollment size does not warrant four executive positions and typically the fiscal and operations functions fall within one department position (see Chapters 4 and 5 for detailed discussions of fiscal services' functions).
None	Create Director of Business Services and assign reporting to the Executive Director for Administrative Services.	See above; See Chapters 5, 8, 9 & 11 for detailed discussions of other administrative services' functions.
Director of School Nutrition	Assign to the proposed Director of Business Services.	See above
Finance Officer	Assign to the proposed Director of Business Services.	See above
Executive Director of Human Resources	Eliminate	In school systems of this size, the human resources function is generally carried out by a supervisor or coordinator position (see Chapter 3 for a detailed discussion of human resources).
None	Create Supervisor of Human Resources reporting to the Executive Director for Administrative Services.	Function should report to the Executive Director for Administrative Services' area, as an operations related function. In school systems of this size the human resources function is generally carried out by a supervisor or coordinator position. A supervisor position should assume responsibility for overall management of human resources.
Director of Technology	Eliminate	See below; See Chapter 9 for a detailed discussion of technology.
None	Create Director of Planning, Accountability, and Technology reporting to the Superintendent.	This organizational provision institutionalizes the planning, accountability, and technology functions and places them within one department.
Director of Assessment and Student Services	Create a new title of Director of Student Services and assign the assessment function to the proposed Planning, Accountability, and Technology Department.	See above; this action permits the assignment of the student/parent information handbook, student hearings, and student transfers activities to the Director of Student Services and creates needed alignment of responsibilities. See Chapters 5 & 6 for detailed discussions.
Director of Elementary Education & Title I	Create a new title of Director of Elementary Education.	See Chapter 5 of this report for a detailed discussion.

Source: Prepared by MGT of America, November 2005.

**FISCAL IMPACT**

Exhibit 2-13 shows the costs and savings resulting from executive level position changes proposed in this recommendation. Salary figures include cost for fringe benefits estimated at 22 percent of scheduled salary.

**EXHIBIT 2-13  
SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDED  
POSITION ASSIGNMENTS/CLASSIFICATIONS  
SAVINGS AND (COSTS)**

POSITION	ACTION	SAVINGS/(COST) *		
		CURRENT SALARY *	PROPOSED SALARY *	SAVINGS/(COST) *
Executive Director for Fiscal Services	Delete	\$102,204	-0-	\$102,204
Director of Business Services	Create	-0-	(\$102,204)	(\$102,204)
Executive Director of Human Resources	Delete	88,162	-0-	88,162
Supervisor of Human Resources	Create	-0-	(74,824 )	(74,824 )
Director of Technology	Delete	76,321	-0-	76,321
Director of Planning, Accountability, Technology and Communications	Create	-0-	(87,840)	(87,840)
<b>Total</b>		<b>\$266,687</b>	<b>(\$264,868)</b>	<b>\$1,819</b>

Source: Prepared by MGT of America, November 2005

\* Includes 22 percent costs for fringe benefits.

Exhibit 2-14 shows how these figures were calculated.

**EXHIBIT 2-14  
COMPUTATION OF TOTAL SALARIES**

<b>POSITION</b>	<b>SALARY</b>	<b>FRINGE BENEFITS</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>
Executive Director for Fiscal Services	\$83,774	\$18,430	\$102,204
Director of Business Services	(83,774 )	(18,430)	(102,204)
Executive Director of Human Resources	72,264	15,898	88,162
Supervisor of Human Resources	(61,331 )	(13,493 )	(74,824 )
Director of Technology	62,542	13,759	76,321
Director of Planning, Accountability, and Technology	(72,000 )	( 15,840)	(87,840)

The summary of all savings and costs for each year during the period 2006 through 2011 is shown below. As can be seen a total of \$1,819 can be saved the first year. The five-year savings can be \$9,095.

<b>Recommendation</b>	<b>2006-07</b>	<b>2007-08</b>	<b>2008-09</b>	<b>2009-10</b>	<b>2010-11</b>
Delete Executive Director for Fiscal Services	\$102,204	\$102,204	\$102,204	\$102,204	\$102,204
Create Director of Business Services	(102,204)	(102,204)	(102,204)	(102,204)	(102,204)
Delete Executive Director of Human Resources	88,162	88,162	88,162	88,162	88,162
Create Supervisor of Human Resources	(74,824 )	(74,824 )	(74,824 )	(74,824 )	(74,824 )
Delete Director of Technology	76,321	76,321	76,321	76,321	76,321
Create Director of Planning, Accountability, and Technology	(87,840)	(87,840)	(87,840)	(87,840)	(87,840)
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$1,819</b>	<b>\$1,819</b>	<b>\$1,819</b>	<b>\$1,819</b>	<b>\$1,819</b>

**2.4.2 Decision Making, Communications, and Management**

The current Superintendent is in his second year of service as executive officer in DCPS. The Superintendent's contract, initiated in September 2004 for a two-year period, provides the terms and conditions for employment. The contract includes specific provisions for benefits and compensation increases consistent with those of other DCPS administrative and professional employees. Additionally, the School Board provides

automobile use reimbursement for school business as well as providing a division vehicle, pays for a family health plan, provide term life insurance and disability plans, authorizes a 403(b) or other tax deferred program, 30 days paid vacation, and other benefits provided 12 month employees of the School Board. The contract in all respects is consistent with Virginia law and sound business practice.

## **FINDING**

The Superintendent leads and manages the division through a Superintendent's Cabinet and by direct consultation with administrative and support staff; however, the cabinet does not include principal representation. The Superintendent's Cabinet is composed of the Executive Assistant to the Superintendent, executive director positions, director positions, other central office administrators, and the Assistant Superintendent. This group can involve as many as 16 or more persons.

The Superintendent's Cabinet meets weekly and principals meetings are held monthly. On the day following School Board meetings the Superintendent typically meets with all central office personnel.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

### **Recommendation 2-11:**

**Reorganize the Superintendent's Cabinet to include the following seven positions: Director of Planning, Accountability, and Technology, Executive Director for Administrative Services, Director of Business Services, Assistant Superintendent for Instruction, Executive Assistant to the Superintendent, and two principal representatives.**

With the implementation of the proposed organizational plan and realignment of functions, a newly configured Superintendent's Cabinet composed of seven positions (a decrease of nine or more) could be developed. Decreasing the number of positions could enhance communications, providing a group representative of the major units and functions within the division, and ensuring school-level input at the primary decision making level of activity.

The Superintendent and the Superintendent's Cabinet should perform the following functions:

- coordinate all planning development through the recommended Planning, Accountability, and Technology Department;
- review projections and alternative "what if" analyses, as part of long-range planning;
- establish and maintain focus on mission, goals, and related initiatives of the system;
- analyze and interpret data to ensure that decisions are based upon accurate and complete information;
- ensure community involvement;

- monitor internal communications to ensure effective communication of decisions and related information;
- communicate the vision of the organization to all stakeholders;
- guide program evaluation;
- identify and participate in training designed to ensure that the team functions effectively;
- engage in orchestrating the specific and purposeful abandonment of obsolete, unproductive practices and programs;
- maintain focus on continuous division and school improvement;
- monitor the division's organizational climate; and
- coordinate the development and equitable allocation of resources (fiscal, personnel, facilities, technology, etc.).

Decisions should be based upon the best information available and have appropriate input. Day-to-day operation decisions would rest with the administrators responsible for their respective units and departments. Within the organizational plan, the Cabinet members would maintain effective, frequent communications (almost daily) to ensure consistency and effective monitoring of activities. The Superintendent would continue to maintain daily communications with various administrators.

The Superintendent's Cabinet should continue meeting on a regularly scheduled basis and with a developed agenda. This group should focus upon consensus building to achieve important goals and objectives. Decisions and activities of the cabinet would be effectively communicated to impacted parties through copies of meeting activity and e-mail requiring confirmation of receipt.

Planning should become the centerpiece of activity from the perspective of responsibility for ensuring that all related planning processes and effective plan monitoring are ongoing processes. The placing of the planning function at the executive level in the organization (see Exhibits 2-11 and 2-12), with specific oversight responsibility assigned to the Superintendent and the Director for Planning, Accountability, and Technology, reflects the important nature of ensuring that planning processes are data-driven and that outcomes can be independently assessed.

The sophisticated development of this process should contribute information that can drive the school system's planning and accountability implementation processes (see Section 4.5.3 for Planning and Accountability).

### **FISCAL IMPACT**

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

## **FINDING**

The quantity of e-mail received by the Superintendent at his e-mail address is not yet so excessive as to impede his fulfillment of responsibilities; however, increases could become a detriment. The Executive Assistant to the Superintendent serves as the School Board Clerk and in this role she processes all Superintendent's Office incoming mail, preparing responses for his review and approval. The Superintendent processes his own e-mail and, as is appropriate has the Executive Assistant to the Superintendent prepare responses or take assigned action.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

### **Recommendation 2-12:**

**Monitor the quantity of e-mail correspondence received by the Superintendent at his assigned e-mail address and assess the time spent processing.**

Implementation of this recommendation should result in the Superintendent's Executive Assistant monitoring the time the Superintendent must commit to processing his e-mail. The Superintendent's Executive Assistant should do this on a random day basis and maintain a record of her findings. At the point that the Superintendent is committing more than 30 minutes a day to this activity consideration should be given to assigning the e-mail processing function to the Executive Assistant to the Superintendent. This action should not increase other contacts with the Superintendent since the Executive Assistant will be responding in his name and would seek his approval for responses that are not routine matters.

Whenever this occurs the Superintendent should acquire a second e-mail address to be provided only to those who must communicate directly with him. Such persons could include School Board members, his cabinet, and other selected persons. This action then should result in freeing up Superintendent's time for important work while still providing access by selected persons.

## **FISCAL IMPACT**

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

### **2.4.3 Planning and Accountability**

Planning is critical to maintaining focus on the organization's purpose. Essential elements of soundly developed planning include:

- organizing resources, including management information, personnel, and communication schemes to accommodate the establishment of the necessary processes;
- assigning specific responsibility for the coordination and oversight of planning for the organization;

- identifying the core values that are essential and important to the organization's clients and community;
- having a clear understanding of the mission --- a statement of purpose;
- understanding what is to be done, when it is to be completed, and why it is important --- the vision; and
- developing specific and prioritized goals from which planned activity occurs.

The Web site reports the division's mission and the 2005-06 goals. The six goals include:

- **School Climate** - provide a safe and healthy environment in all schools;
- **Student Achievement** - ensure that all students be given the opportunity to achieve high levels of academics performance;
- **Educational Personnel** - to provide highly qualified staff for all students;
- **School Facilities** - Implement the long range educational facilities plan;
- **Community Involvement** - provide a framework through community participation from which all schools can develop their plans working toward fulfilling the mission statement of Dinwiddie County Public Schools; and
- **School Board** - develop and monitor a Six-Year School Improvement Plan in order to provide sufficient resources and facilities for staff and students to meet the educational requirements of the school division.

## **FINDING**

The DCPS Strategic Plan 2002–2008 was developed prior to 2002 and, overall, updated and distributed in April 2002; however, the entire plan has not been updated to reflect 2005 trends with the exception of an October 2005 presentation, *Planning for the Future*, focusing on the facilities development portion of planning for DCPS.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

### **Recommendation 2-13:**

#### **Update the Dinwiddie County Public Schools Strategic Plan to include projections, goals, and strategies through 2011.**

The implementation of this recommendation should result in the proposed Planning, Accountability, and Technology Department aligning plans with division wide goals and incorporating appropriate elements into planning documents.

The implementation of this process requires careful attention, through the Superintendent's and the Cabinet, to aligning activities with school improvement needs. This action requires a monitoring of the process by the Superintendent's Cabinet and the proposed Planning, Accountability, and Technology Department.

The implementation of this recommendation should result in establishing a plan and design to integrate school-level and division needs into an overall planning document that should provide the foundation for a comprehensive accountability system and provide leadership important planning information. Recommendation 2-9, relating to aligning functions and reorganization, is designed to place significant emphasis upon this need.

Effective organizations have institutionalized the planning and accountability processes and are constantly adjusting activities based upon these results. John E. Jones, Ph.D., and William L. Barley, Eddy. Report in *Organizational Universe Systems (1995)*, took the position that strategic plans are worthless unless there is first strategic vision.

## **FISCAL IMPACT**

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

### **2.4.4 Public Information**

Effective communication is a key aspect of developing and maintaining organizations that facilitate the realization of essential goals and objectives. Phillip Schlechty in his most recent publication, *Working on the Work (WOW)—An Action Plan for Teachers, Principals, and Superintendents*, continues his important theme that articulates his 12 standards for the WOW school. The underlying piece, as always, is fundamentally sound communications. The modern organization, having emerged to an age of producing results tailored to the individual client, must engage in effective communication to all stakeholders and, furthermore, produce needed responses in a timely fashion.

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

the schools. Building and maintaining open lines of communication with parents and community members help in building long-term public support for its efforts.

### **FINDING**

The Superintendent produces and circulates a series of valuable reports to the parents, community, and other interested stakeholders. These reports are placed on the Web site and circulated in hardcopy to stakeholders. In these reports the Superintendent addresses numerous topics including: Opening of school year, school calendar, information to guide contacting school and division personnel, facilities development, technology status for instructional support, reports on activities, tips to guide parents and volunteers in improving student performance, and many other topics.

As important topics are under consideration by the administration and the School Board, this medium is used to discuss their importance and provide information to the public. These reports are prepared and disseminated without the assistance of a formalized office of communications or public information, due to the small size of the division.

### **COMMENDATION**

**The Dinwiddie County Public Schools Superintendent, administration, staff, and School Board are commended for the production of a widely circulated series of reports containing valuable school division information.**

### **FINDING**

While the Superintendent assumes responsibility for a public information program and schools are provided broad latitude for providing information to parents and the public, there is no overall internal/external communications plan, only the 2002-08 Strategic Plan.

In a public forum conducted during the on-site visit, participants were complimentary of the establishment of the Web site and information provided. However, comments were given relating to improving communications to the community and penetration of all areas of a very large (geographically) county.

A review of the Strategic Plan shows that Goal 5, Community Involvement, reported three primary objectives, including:

- creation of a PR/Media Specialist;
- increasing community involvement using brochures and newsletters both written and electronic (3 times per year), developing a Web site, and support for volunteer programs; and
- enhancing school/business partnerships.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

### **Recommendation 2-14:**

**Update and expand Goal 5 of the 2002-2008 Strategic Plan to include a comprehensive internal/external communications program for Dinwiddie County Public Schools.**

The implementation of this recommendation should result in formalizing the internal and external communication program and include, minimally, the following:

- updating the overall public information plan for the division and all schools as an outgrowth of the strategic plan as it is reviewed and updated;
- developing a broad-based division community support initiative that is designed to reach into all areas of the county;
- coordinating the involvement of central office and school administrators in civic and other community organizations;
- providing for citizen and business recognition programs when such activity is warranted;
- identifying an information liaison among the school division, news media, and the community at large;
- ensuring that photographs for press releases, brochures, and other materials to promote the division are taken;
- coordinating public information strategy/techniques training delivery to school personnel when needed;
- arranging for press conferences; and
- developing and coordinating production and distribution of internal and external publications and news releases.

This recommendation is designed to bring together the public information/community relations dimension, and promote systematic coordination of related activity.

## **FISCAL IMPACT**

This recommendation could be implemented within existing resources and at no additional cost to DCPS until such time as the plan is implemented.

**2.4.5 School Organization and Management**

All activity in a school division should be related directly or indirectly to the education of the students. The delivery of educational programs typically occurs at the school level through prescribed programs. The school curriculum and instructional programs, safety and security requirements, student management necessities, employment of personnel and other considerations are often school-level management decisions.

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

DCPS provides instructional programs to students in one high school, one middle schools, and five elementary schools. The seven schools are staffed with principals and assistant principal positions as well as activities/athletic, guidance, and library positions. Exhibit 2-15 shows data related to various positions in DCPS as compared to five peer divisions.

Exhibit 2-16 shows DCPS enrollment and the number of assistant principals, guidance counselors, librarians, and activities positions assigned to each school.

**FINDING**

The administrative and support staffing of DCPS is consistent with and meets all state standards. Southside Elementary School, with enrollment under 400 students, is provided an assistant principal to ensure adequate management of assigned preschool programs. The high school is provided an activities/athletic position and while the middle school is not staffed with an activities position, however, a supplement for athletic and other activities is provided.

**EXHIBIT 2-15  
PEER SCHOOL DIVISIONS  
STAFF ANALYSIS  
2003-04 SCHOOL YEAR**

SCHOOL DIVISION	STUDENTS AVERAGE DAILY MEMBERSHIP	PRINCIPALS/ ASSISTANT PRINCIPALS PER 1,000 STUDENTS	TEACHERS PER 1,000 STUDENTS	TECHNOLOGY INSTRUCTORS PER 1,000 STUDENTS	TEACHER AIDES PER 1,000 STUDENTS	GUIDANCE COUNSELORS/ LIBRARIANS PER 1,000 STUDENTS
Dinwiddie County	4,425	2.94	72.31	1.13	8.59	4.97
Caroline County	3,498	3.43	76.19	0.60	20.58	5.30
Pulaski County	4,874	4.67	81.19	2.26	22.65	6.15
Mecklenburg County	4,767	4.30	80.76	2.52	15.52	4.82
Isle of Wight County	4,969	3.62	72.30	0.00	9.86	3.82
Lee County	3,691	5.01	93.85	0.00	15.71	3.39
<b>Division Average</b>	<b>4,371</b>	<b>4.00</b>	<b>79.43</b>	<b>1.09</b>	<b>15.49</b>	<b>4.74</b>

Source: Virginia Department of Education Web site, 2005.

**EXHIBIT 2-16  
DINWIDDIE COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS ENROLLMENT AND  
SCHOOL ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL, GUIDANCE COUNSELOR,  
LIBRARY/MEDIA, AND ACTIVITY POSITIONS**

SCHOOL	ENROLLMENT FALL 2005-06	POSITIONS			
		ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL	GUIDANCE COUNSELOR	LIBRARY/ MEDIA	ACTIVITY
<b>Elementary</b>					
Dinwiddie	387		1	1	
Midway	362		1	1	
Rohoic	493	1*	1	1	
Southside	371	1	1	1	
Sunnyside	301		1	1	
<b>Elementary Total</b>	<b>1,914</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>5</b>	
<b>Secondary</b>					
Dinwiddie County Middle School	1,190	3	4	2	
Dinwiddie County High School	1,468	3	5	2	1
<b>Secondary Total</b>	<b>2,658</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>4,572</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>1</b>

Source: Prepared by MGT from DCPS data, November 2005.

\* Vacant position.

**COMMENDATION**

**Dinwiddie County School Board is commended for meeting all minimum Commonwealth school staffing criteria as set forth in the revised Standards of Quality.**

**FINDING**

The middle school is staffed with three assistant principals assigned to the three physical areas of the school to provide appropriate supervision and student management; however, no provision is made for a comprehensive curriculum and instructional development and support system. Additionally, establishment of accreditation for the middle school has been elusive.

Middle school students are located in three separate sections of the school with seventh and eighth grades in the main building on separate floors. The sixth grade is housed in the old elementary facility located to the exterior and rear of the main building. Each area is assigned one assistant principal to provide supervision, work with the resources officer, and manage student behavior and other related tasks. Included in assigned tasks is sharing with the principal responsibility for assessing teacher performance. Because of the problems associated with supervising personnel in a facility designed for high school programs and other factors, little time is available for on-site curriculum development. Issues associated with facility problems are discussed in detail in Chapter 7, Facilities Use and Management.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

### **Recommendation 2-15:**

**Eliminate one assistant principal position, create two behavior management specialists, or deans (persons who are appropriately trained to handle student behavior, e.g., evaluate student behavior and assign appropriate disciplinary action), and convert one assistant principal position to an assistant principal for curriculum.**

Implementation of this recommendation should result in the following actions:

- elimination of one assistant principal position;
- creation of two behavior management specialist or dean, with success in managing students, positions staffed with professional teachers and compensated from the teacher salary schedule;
- assignment to one assistant principal position overall responsibility for student management and supervision of the proposed two behavior management positions and the resource officer;
- conversion of one assistant principal position from assigned area supervision responsibilities to responsibilities as assistant principal for curriculum development and instructional support;
- establishment of a specific job description for the assistant principal for curriculum development and instructional support;
- assignment of evaluation of teacher performance among the principal and assistant principals;
- redefining of curriculum and instructional support responsibilities of the central office personnel to be consistent and supportive of the middle school level curriculum and instruction responsibilities; and
- training of the personnel staffed into the behavior management positions.

Implementation of this recommendation should create a model school-level curriculum and instruction support system designed to bring decisions and actions closer to the classroom teachers and impacted students. Assuming the success of this model in establishing middle school accreditation and improving student academic performance replication should be considered for the high school.

## **FISCAL IMPACT**

Exhibit 2-17 shows the costs and savings resulting school-level position changes proposed in this recommendation. Salary figures include cost for fringe benefits estimated at 22 percent of scheduled salary.

**EXHIBIT 2-17  
SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDED  
POSITION ASSIGNMENTS/CLASSIFICATIONS  
SAVINGS AND (COSTS)**

POSITION	ACTION	SAVINGS/(COST) *		
		CURRENT SALARY *	PROPOSED SALARY *	SAVINGS/(COST) *
Middle School Assistant Principal	Eliminate	\$75,958	0	\$75,958
Behavior Management Specialists (2)	Create	0	(93,406)	(93,406)
<b>Total</b>		<b>\$75,958</b>	<b>(\$93,406)</b>	<b>(\$17,448)</b>

Source: Prepared by MGT of America, November 2005.

\* Includes 22 percent costs for fringe benefits.

The behavior management specialist salary figure is based on a ten months teacher contract and staffed with personnel with ten years experience. The estimated assistant principal salary is based on the midpoint or grade 6 on the middle school assistant principals' salary schedule. Exhibit 2-18 shows how the final costs were calculated.

**EXHIBIT 2-18  
COMPUTATION OF TOTAL SALARIES**

POSITION	SALARY	FRINGE BENEFITS	TOTAL
Middle School Assistant Principal	\$62,261	\$13,697	\$75,958
Behavior Management Specialist	(38,281)	(8,422)	(46,703)
Behavior Management Specialist	(38,281)	(8,422)	(46,703)
<b>Total</b>	<b>(\$14,301)</b>	<b>(\$3,147)</b>	<b>(\$17,448)</b>

Source: Prepared by MGT of America, November 2005.

\* Includes 22 percent costs for fringe benefits.

The summary of all savings and costs for each year during the period 2006 through 2011 is shown below. As can be seen a total cost of \$17,448 is estimated for the first year. The five-year cost can be \$87,240.

Recommendation	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11
Delete Middle School Assistant Principal position	\$75,958	\$75,958	\$75,958	\$75,958	\$75,958
Create 2 Behavior Management Specialist positions	(93,406)	(93,406)	(93,406)	(93,406)	(93,406)
<b>Total</b>	<b>(\$17,448)</b>	<b>(\$17,448)</b>	<b>(\$17,448)</b>	<b>(\$17,448)</b>	<b>(\$17,448)</b>

**FINDING**

The middle school principal position has been in a state of flux and changed three times within the recent four-year period. Concerns related to school accreditation, high teacher

attrition rates, and other issues, in part, can be attributed to a lack of leadership stability for the middle school.

The current high school principal was transferred from the middle school leadership position followed by the current Executive Director for Administrative Services who served only one year at the middle school and then assumed the Director of Student Services position at the central office. The current principal has held the position for just over one year.

The continuation of reassignment of principals without attention to developing school-level leadership continuity can only serve as a detriment to the accomplishment of school improvement initiatives.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

### **Recommendation 2-16:**

#### **Stabilize the middle school principalship.**

Implementation of this recommendation should result in efforts to staff the middle school principal position with the same person for an extended number of years. MGT consultants' experience and research shows that stabilizing the leadership of an organization results in establishing consistency in management, thus promoting continuous progress towards accomplishing established goals and objectives. Each time the leadership of an organization is changed priorities are reordered and strategies for improvements are altered. The division may wish to examine incentives that would make the principalship an attractive career commitment thus minimizing turnover.

Careful attention to the selection of leadership personnel with middle school experience and a commitment to remaining as principal for five or more years is an important element of accomplishing this recommended action.

## **FISCAL IMPACT**

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

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### **3.0 PERSONNEL AND HUMAN RESOURCES**

This chapter reviews the personnel and human resources management functions of the Human Resources Department of Dinwiddie County Public Schools (DCPS). The five areas of review include:

- 3.1 Organization and Personnel Records
- 3.2 Personnel Policies and Procedures
- 3.3 Recruitment, Hiring, and Retention
- 3.4 Job Classifications, Job Descriptions and Employee Compensation
- 3.5 Teacher Certification, Evaluation, and Professional Development

In its review of these functional areas, MGT examined a wide variety of documentation including policy and procedural handbooks, personnel records, staff training and development logs, departmental financial data, employment contracts, departmental forms and informational brochures, and the Human Resources Web site. In addition, MGT consultants conducted interviews with all the central office personnel in the Human Resources Department, as well as the superintendent, and school-based administrators and staff. These activities allowed MGT to gain insight into the operational routines of the department, make recommendations, and note commendations regarding its policies and practices.

#### **CHAPTER SUMMARY**

Quality human resources management and development is essential to a school division's success. The primary responsibilities of the Dinwiddie County Public Schools Human Resources Department are:

- promoting and implementing recruitment strategies and collaborating with school and division administration to create a high performing, diverse workforce;
- responding to the staffing and training needs of the school division in a helpful, supportive, and proactive manner and provide high quality services;
- developing staff excellence through training and development of employees and encouraging professional growth that fosters open communication and promotes an overall positive work environment for all employees; and,
- providing for an equitable and fair administration of school division policies, procedures, and benefits.

DCPS has an active recruitment program that is supported with sufficient fiscal resources to allow both division and school administrators to travel to job fairs and college campuses in and around the state to seek out high quality teachers and other personnel. The division demonstrates its commitment to building a diverse workplace by regular recruitment trips to historically Black colleges and universities (HBCU's), and placement of minority candidates in positions of leadership at the school and central

office level. The division works closely with instructional services personnel to provide high quality training for instructional personnel, including a comprehensive mandatory training program for substitute teachers. For teachers new to the division, there is a mentoring program that matches novice practitioners with veteran teachers through their first year in the classroom. The program is a critical component of the division's retention initiative.

DCPS has a compensation package that is competitive with like-size divisions and provides stipends and salary supplements for teachers that assume additional instructional and/or extracurricular assignments. The Human Resources Department offers an array of support services to employees both at the point of initial employment and at the end of service through retirement or resignation. For example, persons looking towards retirement can get an instant analysis of their years of service and salary status to determine an estimate of their retirement income from the on-line database of the Virginia Retirement System.

The division has policy and procedural handbooks both at the school and central office level to inform all levels of employees about their rights and responsibilities based on state legislation and School Board policies. All division level handbooks are available in full-text electronic format, along with forms and other documents that support the divisional policies and procedures, at the departmental Web site.

The leadership of the department is committed to improving the overall quality of departmental operations and making them more efficient and effective. Currently, DCPS is in the process of adopting a policy on the placement of employees on its salary schedule, and has plans for reviewing all its policies and processes.

In efforts to improve the overall effectiveness and efficiency of the HR Department, a number of areas have been identified as needing review and improvement. For example, there is currently no policy or procedures for placing administrative employees on the board-adopted salary schedule. Currently, the department has drafted language for such a policy and has begun discussions with the school board. Other recommended improvement activities include:

- creating a tracking system to determine the effectiveness of current recruitment activities by identifying the teachers who have been hired from the various recruitment venues;
- conducting an online satisfaction survey among division employees to determine satisfaction with services, and identify unmet client needs;
- establishing a schedule of formative evaluations for all teachers, regardless of their experience level; and
- upgrading the departmental Web site to provide more readily accessible information for current and prospective employees.

Surveys conducted by MGT indicate high levels of personnel satisfaction with the current operations of the department with over 70 percent of all respondents providing affirmative answers to questions on the quality of departmental products and services.

Overall, employees express happiness in their decision to work in the division, while also recognizing the need to improve specific services, policies, or procedures.

## **INTRODUCTION**

One of the main goals of the Human Resources Department is to recruit, attract, hire, and retain highly qualified individuals each year to fill approximately 700 professional and classified positions. Human Resources is responsible for providing a comprehensive program of benefits for employees as well as a competitive compensation package designed to attract and retain qualified staff. The major functions of the department are as follows:

- conducting recruitment and initial screening of job applicants;
- creating, implementing, and updating a job applicant tracking system;
- posting/updating position vacancy listings;
- processing new employees;
- monitoring licensure for certified personnel;
- maintaining personnel files;
- interacting with the public and DCPS employees concerning human resources inquiries;
- ensuring proper adherence to state and federal regulations regarding personnel operations;
- preparing materials for human resources recommendations to the Dinwiddie County School Board; and
- performing any and all other personnel duties in accordance with Board policies and procedures established for human resources management.

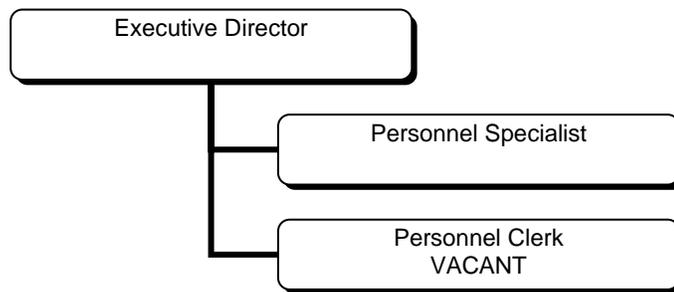
### **3.1 Organization and Personnel Records**

The Human Resources Department is responsible for providing services that help the division ensure the quality of hiring, compensation, placement, appraisal and outplacement of employees. Effective and efficient management of these services is crucial to the successful operation of the school system. In Dinwiddie County Public Schools, employee salaries and benefits comprise nearly 79 percent of the total operating budget. With such a significant financial commitment, it is imperative that the human resources of the division are developed and managed effectively.

**3.1.1 Organization**

Human Resources is headed by an Executive Director and support staff consisting of one Personnel Specialist and a part-time clerical position that is currently vacant. Exhibit 3-1 shows the organizational structure of the department. Previously, the Executive Director's duties also included testing and evaluation, but the position was devoted exclusively to human resources in July of this year.

**EXHIBIT 3-1  
ORGANIZATIONAL CHART FOR HUMAN RESOURCES  
DINWIDDIE COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS  
2005-06 SCHOOL YEAR**



Source: Dinwiddie County Public Schools, Human Resources, 2005.

**FINDING**

The division is in a growth cycle that places greater demands on human resources for recruitment and hiring. The two-person department is stretched to perform all of the functions of human resources except for staff development which is primarily the responsibility of Instructional Services; however, the Human Resources Department processes the awarding of continuing education credits earned through professional development activities. The dedication of the Executive Director's position exclusively to human resources allowed for greater attention to be paid to the needs of the department and its ability to effective service the division employees. Since the position was devoted exclusively to human resources in July, 2005, the Executive Director has focused intensely on identifying the areas of the department in need of review and/or revision.

With the growth of the division, the Executive Director has identified a need for greater automation in the process of hiring, such as coordination of the databases between human resources and payroll, updating the departmental Web site to give applicants and employees greater access to forms and other human resources material, and streamlining the process for criminal background checks.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

### **Recommendation 3-1:**

#### **Increase the part-time clerical position to full-time.**

The division should carefully attend to the staffing needs of the Human Resources Department. The part-time clerical position should be upgraded to a full-time position to provide sufficient manpower to handle the processing of new employees and to relieve the Personnel Specialist of routine filing and personnel inquiries that she is currently handling. With a full-time clerical person, the Personnel Specialist position could be devoted to more administrative functions, such as handling employee benefits questions or assisting school administrators in recruiting, screening, and hiring new personnel. Having the Personnel Specialist position assume more administrative duties would free the Executive Director to focus on improving the overall organizational efficiency of human resources.

## **FISCAL IMPACT**

There are currently six executive secretaries attached to various departments in the central office. One of those positions should be reassigned to human resources and the current part-time position absorbed into another department. This position reassignment would prevent this recommendation from having a fiscal impact in that it can be accomplished with the funds already committed to central office support staff.

### **3.1.2 Personnel Records**

## **FINDING**

Confidential personnel files are kept in a series of locked file cabinets in the Personnel Specialist's office. None of the cabinets are fireproof; however, essential employment information (e.g., initial employment date, social security number, current position, yearly salary, etc.) are kept on 5x8 cards in a small, fireproof container and kept in the Personnel Specialist's office. MGT consultants received permission to review the personnel files of various classes of employees (e.g., administrative, instructional, non-instructional). Each file included contract information, employment application, licensure information, division correspondence regarding insurance/medical benefits, verification of birthday, W-4 tax information, and an assortment of other documents. Personnel evaluations are kept in the same file, but in a separate folder. In adherence to federal HIPAA laws, medical information is kept in a separate locked file cabinet that is exclusively used for that purpose in another area of the administration building.

The review of the personnel files found each file was sorted alphabetically, and contents of the folders were filed both by recency and by frequency of use. The front of the folder contained the most recent Board-approved employment contract and insurance information, and licensure information and academic transcripts were filed in the back of the folder. All other documents were filed in between, in an order that varied little from folder to folder.

The DCPS Board policy regarding personnel records states:

*Personnel records are maintained at the School Board office in locked files. Only specifically designated individuals shall have access to personnel records. Designated officials must sign out all files with the Personnel Specialist. Designated officials are the Superintendent, Assistant Superintendent for Instruction, School Board Clerk, Director of Assessment and Human Resources, and Personnel Specialist.*

*Present and past employees shall have access to their personnel files and records, which are maintained by the Dinwiddie County School Division. No separate file shall be maintained regarding an employee that is not available for that employee's inspection.*

The MGT consultant inquired about the system used to manage the personnel files especially after initial employment and during periods that required extensive filing (e.g., evaluation, contract renewals, etc.). The Personnel Specialist described a checklist system used to track the submission of necessary employment documents, as well as a file storage system employed during periods when large numbers of files must be handled. In addition, a portable locked filing cabinet is used by the Personnel Specialist and the Executive Director of Human Resources for the purpose of reviewing files of newly hired personnel and personnel whose hiring is pending approval of the school board. This portable file allows for these files to be shuttled to appropriate parties, and as they are moved from one office to another, reduces the likelihood of misplacing files and/or their content.

### **COMMENDATION**

**Dinwiddie County Public Schools is commended for having a system of keeping track of records as they are moved and processed that is well-organized and allows for ease in locating specified documents and reduces the likelihood of lost or misplaced personnel files.**

### **RECOMMENDATION**

#### **Recommendation 3-2:**

**Store all personnel records in secured, fire-rated cabinets.**

Personnel and employment records should be maintained in fire-retardant, water resistant storage containers. Replacement of records in case of destruction would be a time consuming, labor intensive process.

### **FISCAL IMPACT**

The implementation of this recommendation will cost DCPS an estimated one-time expenditure of \$4,500. The cost was calculated on the purchase of three 4-drawer vertical letter-size, 25-inch deep fire-rated file cabinets, with an estimated cost of \$1,500 each. This figure was obtained by getting cost estimates from two national office supply stores (Office Depot, Staples) and two on-line discount stores ([www.BettyMills.com](http://www.BettyMills.com), [www.justfilingcabinets.com](http://www.justfilingcabinets.com)). The division may be able to find more competitive pricing

through eVA; however, these figures were not provided and thus are not reflected in this report. The MGT consultants selected the \$1,500 figure based on the average of the cost estimates located during the vendor price search and an estimate of the number of cabinets needed to contain the DCPS personnel files.

<b>Recommendation</b>	<b>2006-07</b>	<b>2007-08</b>	<b>2008-09</b>	<b>2009-10</b>	<b>2010-11</b>
Purchase Three Fire-Rated File Cabinets	(\$4,500)	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0

**FINDING**

The DCPS has access to the Virginia retirement system database that allows employees to verify their credited years of work experience. This system serves as an electronic back-up to the written experience records contained in the personnel file and provides immediate access to work history verification for positions held in other school divisions within the Commonwealth, and in other states that was credited to the Virginia retirement system.

This recruitment system is password-accessed by the Personnel Specialist and saves time from having to calculate years of experience manually, and from calling other divisions to verify years of service.

**COMMENDATION**

**Dinwiddie County Public Schools is commended for utilizing an electronic system of experience verification for the purpose of assisting employees in retirement preparation.**

**3.2 Personnel Policies and Procedures**

The School Board provides direction to the Superintendent and staff through the development and implementation of board policy. Policies serve as guidelines for division decisions and actions on specific issues related to the operation of the school division. The Board policies reflect the division's beliefs and goals and are a crucial component in the evaluation of how well the division is doing. They serve as a gauge by which the Board can measure its effectiveness and to ensure students' needs are being met.

**FINDING**

Human Resources Department policies and procedures guide the delivery of personnel services to DCPS employees and are set forth in Section G: Personnel, of the Policy Manual for Dinwiddie County Public Schools. A review of the personnel section of the manual found policies that covered 16 human resources functions:

- Administration
- Benefits
- Compensation
- Leaves of Absence
- Payroll Administration
- Performance Appraisal

- Employee Assistance
- Employee Grievances
- Health and Safety
- Hiring
- Labor Relations
- Personnel Records
- Salary
- Separation/Termination
- Training/Development
- Working Conditions

Each of the policies was adopted between July, 1998 and July, 2004. There was no indication that any of the policies had been updated since the date of their original adoption. Many of the policies were accompanied by procedures and when applicable, examples of forms and other materials used in executing the procedures.

The consumers of the services listed above are DCPS employees, and as such, they should have a means of providing feedback on the quality of those services. Surveying employees to determine their level of satisfaction with current services and to solicit suggestions for additional and/or amended services, would provide the division with a valuable means of improving its internal processes.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

### **Recommendation 3-3:**

**Conduct an annual on-line survey of DCPS employees in order to evaluate the quality of Human Resources services.**

The department should design an employee survey that focuses on each of its service areas. The survey should include both multiple choice and open-ended questions to allow for the widest range of customer feedback. Possible questions include:

- Overall, how satisfied are you with the services provided by the Human Resources Department?
- What HR services should be improved/changed?
- How satisfied were you with the time it took HR staff to respond to your service request?

Additional questions could be more narrowly focused on other specific aspects of the Human Resources Department such as how knowledgeable the staff is on various personnel topics, the readability/understandability of the informational materials provided by the department, or the quality of the departmental Web site.

## **FISCAL IMPACT**

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

## **FINDING**

The Human Resources Department Web site contains information of use to current and aspiring employees; however, the site is in need of updating and reorganization. At the site, current or prospective employees can find information on a wide assortment of personnel topics. Among the features of the site are embedded links to forms and other materials that accompany the policy. For example, the section on the division's policy on field trips contains links to both the field trip request form that must be submitted for

approval of the trip, and permission form that must be signed by parents allowing their children to go on the field trip. There are electronic copies of the division's school board policies, personnel procedures and employee handbook. There is also a password protected section that allows for employees to update personal information such as name or address changes.

While there is a wealth of information at the Web site, it is not presented in a manner that is user-friendly, particularly for those accessing the site for the first time. For example, information of interest to would-be applicants such as the division's salary schedule and list of benefits are located inside the board policy manual and personnel handbook, respectively. Also, some of the information is outdated and incorrect. For example, in the on-line personnel procedures handbook, the Executive Director for Human Resource's title is still listed as the Director of Assessment and Human Resources.

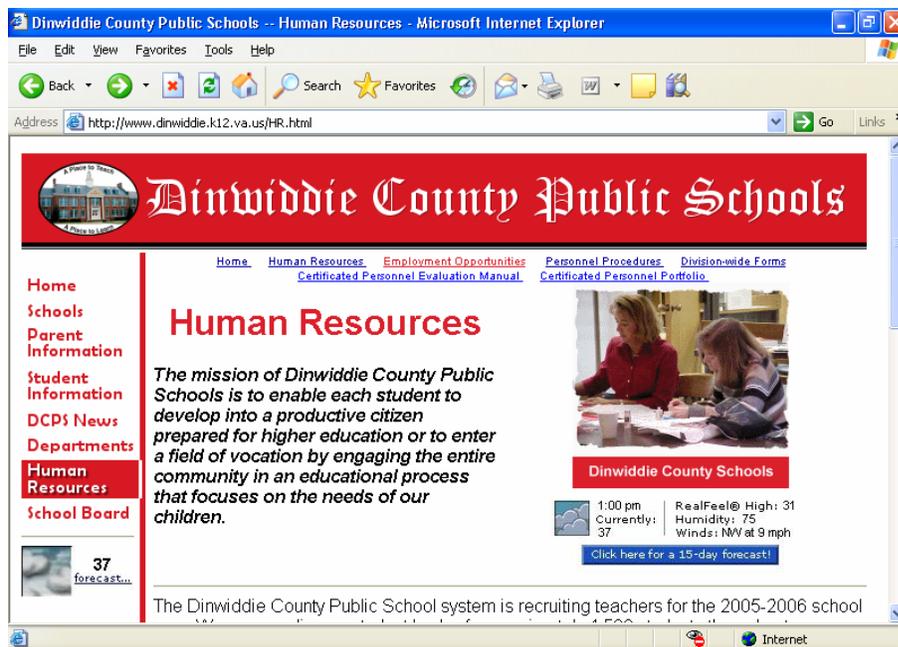
**RECOMMENDATION**

**Recommendation 3-4:**

**Update and reorganize the Dinwiddie County Public Schools Web site.**

The human resources home page should contain basic contact and departmental information (e.g., names, phone number and fax number for HR personnel, primary functions of the department, etc.) The remainder of the page should be links to most-requested documents and information. Exhibit 3-2 shows the current HR home page.

**EXHIBIT 3-2  
DINWIDDIE COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS  
HUMAN RESOURCES WEB SITE HOME PAGE  
NOVEMBER 2006**



Source: Dinwiddie County Public Schools, Human Resources, 2005.

Recommended changes to the Web site include:

- Instead of having the same navigation panel appear on each page of the division Web site, the panel should change to include links specific to that section or department as users navigate from one section of the site to another;
- The links on the navigation panel of the human resources home page should take new users, would-be job applicants, and division employees to the most requested information (e.g., salary schedules, leave forms, benefits package, etc.)
- The specific mission of the Human Resources Department should appear on its home page; and,
- Contact information for HR staff (e.g., phone, fax, email) and the address of the division office should appear on the page.

The Web site is a powerful tool for internal and external communications, as well as for employee recruitment and marketing of the division's programs. The Human Resources Department should work with the central office technology staff to improve the departmental Web site.

#### **FISCAL IMPACT**

This recommendation can be implemented with existing technology staff under the direction of the Human Resources Department for the school division; therefore, no additional cost will be needed.

#### **FINDING**

DCPS produces several divisional handbooks in addition to handbooks produced by individual schools. The divisional handbooks include:

- *Certificated Personnel Evaluation Handbook*. This manual provides a comprehensive review of the evaluation process for classroom teachers.
- *Educational Specialist Evaluation Manual*. This manual explains the evaluation procedures for other certificated personnel such as guidance counselors, speech pathologists, resources teachers, media specialists, nurses, psychologists, and social workers.
- *Personnel Procedures*. As stated at the human resources Web site, this manual "is designed to serve as a reference document for the professional staff of Dinwiddie County Public Schools to answer frequently asked questions and to provide frequently requested information." It is a shortened version of the division's board policy manual.

Each of these documents is available in full-text form on the Human Resources Web site.

## **COMMENDATION**

**Dinwiddie County Public Schools is commended for having such comprehensive information on human resources readily accessible from its Web site.**

### **3.3 Recruitment, Hiring, and Retention**

The Human Resources Department is responsible for recruiting, hiring, and retaining the best staff members available. To staff vacancies resulting from enrollment growth or retirements/terminations, the department monitors the staffing needs of both school and divisional offices, and works to ensure that the appropriate personnel are hired to fill these vacancies. Like divisions across the nation, DCPS has approximately 30 percent of its workforce eligible to retire within the next five years. With neighboring divisions offering higher salaries, and requirements of the federal *No Child Left Behind* (NCLB) act for the hiring of "highly qualified" teachers, DCPS has continued to work with both the state department of education and area colleges and universities to recruit the highest possible quality of employee candidate.

#### **3.3.1 Recruitment**

Human Resources Department staff provided the MGT team with a copy of its recruitment plan. The summary of the plan is as follows:

*Dinwiddie County Public Schools is committed to recruiting a diverse workforce of qualified teachers and staff to serve the students of Dinwiddie County. To accomplish this goal, the division has an ongoing recruitment program. The Executive Director for Human Resources is responsible for planning and developing the recruitment plan with assistance from principals, divisional HR staff, and a part-time recruiter. At recruiting events, potential employees are actively sought to fill current and projected vacancies. A special effort is made to attend job fairs and recruit from historically Black college and universities (HBCU's).*

*Recruitment is done through a variety of media including radio, newspaper, job fairs, internal vacancy postings and in other school divisions, the DCPS Web site, state department of education electronic postings, college internships, word-of-mouth, and walk-ins. The materials used for recruitment fairs include a variety of informational items that provide prospective applicants with a profile of the division to guide their decision-making with regards to employment. The division also has a table display with relevant division information including professional photography of Dinwiddie schools. The Executive Director for Human Resources, selected school principals and other divisional HR staff participate in recruitment trips. Exhibit 1 illustrates the recruitment schedule for 2005-06.*

The recruitment schedule in Exhibit 3-3 includes 18 colleges and universities, five job fairs, and the state teach-in. The schedule is nearly identical to one for the previous year and involves both school and divisional personnel. The recruitment expenses for 2004-05 totaled \$9,368.56 for travel to colleges, universities and job fairs, and \$8,709 for position advertisement. Funding for the 2005-06 maintains this level of funding.

**FINDING**

Representatives from DCPS have attended job fairs at universities, regional educational service centers, and the state department of education. The Great Virginia Teach-In (GVTI) allows the division to interview and offer conditional contracts to a large number of potential applicants at a single event. An evaluation report prepared by the Virginia Department of Education on the previous year's GVTI revealed that there were 3,824 attendees, 77 percent of whom were from Virginia. In state, Region I had the largest representation of school divisions, one of which was DCPS. Over 50 percent of the GVTI participants were either certified or certifiable, thus increasing the likelihood of school divisions to be able to meet NCLB requirements for hiring "highly qualified" teachers.

**EXHIBIT 3-3  
DINWIDDIE COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS  
RECRUITMENT SCHEDULE  
2005-06 SCHOOL YEAR**

LOCATION	DATE	PERSONS ATTENDING
Region I Job Fair	January 21, 2006	All
Great Virginia Teach-In	March, 2006	All
Sweet Briar College	February 8, 2006	Principals/Directors
VASPA Job Fair	November 9, 2005	L. Ampy
Howard University	TBA	L. Ampy/Sharon Yates
Virginia Commonwealth University	TBA	TBA
East Caroline University	TBA	Becky Baskerville
University of Richmond	TBA	TBA
UVA Expo	TBA	TBA
Longwood University	February 16, 2006	Principals/Directors
Virginia Union	TBA	Shirley Cashwell
Hampton University	TBA	L. Ampy/Sharon Yates
Salsbury University	TBA	TBA
University of Delaware	TBA	TBA
E. Tennessee State University	TBA	TBA
CA University of Pennsylvania	TBA	TBA
W. Virginia University	TBA	TBA
Lynchburg College	February 27, 2006	Principals/Directors
The College of William and Mary	TBA	Al Boone
Radford/Virginia Tech	TBA	Principals
PERC	TBA	L. Ampy
Frostburg State	TBA	TBA
Marshal University/W. Virginia	TBA	TBA

Source: Dinwiddie County Public Schools Human Resources Department, 2005.

**RECOMMENDATION**

**Recommendation 3-5:**

**Continue sending division representatives to the Great Virginia Teach-In.**

Recruiting teachers to small, rural school divisions presents the challenge of competing with large urban or suburban divisions with higher salaries and other inducements. Traveling to colleges and universities around and outside the state is time-consuming and costly. With the number of potential applicants attending the GVTI that are both in-state and certified or certifiable, divisional recruiting at this venue is very cost efficient. The upcoming GVTI is scheduled for March, 2006 as a one-day event and is included in the division's recruitment plan. Sending a team of three to five representatives would cost approximately \$1,000.00.

**FISCAL IMPACT**

The fiscal impact of participating in the GVTI is estimated at \$1,000 annually.

<b>Recommendation</b>	<b>2006-07</b>	<b>2007-08</b>	<b>2008-09</b>	<b>2009-10</b>	<b>2010-11</b>
Participate in the Great VA Teach-In	(\$1,000)	(\$1,000)	(\$1,000)	(\$1,000)	(\$1,000)

**FINDING**

While the division has participated in the Great Virginia Teach-In and other recruitment efforts over the past several years, there is currently no system in place to specifically determine which efforts are the most productive in terms of securing teachers who are hired by the division. The evidence that the division has on the effectiveness of the event as a recruitment tool is anecdotal. One of the concerns expressed by the Executive Director for Human Resources is the division's ability to determine accurately what efforts are proving the most productive, in order to target limited resources to their greatest effect.

**RECOMMENDATION**

**Recommendation 3-6:**

**Create a tracking system to determine if teachers recruited at specific events are actually being hired by the division.**

The division should track recruitment information several ways, such as: a field added to the employment application asking individuals to state how they found out about the position, surveys could be conducted at new employee orientation to determine how they became aware of the position, or during initial set up of employees, they should complete a short questionnaire addressing their recruitment to the division.

**FISCAL IMPACT**

This recommendation could be implemented with no additional costs to the division.

### **3.3.2 Hiring**

#### **FINDING**

The division has a succession plan for filling vacancies throughout the system; however, the plan is not formalized. Hiring decisions are the joint responsibility of both school and divisional personnel. Principals are active participants in the hiring process and have the option of screening job applicants themselves, or have the division conduct the screenings and send interview candidates to them. The division requires at least one reference on the application for employment must be contacted before a recommendation for employment is made.

The division seeks job candidates both externally and internally. Current employees are surveyed at the end of each year to determine their desired grade/subject assignment and/or job placement for the upcoming year. Such information allows the division to develop an internal pool of candidates who have expressed a desire for transfer to another work site or grade/subject assignment in their current site. This pool is used as a “first stop” in filling vacancies from resignations, retirements, growth or termination. The division also tracks the reasons for employee attrition through exit interviews.

#### **RECOMMENDATION**

##### **Recommendation 3-7:**

**Determine the adequacy of the DCPS succession plan based on impending retirements and divisional growth.**

The division has a capital improvement plan that includes the construction of new schools. This growth combined with retirements, will place increased demands on the current system and thus there needs to be a plan in place for the staffing of the new schools that includes transfer of current employees, hiring of new staff, and replacement of staff in vacancies created by transfers. Human resources should begin development of the plan well in advance of the actual vacancies to ensure a smooth transition with the least disruption possible to existing schools.

#### **FISCAL IMPACT**

This task could be performed by the human resources supervisor at no additional cost to the division.

### **3.3.3 Retention**

#### **FINDING**

During the 2004-05 school year, there was a tremendous demand for teachers in the division. Exhibit 3-4 shows the number of new teachers hired for that year. As seen in the table, 50 teachers were hired—15 percent of the total teaching force. Of the 50 teachers hired, 24 had no prior teaching experience. The school division was awarded \$1,875 in supplemental funding for its Mentor Teacher Program. The state allocation was part of a 50 percent match that the division provided. With these funds, the division plans to enhance its existing mentoring program.

**EXHIBIT 3-4  
NEW DINWIDDIE COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOL  
TEACHERS HIRED DURING THE 2004-05 SCHOOL YEAR**

<b>SCHOOL LEVEL</b>	<b>NUMBER OF TEACHERS HIRED</b>
Elementary	16
Middle School	14
High School	20
<b>Total</b>	<b>50</b>

Source: Dinwiddie County Public Schools Human Resources Department, 2005.

National studies on teacher retention report that 50 percent of all teachers leave the profession within the first three years. Top among the reasons for this attrition is the lack of formal support networks in the form of mentors and induction processes in schools. DCPS has a mentoring program that includes a handbook for mentors outlining their duties and responsibilities, a schedule of mentoring activities to include classroom observations, division training on curriculum, student assessment, classroom management, and other topics essential to new teachers' success in the classroom. The mentoring program should also have a formal evaluation component in which both mentor teacher and new teacher provide feedback on the effectiveness of the program and suggestions for its improvement. Teachers serving as mentors receive re-certification points towards license renewal and gift cards from a local office supply company valued at \$100.00.

**COMMENDATION**

**Dinwiddie County Public Schools is commended for its formal mentoring program for first-year teachers and teachers new to the division that includes training for mentors and a formal schedule of mentoring activities.**

**3.4 Job Classifications, Job Descriptions, and Employee Compensation**

The development and implementation of a fair and equitable job classification system is an essential element of human resources management in a school division. The system serves as the basis for determining the content of job descriptions and equitable compensation plans.

Job classification systems group jobs by educational and experience requirements, and by levels of difficulty, complexity and responsibility. Job descriptions include the title of the position, nature of the work, examples of the required knowledge and skills, suggested training and experience, any special requirements of the position, reporting authority and salary.

Employees in Dinwiddie County Public Schools are classified as either "teaching" or "non-teaching" employees. "Teaching" positions are those requiring professional certification (e.g., classroom teachers, media specialists, guidance counselors, career and technical teachers). "Non-teaching" positions are administrators, food service workers, custodial and maintenance staff, nurses, speech pathologists, clerical

personnel, aides, bus drivers, mechanics and technicians/technical support staff. For both classes of employees, there are 36 specific positions divided across six categories: teachers, building administrators, central office administrators, central office support staff, school support staff, and transportation/maintenance.

**FINDING**

There is currently no policy for placing DCPS employees on each of the 36 positions in the salary schedule. The schedules are in a step structure and the number of steps in each of the salary schedules ranges from five (bus aides) to 24 (teachers), with the majority of the schedules having ten steps. Steps do not correspond with years, so employees may remain on a step and receive only cost-of-living salary increases, but not move from that salary step the following year. Upon employment, each employee is placed on a step the salary schedule; however, there is currently no policy or formalized procedures for placement on the salary schedule.

MGT team members' review of the division policy on staff salary schedules revealed a one-sentence statement that merely stipulated that the division would "annually establish and approve salaries for all school employees." The policy is not accompanied by procedures, and interviews with division employees revealed some concerned over divisional practices regarding the placement of individuals on the salary schedule. During the time that MGT was conducting its site visit, the Executive Director of Human Resources presented a proposal for a policy with accompanying procedures for placing DCPS staff persons on the salary schedule.

**RECOMMENDATION**

**Recommendation 3-8:**

**Continually pursue the development and Board approval of a policy for the appropriate placement of staff on the salary schedule.**

Interviews with division personnel conducted by MGT consultants revealed a degree of concern and dissatisfaction over the current system of salary placement which was perceived to be arbitrary and unfair. In addition, a review of the personnel files revealed a pattern of employees who were improperly placed on the schedule as evidenced by letters informing them of the error and the actions that had been taken to rectify the problem. Having a written policy would facilitate a more accurate and equitable placement of employees on the Board-adopted salary schedules.

**FISCAL IMPACT**

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources

**FINDING**

A review of the actual salaries of divisional and school-based employees revealed several examples of employees whose published salaries were outside of the approved 2005-06 salary schedule. Exhibit 3-5 illustrates the salary ranges, average and actual salaries for school principals and assistant principals. Several anomalies appear in the salary table, namely:

- An administrative salary was nearly \$6,000 below the minimum on the salary schedule; and
- An elementary principal with a higher salary than the high school principal.

Interviews with HR personnel revealed that the administrative salary was prorated since this individual was hired well into the school year, and thus the salary figure reflects only that portion of the year that they occupied the position. The elementary principal has 40 years experience and is at the top of the pay scale.

**EXHIBIT 3-5  
DINWIDDIE COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS  
SCHOOL-BASED ADMINISTRATOR SALARIES  
2005-06 SCHOOL YEAR**

POSITION	SALARY RANGE		AVERAGE SALARY	ACTUAL SALARY
	LOW	HIGH		
H.S. Principal	\$80,477	\$111,399	\$80,477	\$80,477
H.S. Asst. Principal	\$60,421	\$83,637	\$62,234	\$62,234
M.S. Principal	\$76,512	\$105,911	\$78,807	\$78,807
M.S. Asst. Principal	\$55,318	\$76,573	\$55,631	\$49,834
				\$60,081
				\$56,978
Elem. Principal	\$60,421	\$83,637	\$72,265	\$70,044
				\$83,637
				\$60,421
				\$66,024
				\$81,201
Elem. A.P.	\$50,967	\$70,550	\$50,967	\$50,967

Source: Dinwiddie County Public Schools, Human Resources Department, 2005.

Exhibit 3-6 shows a comparison of teacher salaries for the 2005-06 school year. The starting salaries represent those for first year teachers with a Bachelor's degree and no prior teaching experience. The median salaries represent the mid-point on the salary schedule for teachers with a Bachelor's degree. Starting salaries for Dinwiddie County are the third highest among peer divisions and it has the second highest second highest median salary.

**EXHIBIT 3-6  
COMPARISON OF MEDIAN SALARIES OF PEER SCHOOL DIVISIONS  
2005-06 SCHOOL YEAR**

PUBLIC SCHOOL DIVISION	STARTING SALARY	MEDIAN SALARY
<b>Dinwiddie County</b>	<b>\$33,835</b>	<b>\$44,394</b>
Caroline County	\$34,500	\$44,500
Isle of Wight County	\$35,000	\$40,000
Mecklenburg County	\$30,653	\$33,686
Pulaski County	\$30,500	\$36,534

Source: Virginia Department of Education Web site, 2005.

Benefits provided to full-time teachers in Dinwiddie County include:

- **Credit Union:** Employees are eligible to participate in the Dinwiddie County Employee Credit Union;
- **Health Insurance:** The School Board provides health insurance to eligible employees through participation in the Local Choice Plan;
- **The School Board pays a portion of health insurance premiums** for all full-time employees and selected part-time employees. Open enrollment in the health insurance program is offered to all new employees and during the month of September each year;
- **Virginia Retirement System (VRS):** The School Board pays the entire premium for employees' participation in both the Virginia Retirement System and Group Life Insurance plan through VRS; and
- **Leave:** Employees are granted leave from their professional responsibilities under a variety of circumstances, subject to the Policies and Procedures adopted by the Dinwiddie County School Board. Types of leaves include medical (sick), personal, jury duty, and military. There is also a sick leave bank.

Exhibit 3-7 displays the health insurance benefit payment division between employer and employee contribution. DCPS offers coverage for both individual employees and their families

DCPS provides supplemental salary for teachers with advanced degrees. A Master's degree earns an \$1,800 supplement and \$2,800 for a doctorate degree.

**EXHIBIT 3-7  
HEALTH INSURANCE RATES FOR FULL-TIME  
DINWIDDIE COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOL EMPLOYEES  
2005-06 SCHOOL YEAR**

	<b>EMPLOYEE PART</b>	<b>EMPLOYER PART</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>
Single	\$57	\$343	\$400
Dual	\$261	\$479	\$740
Employee + Employee	0	\$740	\$740
Employee + Employee + Children	\$111	\$969	\$1,080
Family	\$454	\$626	\$1,080

Source: Dinwiddie County Human Resources Dept., 2005.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

### **Recommendation 3-9:**

#### **Perform a comprehensive review of the salary schedule.**

The DCPS Human Resources Department should review the current salary schedule and make recommendations to the Superintendent and the school board regarding policies and procedures governing salary administration and re-placement of individuals on the salary schedule when instances of misplacement are noted. The review should include a comparison of the DCPS schedule with those from peer divisions as well as comparison with national standards for salary structuring.

## **FISCAL IMPACT**

The implementation of this recommendation can be accomplished using division resources, without incurring additional costs.

### **3.5 Teacher Certification, Evaluation, and Professional Development**

A key component of an effective instructional system within a school division is the establishment and implementation of policies and procedures regarding the licensure, training, and appraisal of instructional staff. The state and local education agencies share responsibilities in these areas, with the state having the task of establishing licensure requirements and issuing professional certificates, and the local school division providing an adequate system of professional development, along with an equitable and legally defensible performance appraisal system.

#### **3.5.1 Teacher Certification**

The licensure and license renewal process is supervised by the Virginia Department of Education Division of Teacher Licensure and is subject to the regulations of the State Board of Education. There are seven types of licenses for school personnel:

- Collegiate Professional License;
- Post-graduate Professional License;
- Technical Professional License;
- Provisional License;
- Special Education Conditional License;
- Pupil Personnel Services License; and,
- Divisional Superintendent License.

Licenses are valid for five years and may be renewed through either college coursework, professional development points, or through a variety of other activities specified in state statute and local board policy. The exceptions to this are the provisional and special education conditional licenses, which are three-year, non-renewable certificates. License renewal procedures are outlined on the Virginia Department of Education Web site. The site describes the license renewal process as:

*To renew the license, the individual must obtain at least 180 points through a series of 10 professional development options. License holders without a master's degree must earn at least 90 points by completing a three-semester-hour course at an accredited two or four-year college in the content area listed on the license. During one five-year cycle, the license holder may be granted approval to take course work in special education, English as a second language, gifted education, or technology education in lieu of the three-hour content course. In addition, professional development activities designed to support the Virginia Standards of Learning, Standards of Accreditation, and Assessments may be accepted in lieu of the content course for one renewal cycle.*

## **FINDING**

The DCPS personnel procedures handbook states, "The Executive Director of Human Resources will maintain a schedule of license renewal dates and license types for all employees." The Executive Director of Human Resources will also endeavor to provide a written reminder to staff members whose licenses expire with one year and two years at the beginning of each school year; however, failure to receive such notification does not waive or postpone license requirements. The individual employee ultimately bears full responsibility for maintaining a valid professional license at all times."

The division executes this policy through written notification letters sent to teachers to remind them that their regular teaching certificates are due to expire. In addition, teachers working on provisional certificates are sent notification letters reminding them of deadlines for completing all requirements for initial certification. These letters are generated by the Executive Director of Human Resources and mailed to teachers. All necessary license fees are the responsibility of teachers, and the division provides no financial support for license renewal.

## **COMMENDATION**

**The Dinwiddie County Public Schools Human Resources Department is commended for its tracking and notification process for professional licensure.**

## **RECOMMENDATION**

### **Recommendation 3-10:**

**Pay the license renewal fees for its teachers, as an additional employee benefit.**

The school division's salary and benefits package is competitive, but does not provide the top salaries and benefits of the divisions in the surrounding area. The addition of the license renewal fee payment would match a benefit offered in neighboring divisions without significantly increasing personnel costs.

## **FISCAL IMPACT**

With certificates on a five-year renewal cycle, roughly 20 percent of teachers in any given year will be up for certificate renewal. At \$25 per renewal and 60 teachers per

year, this additional benefit would cost the division up to \$1,500 per year. The funds would be paid as a reimbursement during the year following the renewal of the certificate, if the employee remained in the school division.

<b>Recommendation</b>	<b>2006-07</b>	<b>2007-08</b>	<b>2008-09</b>	<b>2009-10</b>	<b>2010-11</b>
Payment of Teacher License Renewal Fee	(\$1,500)	(\$1,500)	(\$1,500)	(\$1,500)	(\$1,500)

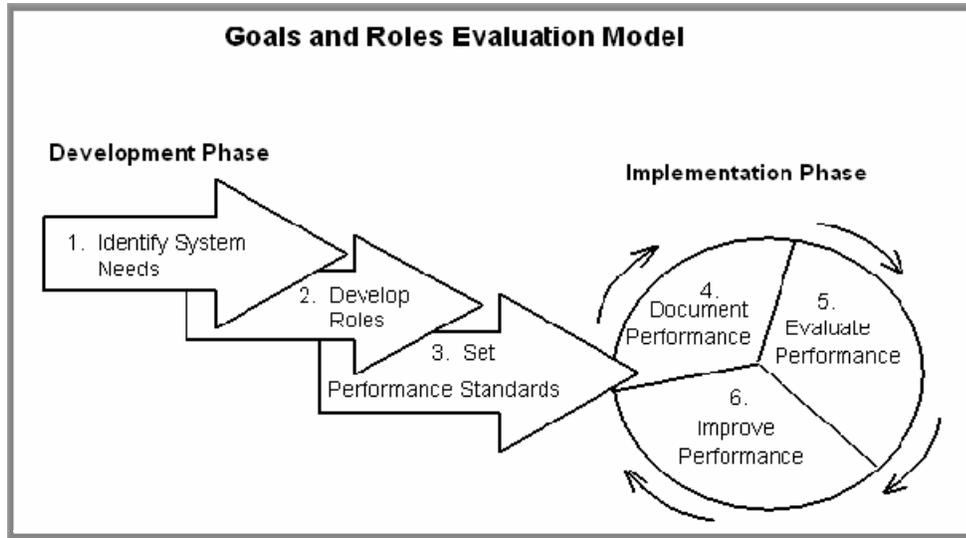
**3.5.2 Employee Evaluations**

The DCPS performance assessment system is based on the *Goals and Roles Evaluation Model* © (Stronge, 1997). The procedures meet requirements for the *Guidelines for Uniform Performance Standards and Evaluation Criteria for Teachers, Administrators, and Superintendents* (Virginia Department of Education, Adopted by Virginia Board of Education, January 6, 2000) and the *Educational Accountability and Quality Enhancement Act of 1999* which includes regulations and legal requirements for the evaluation of teachers, administrators, and other instructional personnel in the Commonwealth of Virginia. The primary purposes of the evaluation system are to:

- improve the quality of instruction by assuring accountability for classroom instruction;
- contribute to the successful achievement of the goals and objectives of the school division;
- provide a basis for instructional improvement through productive teacher appraisal and professional growth; and,
- share responsibility for evaluation between teacher and administrator in a collaborative process that promotes self-growth, instructional effectiveness, and improvement of overall job performance.

Exhibit 3-8 shows the Goals and Roles Evaluation Model. As shown in the model, the evaluation system has two phases: development and implementation. There are three stages in the development phase: 1) identify the needs of the system through the division’s mission and goals; 2) develop roles through the thorough and complete development of job descriptions that clearly outline the responsibilities of each position; and 3) set performance standards by determining a level(s) of performance within each job responsibility on which the performance will be evaluated.

**EXHIBIT 3-8  
GOALS AND ROLES EVALUATION MODEL  
DINWIDDIE COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS**



Source: Dinwiddie County Public School Employee Handbook, 2005.

In the implementation phase, the evaluator must record sufficient information about the individual's performance to support ongoing professional development and to justify personnel decisions (e.g., renewal, non-renewal/termination).

Documentation of performance is gathered through formal and informal observations, student surveys, portfolios, and student achievement data. The collection of performance data from these various sources are combined on the Teacher Data Source Matrix. A Teacher Performance Review Form is used for formal observations. The performance appraisal activities conclude with a summative evaluation conducted on an established schedule for tenured and non-tenured teachers. Exhibits 3-9 and 3-10 illustrate the schedules for both categories of teachers. Each schedule outlines the activities for each of the years in the three-year evaluation cycle. For tenured teachers, the summative evaluation does not occur until the end of the three year cycle. Evaluators rate teaching performance on a four-point scale: 4-Excellent; 3-Meets Expectations; 2-Needs Assistance; and 1-Unsatisfactory. Interviews with divisional personnel indicated that the appraisal system is administered satisfactorily and in accordance with its purpose and design.

**COMMENDATION**

**The Dinwiddie County Public Schools Human Resources Department is commended for developing a comprehensive appraisal system that is research-based and focused on student outcomes, and has a specified schedule for implementation.**

**FINDING**

The Certificated Personnel Evaluation Manual for DCPS states, "Due to the high number of new teachers Dinwiddie has had in recent years, the decision was made as part of the evaluation structure that teachers reaching continuing contract status would receive a

formal evaluation once every three years. All teachers are required to set annual goals and are observed each year. However, they are given a formal evaluation on a 3-year cycle.” Teachers go on to continuing contract status when they receive a satisfactory performance evaluation and are reappointed for their fourth year of teaching. This system requires the principal to observe/evaluate only one-third of the experienced teachers and all of the new teachers in a given school year.

**RECOMMENDATION**

**Recommendation 3-11:**

**Perform a formative evaluation every year with all teachers, regardless of experience level.**

Continual school improvement requires a constancy of purpose that includes providing feedback to every employee on their job performance as a part of the overall performance of the school. The annual appraisals would be formative in nature, i.e., they would not be considered final evaluations, but would serve to monitor the implementation of the performance and student achievement goals set by the teacher and provide direction for the teacher’s continuing professional development

**EXHIBIT 3-9  
EVALUATION SCHEDULE FOR NON-TENURED  
DINWIDDIE COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOL TEACHERS  
2005-06 SCHOOL YEAR**

<b>YEAR</b>	<b>DATA COLLECTION PROCEDURE</b>	<b>FORM</b>	<b>EVALUATOR</b>	<b>TEACHER</b>
<b>Year 1</b>	Annual Goal for Student Achievement	Annual Goal Form	Review/ Approve	Select/ Develop
	Scheduled Formal Observation & Conference (minimum 1)	Performance Review Form	X	
	Non-scheduled Formal Observation (minimum 2)	Performance Review Form	X	
	Informal Observation (whenever appropriate)	Informal Observation Form	X	
	Student Survey	Survey Form		X
	Summative Evaluation, Portfolio Review/Conference by 3/15	Summative Form	X	
<b>Year 2</b>	Annual Goal for Student Achievement	Annual Goal Form	Review/ Approve	Select/ Develop
	Scheduled Formal Observation & Conference (minimum 1)	Performance Review Form	X	
	Non-scheduled Formal Observation (minimum 2)	Performance Review Form	X	
	Informal Observation (whenever appropriate)	Informal Observation Form	X	
	Student Survey	Survey Form		X
	Summative Evaluation, Portfolio Review/Conference by 3/15	Summative Form	X	
<b>Year 3</b>	Annual Goal for Student Achievement	Annual Goal Form	Review/ Approve	Select/ Develop
	Scheduled Formal Observation & Conference (minimum 1)	Performance Review Form	X	
	Non-scheduled Formal Observation (minimum 2)	Performance Review Form	X	
	Informal Observation (whenever appropriate)	Informal Observation Form	X	
	Student Survey	Survey Form		X
	Summative Evaluation/Conference by 3/15	Summative Form	X	

Source: Dinwiddie County Public School Employee Handbook, 2005.

**EXHIBIT 3-10  
EVALUATION SCHEDULE FOR TENURED  
DINWIDDIE COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOL TEACHERS  
2005-06 SCHOOL YEAR**

<b>YEAR</b>	<b>DATA COLLECTION PROCEDURE</b>	<b>FORM</b>	<b>EVALUATOR</b>	<b>TEACHER</b>
<b>Year 1</b>	Annual Goal for Student Achievement	Annual Goal Form	Review/ Approve	Select/ Develop
	Scheduled or Unscheduled Formal Observation, Portfolio Review & Conference (minimum 1)	Observation Review Form	X	
	Informal Observation (whenever appropriate)	Informal Observation Form	X	
	Student Survey	Survey Form		X
<b>Year 2</b>	Annual Goal for Student Achievement	Annual Goal Form	Review/ Approve	Select/ Develop
	Scheduled or Unscheduled Formal Observation, Portfolio Review & Conference (minimum 1)	Observation Review Form	X	
	Informal Observation (whenever appropriate)	Informal Observation Form	X	
<b>Year 3</b>	Annual Goal for Student Achievement	Annual Goal Form	Review/ Approve	Select/ Develop
	Scheduled or Unscheduled Formal Observation, Portfolio Review & Conference (minimum 1)	Observation Review Form	X	
	Informal Observation (whenever appropriate)	Informal Observation Form	X	
	Student Survey	Survey Form		X
	Summative Evaluation/Conference by 3/15	Summative Form	X	

Source: Dinwiddie County Public School Employee Handbook, 2005.

**FISCAL IMPACT**

Conducting annual evaluations for all employees would not produce additional funding requirements for the school division.

**3.5.3 Professional Development**

Comprehensive professional development programs provide the means to enhance the knowledge, expertise, and performance of a school division's employees. Federal *No Child Left Behind* legislation defines professional development as, "high quality, sustained, intensive, and classroom focused in order to have a positive and lasting impact on classroom instruction and the teacher's performance in the classroom." The legislation also states that professional development activities are not "one-day or short-term workshops or conferences."

## **FINDING**

DCPS provides a comprehensive staff development program that is coordinated between the Human Resources Department and the division of curriculum and instruction. The Human Resources Department maintains a database of professional development activities that includes the following fields: title of training activities, first/last name of participants, school assignment, date of training, number of training hours, rate of pay for stipend (if applicable), and the number of professional development points earned. The majority of professional development offerings focus on core curriculum areas such as mathematics, reading and writing. Other offerings include classroom management, parent conferencing, and instructional use of Power Point. The professional development activities are aligned with the standards of "high quality" as defined by NCLB.

DCPS teachers have a variety of avenues through which to engage in ongoing professional development. The school division supports and encourages these activities and provides the infrastructure for them to occur both at the school and division level, as well as for training outside of the school division.

In 2000, the school division established board policy that encouraged its teachers to pursue advanced degrees. The policy is supported annually by a \$25,000 fund that allows teachers to be reimbursed for one college course per year, up to the exhaustion of the allocated funds. Teachers can apply each fall for courses taken the previous year. If reimbursement requests exceed the \$25,000 allocation, the awards will be prorated, based on the number of requests.

## **COMMENDATION**

**The Dinwiddie County Public Schools are to be commended for providing financial support for obtaining advanced degrees. Such an incentive serves to enhance the quality of the teaching work force and to create a climate of professionalism and support for learning.**

## **FINDING**

In addition to supporting teachers' pursuing advanced degrees, DCPS offers college courses on its divisional campuses. Since 2002, the University of Virginia (UVA) and DCPS have partnered to create on-site course offerings that lead to the gifted education endorsement. Other UVA courses include:

- Social Foundations of Education;
- Reading in the Content Areas;
- Foundations of Reading;
- Strategic Teaching of Reading;
- Curriculum and Instruction; and,
- Classroom Management.

DCPS partnered with Prince George in 2003 to support teacher participation in a Library/Media Master's program, and is currently pursuing a partnership with Longwood to bring a Master's program in Reading to the division in 2006-07.

**COMMENDATION**

**Dinwiddie County Public Schools is commended for pursuing partnerships with neighboring divisions and higher education institutions to provide on-line professional development.**

On-line courses are a great means to provide high quality professional development to teachers with the flexibility and accessibility that make this delivery so popular today. The division should begin having conversations with local colleges and universities, particularly those that already have on-line courses and programs, to pursue the question of the viability of offering such courses to teachers in the division.

**FINDING**

The Dinwiddie County Public Schools offer Staff Development Institute Courses for division teachers that feature an on-line registration process. The on-line registration allows for 24 hours a day and seven days a week access to course registration and the ability to review course descriptions prior to enrolling. The system allows for participant data to be captured in a systematic fashion that facilitates the collecting of demographic data on teachers as well as accurately recording the type and amount of professional development taken by teachers.

**COMMENDATION**

**The Dinwiddie County Public Schools is commended for its on-line training registration system.**

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## **4.0 FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT**

In this chapter the findings and recommendations for the financial management of Dinwiddie County Public Schools (DCPS) are presented. The major sections of the chapter include:

- 4.1 Staffing and Organization
- 4.2 Finance and Purchasing Systems
- 4.3 Purchasing Processes
- 4.4 Budgeting and Fiscal Operations
- 4.5 Fixed Asset and Textbook Controls
- 4.6 Accounting for School Activity Funds

### **CHAPTER SUMMARY**

The review team found that the fiscal operations of the division were well run in general and that employees of the Fiscal Operations Department were dedicated and knowledgeable. With the exception of the Executive Director for Fiscal Operations who came to the division in August 2005, the employees in the department have a long tenure with DCPS.

By far the largest challenge to the Fiscal Operations Department is the lack of a comprehensive, integrated accounting system. Implementation of a new system would help to improve the efficiency of the department, as the employees are hindered by the largely manual processes. That the employees of the department are able to handle their current work loads using the current financial system is an indication of the staff's willingness to provide good customer service to the internal and external customers of the division.

As evidence of this dedication, participants in a survey conducted for this review indicated that they felt that administrative practices in the division were efficient and effective. Specifically, 63 percent of administrators, 76 percent of principals, and 53 percent of teachers either agreed or strongly agreed with this assertion.

In addition, when asked about specific fiscal operations in the division, survey participants largely agreed that departmental functions were adequate or outstanding. For instance, regarding the budgeting function in DCPS, 63 percent of administrators and 50 percent of principals rated the function as adequate or outstanding. When asked about the financial management of the division in general, 76 percent of administrators and 63 percent of principals responded with an adequate or outstanding rating. The purchasing function of the division also received high acclaim in the survey, with 76 percent of administrators and 75 percent of principals again giving the function either adequate or outstanding marks.

The recommendations in this chapter focus on improving the efficiency of the department while at the same time increasing the level of internal controls of the department. Some of these recommendations include:

- implementing a new financial accounting system;

- reassigning some job responsibilities among staff to strengthen the separation of duties;
- decentralizing and automating the data entry for purchase order information, thus reducing the workload for the Fiscal Operations Department;
- decentralizing and automating the process for receiving goods in the division;
- improving the accountability of the division by improving the expanding the annual budget document;
- providing a higher level of accountability over fixed assets and textbooks; and,
- conducting regular internal reviews of school Activity Funds.

In addition, Chapter 2, *Division Administration*, proposes a change to one position and the reporting structure of the Fiscal Operations Department. Specifically, Chapter 2 recommends that the Executive Director for Fiscal Operations position be downgraded to a director-level position, and that Fiscal Operations fall under the Executive Director for Administrative Services, thus bringing DCPS more in line with its peer divisions.

## **INTRODUCTION**

Successful financial management of a school division helps to promote educational excellence by enabling school divisions to operate in a fiscally responsible manner in order to achieve the objectives of its overall mission. Adequate and well-managed financial resources allow divisions to recruit, reward and retain qualified educators, build and maintain suitable facilities for all divisional operations, and create the capacity to meet increasing state performance requirements. At its core, the finance and purchasing systems of a school division must:

- meet constitutional and statutory requirements for equity and adequacy; and
- operate legally, efficiently and effectively in the execution of basic budget, accounting, and purchasing practices.

The School Board of Dinwiddie County Public Schools receives monthly financial statements, including statements of revenues and expenditures, showing the financial condition of the division, and approves the annual budget. The annual budget includes estimated revenues, sources of these revenues, estimated expenditures, and the planned amounts which may be spent under each account code. The DCPS contracts with an external accounting firm to conduct annual audits and results of the audit are presented to the DCPS School Board.

**4.1 Staffing and Organization**

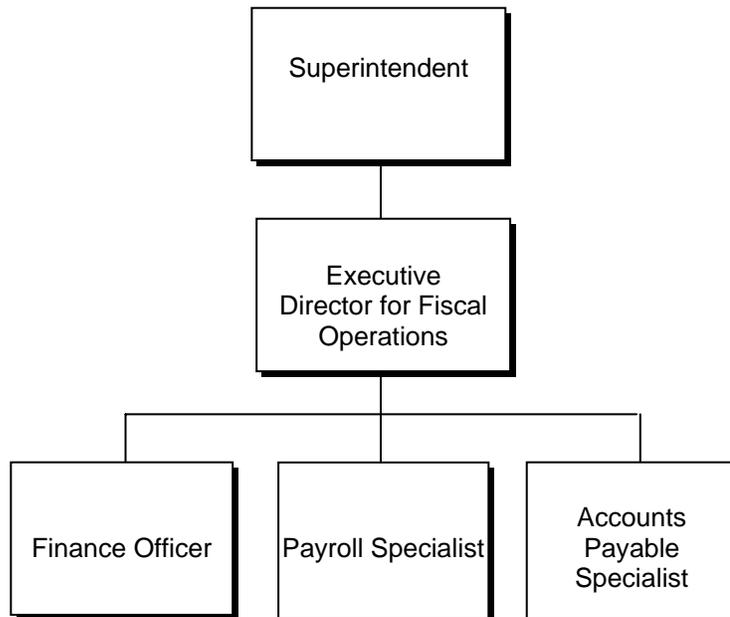
Exhibit 4-1 shows the current organization of the division's Fiscal Operations Department. As this exhibit shows, the division has an Executive Director position which reports directly to the Superintendent and is in charge of all finance functions. In addition to the fiscal operations for the division, the Executive Director for Fiscal Operations also oversees the Director of Technology.

The finance and accounting functions of the division are performed by the Payroll Specialist, Accounts Payable Specialist, the financial officer, and the Executive Director for Fiscal Operations. The Executive Director for Fiscal Operations position was added in August 2005. Each of the other employees of this department has served in their current position for an average of five years.

The Payroll Specialist is responsible for all activities required of the payroll processing function including issuing all paychecks, maintaining employee leave balances, tracking employee deductions, making payroll tax payments and filing tax reports, and issuing employee W-2 forms at year-end.

The Accounts Payable Specialist is responsible for entering all approved purchase orders and invoices into the accounting system, ensuring that purchasing processes and procedures have been followed by departments and schools, interacting with vendors in the resolution of questions, issuing 1099 forms at year-end, and issuing accounts payable checks.

**EXHIBIT 4-1  
DINWIDDIE COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS  
FISCAL OPERATIONS DEPARTMENT ORGANIZATION STRUCTURE**



Source: *Organization Profile*, Office of the Superintendent and Fiscal Operations Department, November 2005.

With the addition of the Executive Director for Fiscal Operations, the job duties for this position and the Finance Officer were evolving at the time the review team visited the division; however, at the time of the team's visit, the Finance Officer was primarily responsible for maintaining the general ledger, reconciling bank accounts, grant reporting, issuing monthly expenditure and budget reports, and monitoring School Activity Funds. The Executive Director for Fiscal Operations' responsibilities included developing and monitoring the division budget, serving as the division's risk manager as well as the division's purchasing agent.

## **FINDING**

DCPS improved the accountability and oversight of its financial operations upon adding a position to oversee the Fiscal Operations Department and by re-organizing the responsibilities of the department. In 2004, the Virginia Association of School Superintendents (VASS) conducted a study and recommended that the division add a director-level position to oversee fiscal operations.

Between the 2000-01 and 2004-05 school years, the fiscal operations of the division had been managed by five different individuals. Prior to the staffing and organization changes that were made in August 2005, the division's fiscal operations fell under an assistant superintendent position that was also responsible for instruction.

Not only did the frequent turnover in leadership of the department create instability, but the placement of the department in the instructional division was not conducive to promoting accountability.

## **COMMENDATION**

**The division is to be commended for improving the accountability of the Fiscal Operations Department and for more appropriately aligning the fiscal functions in the department.**

## **FINDING**

Though the division has improved the accountability of the Fiscal Operations Department in the recent re-organization of its functions, there are still areas that could be improved. Primarily, the fiscal operations could be improved by creating a greater separation of duties between the finance staff.

Separation between duties is an internal control concept that should be in place to prevent and detect errors or irregularities in the financial operations of an organization. The concept of separation of duties calls for checks and balances to occur at various stages of any process so that errors or irregularities can be prevented and detected. In addition, separation of duties requires that no one person handle a process from beginning to end.

DCPS's accounts payable and Payroll Specialists each handle their respective processes from beginning to end. This not only puts the division at risk of having undetected errors, but in the event of an irregularity occurring, each of these employees is at risk of being unfairly held responsible for wrongdoing. Implementing steps to

provide adequate separation of duties would not only protect the division's financial interests, but would also serve to protect innocent employees.

In DCPS, internal controls could be improved by separating some of the responsibilities of the accounts payable and Payroll Specialists. Specifically, the Accounts Payable Specialist is responsible for vendor file maintenance, data entry of purchase orders, payment of invoices, and receipt and distribution of departmental mail. The Accounts Payable Specialist also prints and disburses vendor checks. Because this individual has the ability to establish vendors in the accounting system, in addition to having the ability to input and pay invoices and issue checks, the potential exists for setting up a fictitious vendor and making payments to that vendor. This risk is further increased because the Accounts Payable Specialist has first-hand access to the departmental mail and could cover up vendor discrepancies by hiding invoices or vendor statements.

The Payroll Specialist is responsible for the division's payroll process from beginning to end, including establishing new employees in the pay system and making pay changes for existing employees. This position is also responsible for the printing and disbursement of payroll checks. The combination of these responsibilities falling to one person provides opportunities for establishing and issuing checks to "phantom" employees.

Any discussion of internal controls and separation of duties warrants mentioning the fact that the potential for employee wrongdoing is theoretical in nature. Establishing sound controls does not imply that employees are untrustworthy or have the potential for wrongdoing. Undeniably, the review team found the employees in the Fiscal Operations Department to be dedicated, capable, and competent individuals; yet the assignment of duties should not be based on the character of the employee holding the position. As mentioned earlier, sound internal controls are also designed for the protection of well-meaning employees.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

### **Recommendation 4-1:**

#### **Redistribute some of the accounting and payroll functions to improve internal controls in the division's Fiscal Operations Department.**

While the concept of separation of duties is a commendable one, in practice it is difficult to implement in small organizations such as DCPS's Fiscal Operations Department simply because there are so few employees to share in the duties and responsibilities; however, there are some ways that the division could improve the controls over its fiscal operations.

The payroll and Accounts Payable Specialists should cross-train so that each position can serve as a check or "second set of eyes" for the other. Some of the duties that should be separated include the following:

- the data entry for purchase orders should be separated from the invoice payment function;

- the accounts payable data entry function should be separated from the accounts payable check disbursement function;
- the payroll processing functions should be separated from the payroll check disbursement function;
- the vendor file maintenance function should be separated from both the purchase order data entry and the accounts payable data entry functions;
- the mail should be received and opened by someone other than the Accounts Payable Specialist; and,
- the input of new employees or employee pay changes into the payroll system should be made by someone other than the Payroll Specialist.

By cross-training the Accounts Payable and Payroll Specialist positions, the two employees holding these positions can perform functions for each other that will increase the level of separation of duties. For instance, the Accounts Payable Specialist could be responsible for verifying, issuing, and disbursing paychecks while the Payroll Specialist could do the same for accounts payable checks. In addition, each of these positions could perform data entry functions for the other that would improve controls.

In addition to the cross-training of the accounts payable and payroll positions, other employees in the division could help to increase the separation of duties. Specifically, the Finance Officer could be responsible for establishing and maintaining vendor files in the accounts payable system, while the Human Resources Department could input all employee data into the payroll system. Either the Finance Officer or the office receptionist could be responsible for opening and distributing the mail, and all vendor statement should be reviewed by the Finance Officer prior to being submitted to the Accounts Payable Specialist.

#### **FISCAL IMPACT**

There is no fiscal impact associated with this recommendation

#### **4.2 Finance and Purchasing Systems**

DCPS uses a financial operating system called Bright. Designed primarily for municipal and local government operations, the system is operated on an AS-400 operating system and provides general ledger, budgeting, purchasing, payroll, and accounts payable features. DCPS has used the Bright system since the mid-1980s. The system is licensed to Dinwiddie County and the division pays a user fee of \$500 annually. Although the school division's system does not interface with the county's system, school financial activity is loaded manually to the county's system on a monthly basis.

#### **FINDING**

The Bright System is ill-suited for school division use. In interviewing DCPS staff, the review team heard several complaints of how the Bright System does not meet the needs of the division and is cumbersome to use.

In particular, the system does not have a position control feature which makes it difficult for budgeting and forecasting and tracking of employee positions. In addition, the payroll and human resources systems do not interface, and employee leave tracking is primarily a manual process. The budget features of the system are limited and require user intervention and manipulation to extract adequate budgetary reporting.

Some of the most inefficient aspects of the system involve the purchasing system. Due to system limitations, many purchasing functions are highly manual requiring excessive staff time to complete. For instance, when a purchase has been completed and the associated invoice paid, the system does not automatically “close” the purchase order, requiring the Accounts Payable Specialist to manually change the “open” or “closed” status in the purchasing system.

Special approval for items purchased with restricted funds such as Title I, Title V, or ESL funds must be manually routed to the appropriate program manager for additional approval. An automated purchasing system will allow for set-up of automated electronic routing of purchase orders so that the appropriate person can receive and approve the purchase without manual interaction.

Other drawbacks of the system include limited reporting features and the need to log into and out of several “screens” in order to complete a single transaction.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

### **Recommendation 4-2:**

#### **Implement a financial system that is better suited for school division operations.**

Many Virginia school divisions use a financial system called Xpert, a product of RDA Systems, Inc. This system has many features that would help to improve the efficiency of DCPS’s Fiscal Operations Department.

School division financial systems need to be a fund accounting system containing several standard reporting features in addition to a report-writing module that allows users to develop custom reports. The system should allow for decentralized entry of purchase orders as well as fixed assets (discussed in Section 4.5 of this chapter) which greatly increases efficiency since users enter their data directly to the system rather than having it keyed centrally.

System modules include:

- financial management;
- budgeting;
- payroll;
- purchasing;
- accounts payable;
- position tracking;
- personnel; and
- fixed asset tracking.

**FISCAL IMPACT**

Implementation of this recommendation will require an initial investment of approximately \$60,000 and annual maintenance fees of approximately \$12,000. The implementation of a new system will provide operating efficiencies for the division.

<b>Recommendation</b>	<b>2006-07</b>	<b>2007-08</b>	<b>2008-09</b>	<b>2009-10</b>	<b>2010-11</b>
Implement a Financial System That is Better Suited for School Division Operations	(\$60,000)	(\$12,000)	(\$12,000)	(\$12,000)	(\$12,000)

**4.2.1 Purchasing Processes**

Though the Dinwiddie County Public Schools’ purchasing function is rated favorably by department and school users, the function is largely a cumbersome, manual process. The division could achieve dramatic efficiencies by implementing new processes to cut down on the amount of paperwork required in the purchasing process.

Virginia school divisions are required to follow the Virginia Public Procurement Act (VPPA). In DCPS’s, the Board has delegated purchasing authority to the Superintendent and the Executive Director for Fiscal Operations, who serves as the division’s purchasing agent, to enter into contracts for amounts of less than \$50,000; school board approval is required for amounts of \$50,000 or more. The superintendent has delegated authority to all division “budget holders” to approve purchases made from their budgets in the amount of \$2,500 or less. School-based purchase orders greater than \$2,500 require the additional approval of the superintendent or the Executive Director for Fiscal Operations. In addition, school-based purchase orders for the purchase of textbooks, regardless of the amount, and all central administration purchase orders, regardless of the amount, must also be approved by the Executive Director for Fiscal Operations.

Division policies (DJF-R – Purchasing Procedures) require the following:

- purchases of goods or services estimated to cost less than \$1,000 require one bid, either by telephone or in writing;
- purchases estimated to cost between \$1,001 and \$2,500 require a minimum of three telephone or written bids; and
- purchases estimated to total between \$2,501 and \$50,000 are to be forwarded to the Executive Director for Fiscal Operations for competitive pricing.

Policy DJF-R further requires that for professional services anticipated to amount to more than \$30,000, requests for proposals (RFP) are to be issued. All RFPs must be advertised in a general circulation newspaper for at least 10 days prior to the deadline for receipt of bids. All bids are required to be evaluated by a committee established by the purchasing agent.

Division policy also provides for sole source, emergency, and cooperative procurement arrangements.

DCPS does not have a segregated Purchasing Department. The staff in the Fiscal Operations Department handle procurement functions along with finance responsibilities. The Executive Director for Fiscal Operations acts as purchasing officer for the division, and the Accounts Payable Specialist ensures the accuracy of purchase order information and enters purchase orders into the financial system to encumber funds.

Prior to the purchasing responsibilities being assigned to the Executive Director for Fiscal Operations the Finance Officer was responsible for them.

Exhibit 4-2 shows the flow of a purchase order through the approval system. As this exhibit shows, a purchase order is initiated at the school or department level, and is then sent to the appropriate person for approval. All paper purchase orders are physically routed through this approval process.

## **FINDING**

The VPPA allows for collaborative or cooperative purchasing. That is, school divisions may purchase from contracts from any state or local government agency, even though the school division did not participate in the request for proposals or the invitation to bid. Specifically, Section 2.2-4304 of the VPPA states:

*Any public body may participate in, sponsor, conduct, or administer a cooperative procurement agreement on behalf of or in conjunction with one or more other public bodies, or public agencies or institutions or localities of the several states, of the United States or its territories, the District of Columbia, or the U.S. General Services Administration, for the purpose of combining requirements to increase efficiency or reduce administrative expenses in any acquisition of goods and services. Except for contracts for professional services, a public body may purchase from another public body's contract even if it did not participate in the request for proposal or invitation to bid, if the request for proposal or invitation to bid specified that the procurement was being conducted on behalf of other public bodies.*

For fiscal year 2004-05, the school division teamed with the county on a collaborative bid for fuel, diesel and propane. This collaboration resulted in a cost savings to the school division because the collaborative bid provided better pricing than the school division had paid in the past for propane.

While the exact amount of savings resulting from the collaborative bid with the county, because of the volatility of fuel prices, is difficult to determine, the division estimates that it saved approximately \$3,500 by jointly bidding its fuel with the county.

In addition, the county and the school division are considering a collaborative bid for cellular telephone services.

DCPS also uses cooperative purchasing opportunities to save money. The division is a member of eVA and of US Communities Government Purchasing Alliance (US Communities). eVA is a statewide purchasing network that allows participants to purchase from a wide selection of pre-bid items. US Communities is a nationwide strategic sourcing program designed by public purchasing professionals for use by government agencies and public-benefit non profits throughout the country. School divisions can participate in US Communities at no cost in the procurement of items such as janitorial, office and classroom supplies; office and school furniture; technology equipment; playground and physical education supplies.

## **COMMENDATION**

**Dinwiddie County Public Schools achieved cost savings in the price paid for propane by collaboratively bidding with the county.**

## **FINDING**

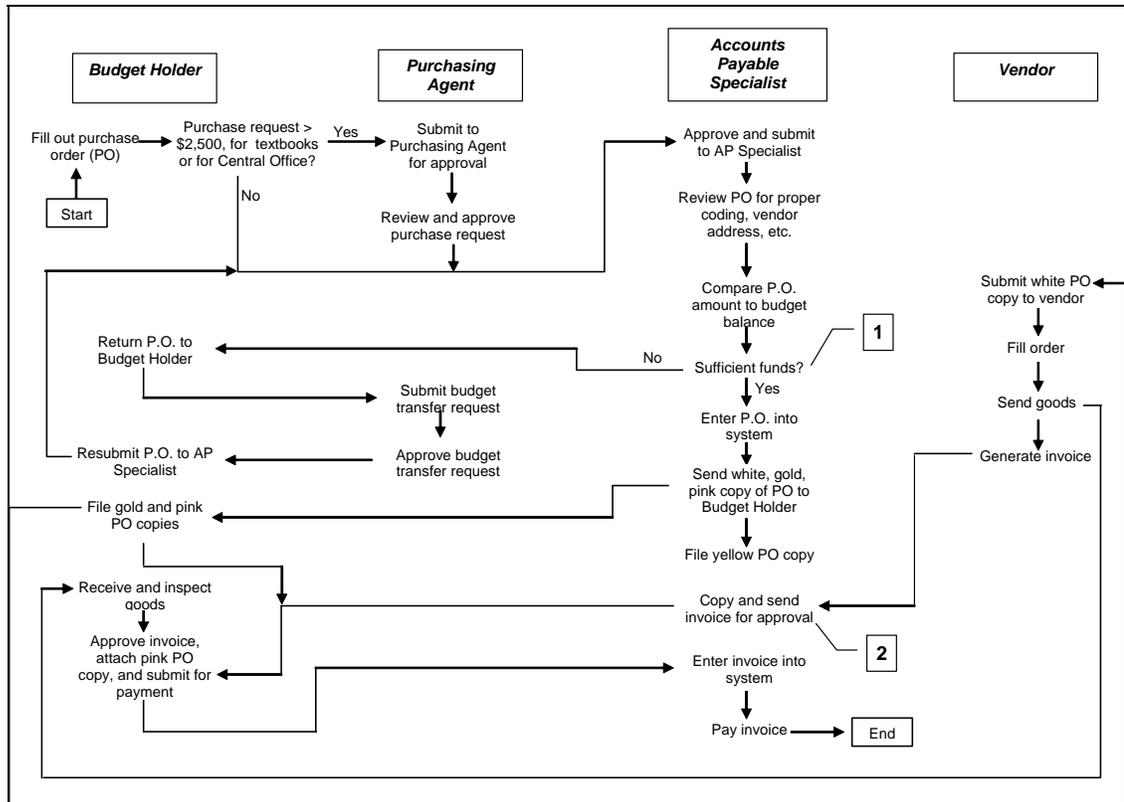
DCPS's procurement process is largely a manual, centralized process; that is, paper purchase requests and purchase orders are physically routed among the various individuals and departments represented in Exhibit 4-2. The manual nature of the purchasing process does not necessarily result in delays in the procurement of goods and services in the division, but places a large workload burden on Fiscal Operations employees.

The manual nature of the purchasing process, combined with the level of the workload associated with the purchasing function, leaves the division at risk of committing errors or over expending budgets.

For instance, the Accounts Payable Specialist is responsible for manually reviewing all purchase orders to ensure that they have received proper approval, which is not only based on dollar levels but also dependent upon fund sources. That is, certain expenditure classifications require additional approval. The Accounts Payable Specialist is also responsible for reviewing all supporting bid and quote documentation to ensure schools and departments follow division policies. In addition, the Accounts Payable Specialist is solely responsible for the data entry of all purchase orders into the financial system, in addition to being responsible for issuing all accounts payable checks. For the 2004-05 school year, DCPS issued 4,100 accounts payable checks.

In the diagram of the purchase order process shown in Exhibit 4-2 above, step "1" in the process is cumbersome and can result in delays in the procurement of goods. During this step, if the Accounts Payable Specialist determines that a budget holder has insufficient funds in a line item, the purchase order is returned to the budget holder who is then required to request a budget transfer and then re-submit the purchase order. This step is highly inefficient and allows for purchase orders to be lost in transit between departments.

**EXHIBIT 4-2  
DINWIDDIE COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS  
PURCHASING PROCESS  
2005-06 SCHOOL YEAR**



Source: Interviews with DCPS Fiscal Operations staff, November 2005; review of DCPS Policy Manual, adopted February 1999; and review of DCPS *Manual of Fiscal Management*, undated.

Manual processes can also contribute to a higher number of errors and irregularities, and detecting them can be difficult because of the lack of audit trails that are inherent in mostly manual systems.

Other issues identified with the current purchasing system include:

- The current system does not automatically “close” a purchase order upon final payment of goods or services. Rather, the Accounts Payable Specialist must access the system and enter a “C” in the appropriate field in order to close purchase orders. This process again leaves room for errors and is inefficient.
- The purchase order data entry system requires a series of screens to be accessed during the purchase order entry and invoice payment functions. The different screens must be accessed a number of times throughout the process and each screen requires the Accounts Payable Specialist to enter a different security code and password each time it is accessed.

- The executive director for Fiscal Operations and the accounts payable specialist must manually review purchase orders for adequate approval. With a fully automated system, this review would not be necessary.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

### **Recommendation 4-3:**

#### **Automate and decentralize the purchase order process to achieve greater efficiencies in the division.**

A decentralized entry process means that rather than manually routing paper purchase orders to the Fiscal Operations Department where they are reviewed, approved if necessary, and entered into the system, users would be required to enter the purchase order information into the system directly. A proper automated purchasing system would have budgetary controls that would restrict the entry of a purchase order if adequate funding was not available, thus eliminating the manual rejection of purchase orders as depicted in step “1” of Exhibit 4-2.

The features of an improved financial system also allow for the electronic routing and approval of purchase orders. That is, even though users enter purchase order data into the system, the purchase order is not approved until it is reviewed and approved by the appropriate individuals. This approval process is entirely automated, with pre-established “approvers” set up upon system implementation. Under such a system, approvers receive an automated notice that there are purchase orders to be reviewed and approved, and they then access the purchase order online and enter a password-protected “approval”.

Most systems allow multiple electronic approval levels, increasing the efficiency of the process while at the same time affording a greater degree of control over the expenditure function. For instance, if a school is requesting a purchase of over \$2,500 (which is required to receive additional approval from the Executive Director for Fiscal Operations), from Title I funds (which require additional approval from the Title I director), an automated approval routing can be established that would send the purchase order first to the Executive Director for Fiscal Operations and then to the Title I director. Only after all necessary approvals have been received is the purchase order allowed to be issued. This not only speeds the approval process by eliminating the manual routing of paperwork, but ensures that the review of purchase order information such as account coding does not overlook the fact that certain expenditures need special review and approval.

Additionally, requiring that purchase orders be entered into the system by the initiator not only saves time for the Accounts Payable Specialist, but it allows budget holders to know immediately whether there are insufficient funds in the account to which they are charging their purchase. In the event of insufficient funds, the budget holder can submit a budget transfer request immediately rather than having to wait until their purchase order is denied and returned, further speeding up the procurement process.

## **FISCAL IMPACT**

The fiscal impact associated with this recommendation is accounted for in Recommendation 4-2 of this chapter.

## **FINDING**

DCPS uses a manual receiving process, whereby physical invoices are sent to the receiving department or school for approval. A school or department's approval indicates that all goods were received in good condition, in the quantity ordered, and that the invoice is ready for payment. After approving the invoice, the user department or school sends the invoice back to the Accounts Payable Specialist for payment processing. This step is indicated as note "2" in Exhibit 4-2.

Upon receipt of an invoice, the Accounts Payable Specialist makes a copy of the invoice and sends the original to the school or department who initiated the purchase order. The appropriate individual at the school or department then signs the original invoice, attaches the pink paper copy of the purchase order, and sends the invoice back to the Accounts Payable Specialist for payment.

This step is inefficient and can result in the delayed payment of invoices.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

### **Recommendation 4-4:**

#### **Implement an electronic receiving function in DCPS.**

Departments and schools should perform the receiving function online rather than by sending paper receiving reports to the Accounts Payable Specialist, another feature available with most automated purchasing systems.

With an electronic receiving function, after receipt of goods, user departments and schools access the receiving function in the purchasing system, look up the appropriate purchase order, and note whether items were received in proper quantities. This information can then be transmitted electronically to the Accounts Payable Specialist so that invoice payment can be made without having to manually route the invoice to the budget holder.

## **FISCAL IMPACT**

The fiscal impact associated with this recommendation is accounted for in Recommendation 4-2 of this chapter.

### **4.3 Budgeting and Fiscal Operations**

DCPS prepares a budget annually based on a budget calendar that is distributed at the beginning of each budget cycle. A typical budget cycle for the division begins in October with a final budget submitted for the County Board of Supervisors' approval around April each year.

Prior to establishing an annual budget, the division develops goals that are incorporated into the budget process. The division is currently working to develop its 2006-07 budget, with goals as shown in Exhibit 4-3.

**EXHIBIT 4-3  
DINWIDDIE COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS  
SCHOOL BOARD GOALS  
2006-07 SCHOOL YEAR**

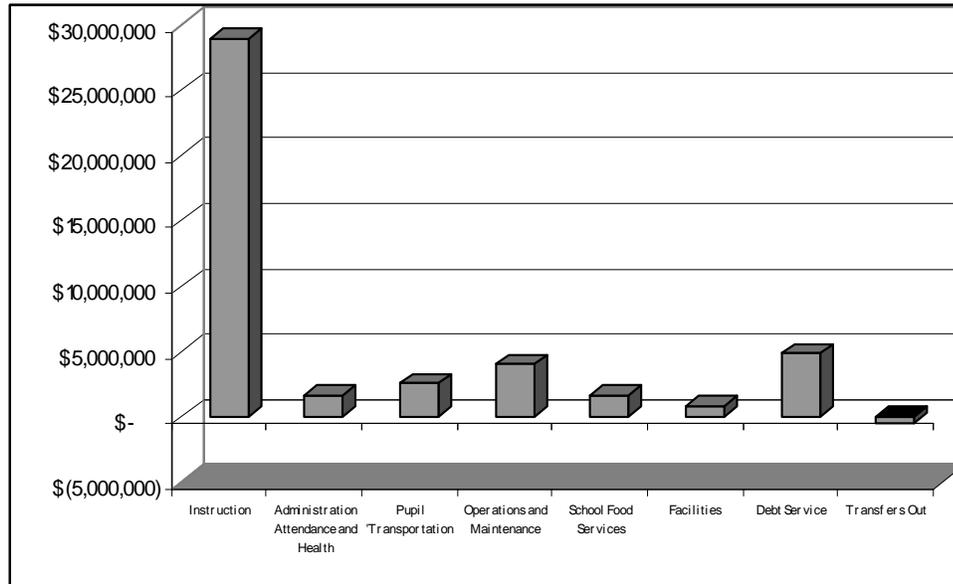
<b>GOALS FOR 2006-07 SCHOOL YEAR</b>
Maintain low pupil-teacher ratios in grades K-5
Lower pupil-teacher ratio in grades 6-12 core subjects
Continue to provide multiple remedial opportunities for students not meeting Annual Yearly Progress or Standards of Learning assessment success
Review and further expand secondary course offerings and electives
Provide sufficient support for consumable materials, textbooks, and library needs
Continue the deployment of instructional technology at all levels and meet all state technology standards
Provide a competitive salary and benefits package to recruit and retain highly qualified teachers, administrators, and support staff
Provide adequate funding to meet the growing demands of the division's Special Education, ESL, and Alternative Education Programs
Request additional funding for Capital Projects to meet the maintenance needs of aging and overcrowded buildings
Provide funding to meet growing demands on the pupil transportation system
Continue to request adequate capital funding to replace ten school buses annually to maintain the integrity of the school bus fleet
Continue to maximize use of No Child Left Behind, Title VIB, and other federal funds to support the division's instructional, staff development, and technology programs
Add additional elementary assistant principals
Add a paraprofessional for instructional support dictated by increased enrollment
Implement the recommendations of the Governor's School Efficiency School Review

Source: DCPS Budget development guidelines, Fiscal Operations Department, November 2005.

The division's categorical expenditure budget for all funds for the school year 2005-06 is \$43.9 million, an increase of \$5.3 million, or almost 14 percent, from the 2004-05 school year budget of \$38.6 million. One of the primary factors contributing to this increase include an increase in debt service of almost 78 percent from 2004-05 due to the division's plans to add school facilities. Total budgeted debt service for 2005-06 amounts to \$4.8 million while 2004-05 debt service was budgeted at \$2.7 million. In addition, the division increased its budgeted spending for instruction from \$27.1 million in 2004-05 to \$28.9 million in 2005-06, an increase of over 6 percent. Other categories of increase between the 2004-05 and 2005-06 school years include capital projects (an increase of over four times the prior year amount), operations and maintenance (nine percent increase), and pupil transportation (eight percent increase).

Exhibit 4-4 shows a breakdown of the 2005-06 school year budget for DCPS that was adopted in April 2005.

**EXHIBIT 4-4  
DINWIDDIE COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS  
BUDGET FOR ALL FUNDS  
2005-06 SCHOOL YEAR**



Source: DCPS Fiscal Operations Department, 2005.

**FINDING**

The division implemented a mandatory direct deposit policy in July 1998. Policy DLB-R – Salary Deductions states that any employees hired after August 1, 1997 will have their paycheck amount deposited directly into a bank account at a bank of the employee’s choice.

Studies have shown that organizations that use direct deposit effect not only cost savings from the elimination of check stock and reduced processing fees, but efficiency savings as well. For instance, the National Automated Clearinghouse Association (NACHA) - The Electronic Payments Association, states the benefits of direct deposit as:

- there are fewer checks to print and store;
- facsimile signature security isn’t necessary with direct deposit since no signatures are required;
- lost and stolen checks are eliminated;
- financial institution service charges are reduced; typically, it costs more to process a paper check through an entity’s bank account than a direct deposit transaction;

- the potential for errors is reduced because direct deposit requires less manual handling than a check;
- account reconciliation is simplified;
- fraud is reduced because there is less potential for counterfeit checks, stolen checks or signature plates, altered amounts, and forged signatures;
- problems with direct deposit are very rare; the chance of having a problem with a check is 20 times greater than with direct deposit;
- administration costs can be lowered due to the elimination of manual check preparation;
- organizations report savings of more than 40 cents in processing costs for each paper check converted to direct deposit;
- direct deposit adds one more incentive to competitively attract employees; and
- productivity can be increased due to employees spending less time away from work to cash or deposit a payroll check.

Using the NACHA benefits assumptions, DCPS has saved over \$3,000 in check processing costs since the implementation of its direct deposit policy. In addition, the division has gained efficiency savings as well, not only for the Payroll Specialist but for all employees.

#### **COMMENDATION**

**DCPS has implemented a mandatory direct deposit policy that has resulted in cost and efficiency savings for the division.**

#### **FINDING**

DCPS' budget document, while providing the basic information required by law, is not a user-friendly document. The 2005-06 school year adopted budget document, for instance, contains several line-item schedules for its budgeted revenue and expenditures, but does not provide the reader with narrative to explain the division's goals and how the budget will ensure the attainment of those goals. In addition, the document contains no graphical or demographic information.

A major challenge for DCPS, for example, is the issue of school facilities. The student population of the county is increasing and maintenance and renovation deferrals on school buildings are placing an ever increasing strain on the division's budget and resources. However, the division's budget does not provide the reader with the sense of urgency of this issue.

With school systems facing ever-increasing demands while often experiencing revenue declines, it becomes imperative that all decision-makers have a full understanding of the budgeting issues presented before they can make informed decisions. Almost equally as important is that stakeholders, including taxpayers, community members, and parents, know and understand a school system's financial needs.

The Government Finance Officers' Association (GFOA) is a professional association of state/provincial and local Finance Officers in the United States and Canada, and has served the public finance profession since 1906. GFOA membership includes individuals whose careers involve government financial management. GFOA has produced a set of best practice guidelines for the budget process. In its online publication, *Improving the Budget Process*, the GFOA states:

Governments allocate scarce resources to programs and services through the budget process. As a result, it is one of the most important activities undertaken by governments.

The National Advisory Council on State and Local Budgeting (NACSLB) is an organization that was created to provide tools for governments to improve their budgeting processes and to promote their use. NACSLB has developed a framework to provide guidance to government officials in the development of their budgets.

NACSLB's framework for budgeting practices includes 12 elements to assist budget managers to achieve improvement in the budgeting practice. Element 10, *Make Choices Necessary to Adopt a Budget*, includes a step for presenting the budget in a clear, easy-to-use format.

Exhibit 4-5 summarizes the items that NCSLB recommends for inclusion in a budget document to make it understandable to decision-makers and stakeholders.

**EXHIBIT 4-5  
NACSLB BUDGET DOCUMENT CONTENTS**

<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ <b>Table of Contents</b></li> <li>■ <b>Introduction</b><ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- superintendent's message</li><li>- statement of school division goals</li><li>- information regarding the Strategic Plan</li><li>- organizational chart</li><li>- overview of the school division and the services provided</li><li>- student population trends</li></ul></li> <li>■ <b>Budgetary Process</b><ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- overview of the budget process</li><li>- calendar for budget development</li><li>- board policies as they relate to the budget process</li><li>- detailed explanation of state funding formulas</li></ul></li></ul>
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Source: *National Advisory Council on State and Local Budgeting Practices*, Copyright 1998.

NACSLB elaborates further by saying that budgets should be presented in a consistent format, with high-level summary information that describes overall funding sources and the organization as a whole. In addition, budgets should contain descriptions of the overall planning and budgeting process and the interrelationships of the various process used in preparing the budget.

Best practices research identified local government budgets that present information in clear and concise way. These best practice examples include El Paso County, Colorado ([http://www.elpasoco.com/pdf/2005\\_budget\\_book.pdf](http://www.elpasoco.com/pdf/2005_budget_book.pdf)) and the City of St. Charles, Illinois (<http://www.ci.st-charles.il.us/departments/cdd/tableofcontents.html>).

**RECOMMENDATION**

**Recommendation 4-5:**

**Develop a comprehensive, user-friendly budget document.**

An entity’s budget document is the document that guides the organization throughout the year. In the case of a public entity such as a school division, it is critically important that stakeholders including taxpayers, citizens, parents, teachers, employees, and other governmental agencies be able to easily read and understand budget information.

DCPS should develop a budget document that includes the elements contained in Exhibit 4-5 above. DCPS should also obtain the GFOA and NACSLB guidelines to assist in the budget preparation process.

**FISCAL IMPACT**

There is no fiscal impact associated with this recommendation.

**4.4 Fixed Asset and Textbook Controls**

Exhibit 4-6 shows the detail of DCPS’s capital assets as of June 30, 2004, the most recently audited information available.

**EXHIBIT 4-6  
DINWIDDIE COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS’  
CAPITAL ASSETS  
AS OF JUNE 30, 2004**

DESCRIPTION	AMOUNT
Land and land improvements	\$211,551
Equipment	3,936,929
Jointly owned assets	5,523,157
Accumulated depreciation	(3,102,218)
<b>Net capital assets</b>	<b>\$6,569,419</b>

Source: County of Dinwiddie, Virginia, *Comprehensive Annual Financial Report*, June 30, 2004.

Fixed assets include equipment and other assets used in the operation of the division. Fixed assets need to be accounted for by keeping detailed inventory records of asset descriptions including make, model and serial numbers, acquisition dates, cost, annual depreciation amounts, and the location of the assets. Safeguarding of assets includes comparing the detailed recorded transactions to the physical assets on a regular basis. Missing or stolen assets should be reported as soon as they are detected as missing so that asset recovery and accountability can be attempted.

In addition to acquiring assets, DCPS also purchases textbooks for use in classrooms. In 2003-04, DCPS expended \$375,612 for the purchase of textbooks; during the 2004-05 school year, textbook expenditures amounted to \$388,295.

## **FINDING**

DCPS does not maintain an asset inventory tracking system for the purpose of tracking its assets, nor does it conduct annual asset counts. DCPS policy DI – Financial Accounting and Reporting requires that the superintendent or his/her designee will be responsible for the inventory of all assets of the school division. Interviews with Fiscal Operations staff; however, revealed that an annual inventory count does not take place.

DCPS updates its fixed asset inventory annually as required by GASB 34; however, this process does not involve physical inspection of assets on a regular basis to ensure asset protection.

School systems that employ sound fixed asset controls are better able to protect their investments in furniture, equipment, and other valuable items and are able to identify missing or stolen assets in a timely manner. Clay County Public Schools (CCPS) in Florida, for instance, uses fixed asset controls that help it to keep fixed asset losses to a minimum.

CCPS requires that all fixed assets be added to the school's asset database upon receipt. Each school principal or department head, or their designees, are responsible for entering the asset data. The accounting department monitors this process to ensure that assets are entered in a timely manner and that asset data is correct.

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

## **RECOMMENDATION**

### **Recommendation 4-6:**

#### **Develop and implement asset tracking procedures.**

As discussed in Recommendation 4-2 above, implementing a financial accounting system that has an asset tracking module will assist with implementing this

recommendation; yet a new accounting system is not at all necessary for the successful implementation of an asset tracking system since asset tracking can be accomplished by readily available spreadsheet software.

Once assets have been recorded and inventoried, the Superintendent should require that all principals and department heads conduct annual inventories. For items found missing or stolen, the responsible principal or department head should either be required to fill out a police report (in the case of stolen items), or report missing items to the school board on a regular basis.

### **FISCAL IMPACT**

There is no fiscal impact associated with this recommendation. Implementation of this recommendation, however, will most likely result in improved accountability for division assets and will eliminate the need to purchase replacement assets.

### **FINDING**

DCPS does not track its textbooks nor require that schools be held accountable for textbook losses. A review of division policies found that schools are not required to track and account for textbooks.

Both the Executive Director for Fiscal Operations and the Assistant Superintendent for Instruction told the review team that funds for textbooks were tight and that textbook expenditures were monitored carefully at the central level. However, without adequate recording, tracking and collection efforts at the school level, the division is at risk of expending more than necessary for textbooks.

Smyth County Schools (SCS) in Virginia tracks and monitors textbooks on a monthly basis. Each teacher is required to perform textbook counts monthly and report lost books to the central office and to parents. Though by law Virginia school divisions cannot withhold grades or transcripts for the purpose of collecting for lost textbooks, school divisions can restrict student participation in things such as extracurricular field trips pending submission of funds for lost books. Because SCS conducts frequent counts of its classroom textbooks, schools are able to collect from parents in a timely fashion. For the fiscal year ending June 30, 2005, for instance, SCS schools were unable to collect for only 13 textbooks amounting to \$684.

### **RECOMMENDATION**

#### **Recommendation 4-7:**

**Develop and implement a policy requiring the tracking and accounting for textbooks.**

Like tracking and accounting for assets, schools that are held accountable for tracking textbooks experience fewer textbook losses. While Virginia schools are not allowed to withhold student records or grades for the purpose of collecting funds for lost or damaged textbooks, schools can deny participation in extracurricular activities and field trips, thus obtaining leverage for collecting for textbooks.

Schools that regularly conduct textbook checks are more successful in collecting for lost books when the loss is discovered in a timely manner.

### **FISCAL IMPACT**

There is no fiscal impact associated with this recommendation; however, implementation of this recommendation will most likely result in fewer textbook replacement expenditures for the division.

### **4.5 Accounting for School Activity Funds**

School Activity Funds include all funds derived from extracurricular activities at the school level. These extracurricular activities include entertainment, athletics, clubs, yearbook sales, band activities, and fund raisers. Funds collected from these activities are held for student use.

Chapter 240, Section 20 of Virginia's Administrative Code states the following in regard to School Activity Funds:

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

### **FINDING**

DCPS does not conduct regular spot audits of School Activity Funds. Though the funds are examined annually by an external auditor, there are no interim checks to ensure that funds are appropriately accounted for and that cash and checks are deposited to bank accounts on a timely basis.

In DCPS, a school bookkeeper or secretary is responsible for collecting funds from teacher or parent activity sponsors, making deposits to the school's bank account, maintaining financial records, disbursing funds, and reconciling monthly bank statements.

Although funds are collected and maintained at the school level and kept in individual school bank accounts, the school board is responsible for providing adequate oversight and accounting for these funds.

All schools send monthly reports of their School Activity Funds to the Finance Officer.

Exhibit 4-7 shows the balances of funds in each school's Activity Fund accounts as of June 30, 2005.

**EXHIBIT 4-7  
DCPS'S SCHOOL ACTIVITY FUND BALANCES  
AS OF JUNE 30, 2005**

SCHOOL	AMOUNT
Dinwiddie Elementary	\$14,192
Dinwiddie County High	251,286
Dinwiddie County Middle	103,740
Midway Elementary	16,157
Rohoic Elementary	25,290
Southside Elementary	13,523
Sunnyside Elementary	7,042
<b>Total All Schools</b>	<b>\$431,230</b>

Source: Financial Audit of DCPS School Activity Funds, June 30, 2005.

As is the case in most schools, activity funds are maintained by a single individual with little or no daily supervision or oversight. As a result, regular interim inspections of activity funds help to ensure that errors and irregularities are prevented or identified timely.

**RECOMMENDATION**

**Recommendation 4-8:**

**Develop and implement audit procedures for School Activity Funds.**

Prior to adding the Executive Director of Fiscal Operations position, the department had little time to afford to auditing School Activity Funds. Now that the department has an added position and job responsibilities have been reassigned, the Finance Officer should now conduct regular audits.

**FISCAL IMPACT**

There is no fiscal impact associated with this recommendation.

**FINDING**

DCPS does not charge the School Activity Funds for the annual audit. Virginia Administrative Code Chapter 240, Section 40 requires that school divisions have their School Activity Fund accounts audited at least annually by an outside audit firm, and that the cost of the audit may be paid for from the school funds.

**RECOMMENDATION**

**Recommendation 4-9:**

**Allocate the cost of the annual audit of School Activity Funds to each school based on the year-end fund balances.**

Allocating the cost of the audit to schools based on the balance of their activity funds would eliminate this charge from the division's local budget.

The cost of auditing the 2004-05 school year activity funds was \$4,700. Based on the 2004-05 school year balances of activity funds, the allocation by school would be as shown in Exhibit 4-8.

**EXHIBIT 4-8  
DINWIDDIE COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS  
ALLOCATION OF AUDIT COSTS**

SCHOOL	ENDING FUND BALANCE	PERCENT OF TOTAL SCHOOL ACTIVITY FUNDS	ALLOCATION OF AUDIT COST
Dinwiddie Elementary	\$14,192	3.2%	\$150
Dinwiddie County High	251,286	58.5%	2,750
Dinwiddie County Middle	103,740	24.0%	1,128
Midway Elementary	16,157	3.7%	174
Rohoic Elementary	25,290	5.9%	277
Southside Elementary	13,523	3.1%	146
Sunnyside Elementary	7,042	1.6%	75
<b>Total All Schools</b>	<b>\$431,230</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>\$4,700</b>

Sources: Financial Audit of DCPS School Activity Funds, June 30, 2005; and interviews with Fiscal Operation staff, November 2005.

**FISCAL IMPACT**

The implementation of this recommendation would result in a savings of \$4,700 annually for DCPS's general fund budget.

Recommendation	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11
Allocate the Cost of the Annual Audit of School Activity Funds	\$4,700	\$4,700	\$4,700	\$4,700	\$4,700

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## **5.0 EDUCATIONAL SERVICE DELIVERY AND MANAGEMENT**

This chapter provides a summary of the delivery and evaluation of services to students in the Dinwiddie County Public Schools (DCPS). The eight major sections of this chapter are:

- 5.1 Organization and Management of Curriculum and Instruction
- 5.2 Curriculum and Instructional Services
- 5.3 Program Evaluation
- 5.4 Instructional Technology
- 5.5 Instructional Staffing
- 5.6 School Improvement
- 5.7 Instructional Staff Development
- 5.8 Alternative/Remedial Education

### **CHAPTER SUMMARY**

The Dinwiddie County Public Schools has a relatively new staff of division-level administrators who are dedicated to the division's students and educators and are learning the breadth of their new responsibilities. The division has created many programs and strategies to meet student needs and build improvement into its services to them. 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 the curricular and instructional functions of the division's operations. Key suggestions that should assist the division in achieving a more seamless service delivery include:

- Institute formal processes that provide for monitoring and accountability into division activities such as curriculum planning and revision across departments, grades, and the division, as a whole;
- Expand the curriculum map that currently exists at the elementary level to make it more comprehensive and create articulation across all grade levels;
- Address the multitude of concerns expressed across the division regarding middle school issues by enhancing the current improvement plan to include a thorough analysis of all factors impinging on students' academic and behavioral success beyond discipline, middle school characteristics, and SOL success;
- Make the analysis and use of data an integral part of all division actions from principals' meetings to classroom instructional decisions;
- Examine effective alternative school and dropout prevention programs and develop a comprehensive plan to aid student success across grades and academic and social needs;

- Examine factors that have led to high turnover rates of middle school and ESL staff and develop strategies to ameliorate them; and
- Require data-driven school improvement plans to be consistent among schools to drive reform initiatives.

**INTRODUCTION**

Central office staff serves 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 communication systems, processes that streamline and reinforce division goals, and monitoring of division priorities are essential responsibilities of the central office.

Prior to the 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 DCPS staff were merged for a comparison of their responses with those of similar groups in other school divisions. One hundred percent of DCPS administrators and principals noted that the emphasis on learning had increased in recent years compared to 83 percent and 89 percent respectively in other divisions. Exhibit 5-1 shows comparisons in ratings of the division on aspects of division/program functions relating to educational service delivery among administrators, principals, and teachers in DCPS and other divisions.

**EXHIBIT 5-1  
COMPARISON SURVEY RESPONSES  
DINWIDDIE COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS STAFF  
AND STAFF IN OTHER SCHOOL DIVISIONS**

	ADMINISTRATORS		PRINCIPALS		TEACHERS	
	DCPS	OTHER DIVISIONS	DCPS	OTHER DIVISIONS	DCPS	OTHER DIVISIONS
	(S+M/A+O)	(S+M/A+O)	(S+M/A+O)	(S+M/A+O)	(S+M/A+O)	(S+M/A+O)
Curriculum Planning	13/76	30/50	50/50	40/59	29/63	52/41
Instructional Coordination/ Supervision	25/63	30/50	25/76	40/58	25/67	38/48
Instructional Support	25/63	32/51	25/76	44/55	29/67	48/45

Source: Created by MGT, October 2005.  
(% Needs Some + Major Improvement/% Adequate+Outstanding)

The exhibit shows that about 1:3, DCPS staff believes that instructional coordination and support in the division is *Adequate + Outstanding*. Principals in other divisions are more evenly split at 40/58 agreeing that Instructional Coordination is *Adequate + Outstanding* and Instructional Support at 44/55.

With respect to Curriculum Planning, however, DCPS principals were evenly divided at 50/50 compared to principals in other divisions rating it *Adequate + Outstanding* at the rate of 40/59. Teachers and administrators were much more favorable rating it *Adequate + Outstanding* at 29/63 and 13/76 respectively. With respect to adequacy of instructional resources, DCPS administrators responded 100/0, principals 88/13, and teachers 79/10. That contrasts with the same groups in other divisions responding 63/17, 75/14, and 53/31 respectively.

### **5.1 Organization and Management of Curriculum and Instruction**

Central office staff serves 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.

#### **FINDING**

The DCPS has recently undergone a re-organization that has put many division-level administrators in positions with responsibilities that are new to them, causing a learning curve that is presently occurring and affecting division operations. Interviewees stated that the recent re-allocation of responsibilities has created a degree of confusion on the part of school staff with respect to whom to call for answers to questions regarding specific aspects of division operations. New instructional administrators have committed themselves to learning their job responsibilities and to working together to raise student achievement and providing support services to schools. Leadership has provided opportunities for them to learn about their new roles. DCPS leadership is in the process of developing communications structures and procedures that, in time, will alleviate this issue. This influx of new leaders provides an opportunity for them to coalesce into a unified corps as they create a cohesive structure for achievement of division goals.

The two Directors of Elementary and Secondary Education have historically conducted curricular development, articulation, and revision independently of each other without bridging the elementary-secondary gap. The Special Education Office has worked together with them on joint projects and to address cross-cutting needs as have the people in charge of assessment. Collaboration, though, has been largely informal with a disconnect in terms of joint planning and creation of curriculum articulation that sequences seamlessly between the elementary and secondary levels. Furthermore, no

longitudinal examination of data from K-12 has taken place thus far to identify trends to address as an entire division and across functional duties. A new Assistant Superintendent for Instruction is working to clarify reporting issues and provide accountability for mutual planning and analysis among otherwise formerly independent units.

The Director of Elementary Education assumed her role five years ago. From previously following the Commonwealth's standards, she pulled teachers together to concurrently develop six weeks pacing guides, support documents, and assessments in math, the division's lowest scoring subject on state tests at the elementary level at that time. Straightforward documents for record-keeping and data analysis are provided for teachers to facilitate their use in instruction. Teachers are reported to have moved from using the textbook as a "Bible" to seeing it as a resource to access when indicated. Third and fifth grade SOL scores over that period of time show an increase in every subject, in some schools and content areas by as much as 20-50 points. Another example of the division's success was the recent recognition of Southside Elementary School as one of 77 out of 765 Title I schools in Virginia as a 2005 Distinguished Title I school.

All elementary schools have reading and math specialists who serve as content liaisons between their sites and the division office. Elementary teachers also participate in cross-grade discussions that promote curricular articulation and consistency among schools. In response to a concern regarding the numbers of kindergarten retainees, kindergarten teachers are developing a rubric report card. Elementary goal-setting took place in August with the entire division including special education examining what worked, identifying needs and related professional development, and planning for after school programs.

The advent of the Assistant Superintendent has heightened the frequency of communications and planning among administrators. Interviewees report that a new K-12 Curriculum and Instruction (C/I) Committee he started has helped to get everyone on the same page and fully informed of activities taking place across the division. However, principals report that they are not a part of the K-12 C/I committee and feel somewhat disenfranchised from instructional and curricular decisions that affect their schools that they were formerly part of. The morning after Board meetings, one level of principals meets with the Assistant Superintendent. That is followed by a joint meeting of all principals. In the afternoon, he meets with the other group of principals. Opinions differ regarding those meetings being substantive discussions of instruction and opportunities for principals to have input into decisions they were once involved in the division used to have two administrative meetings a month, one with all administrators and one with principals and instructional directors. Now the Curriculum/Instruction Committee only contains division level directors and no principals. When division leaders attend conferences, principals expressed a concern about information being systematically disseminated to them at their schools where instructional impact is felt.

Schools and school systems that have effectively reformed have developed widespread, shared commitment to the effort through involvement of critical segments of stakeholders. Both school and division leaders collaborate in determining the direction and specific actions to take to realize mutually developed goals. Communication structures are inclusive, and processes consistently address student learning issues across grades and student groups. Those elements of administrative meshing lead to

the development of strategies that create a seamless system of education for all students and are more likely to build universal commitment to goals.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **Recommendation 5-1:**

**Develop formal processes that provide accountability for curriculum planning and data analysis and usage across grade levels between elementary and secondary levels and include special education and ESL personnel.**

This is the direction in which the division is moving with its reconfiguration of meetings and administrative assignments. Creating a structure of formal procedures and making the need for cross-level articulation, planning, and communications a division priority will heighten the likelihood of consistent, focused, educational decisions that foster continuous improvement in all schools.

### **Recommendation 5-2:**

**Consider changing the composition of the Curriculum/Instruction Committee to include principal representation.**

Setting the meeting during the time between elementary and secondary principals' meetings when they meet jointly anyway would not require attendance at an additional meeting by division administrators but would help keep division level personnel and principals on the same page by all hearing and discussing issues at the same time. It would also contribute to a sense of involvement in instructional decisions that is perceived to be missing and, thus, would engender clearer communications with school level administrators. Possible options to consider are to alter the mid-day joint principals meeting to include the directors currently involved on the Curriculum and Instruction Committee or to include principal representation on that committee.

## **FISCAL IMPACT**

Implementation of these recommendations can be accomplished with existing resources.

## **FINDING**

While the DCPS has a vision related to where it wants to go with regard to curriculum and instruction, it does not uniformly filter down into written goals, objectives, and procedures, timelines, and benchmarks for achievement for individual units. Thus, there is no overarching plan that ties curricular and instructional operations to agreed-upon goals and objectives nor units of the department with related responsibilities together. Administrators in every department described an array of processes that are occurring to better prepare teachers and administrators to improve student achievement, to focus attention on the needs and knowledge of individual students, and to use that information to improve instruction, professional development, and division procedures. In some departments, forms and written procedures detail actions and provide tools to facilitate goals. However, in many cases, no procedures were available that document goals, guide actions, or describe parameters and procedures that could be continued if the

person in charge of the initiative were to leave. Nor do they provide for planning across administrative areas of responsibility or grade levels. This has been a particular challenge with a great number of new division level administrators assuming roles with few documents to guide them. It is critical that, as they learn their new responsibilities, they also document critical components of their duties so their successors are not in the same quandary.

Effective systems have rules, roles, and responsibilities clearly delineated. This clarifies both division of responsibility and areas where collaboration is essential. When personal, departmental and divisional expectations are detailed and reporting relationships clear; and documents describe processes and facilitate achievement of intended outcomes, there is a school system instead of a system of schools.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

### **Recommendation 5-3:**

**Develop procedures that describe program details and expectations and even documents that facilitate completion of those expectations.**

While the current administrative staff is committed to division goals and obviously administrators are trusted by the Superintendent and Board to accomplish their tasks, written structure would both guide them in their individual roles and coalesce their efforts into a uniform division-wide structure to achieve agreed-upon goals. Creating written documents that are unambiguous, provide parameters within which decisions and actions will be taken, and create consistency among schools and departments will enable the division to focus on core activities. Without written clarification, energies will either be expended on non-core activities or critical actions that are neither defined or assigned, will be overlooked.

## **FISCAL IMPACT**

Implementation of this recommendation can be accomplished with existing resources.

## **5.2 Curriculum and Instructional Services**

### **FINDING**

The division provided MGT consultant with a copy of an “integrated curriculum map” for core content areas and Guided Reading in grades K-5 that serves as a strong beginning point for a division-wide map to guide curriculum, instruction, and assessment. The map shows a timeline from September through June for key skills and concepts to be taught. Interviewees stated that they were focusing on instruction reflecting Bloom’s taxonomy and higher order thinking skills and that related assessments have been developed and are used. Those elements have not yet been integrated into the map. The current map could be strengthened by continuing the process of involving teachers to expand it to include additional features such as:

- performance outcomes or indicators (learning targets),
- unit plans with:
  - objectives,
  - motivational strategies, that build on prior learning, actively engage students, and clarify expectations for demonstration of learning,
  - informational strategies that give students information and resources (e.g. lecture, demonstration, visual organizers),
  - assessment strategies, and
  - culminating activities that measure learning holistically through problem-solving or projects; and
- designation of strategies that reflect various levels of Bloom’s taxonomy and require students to use higher order thinking skills.

Where a year-long curriculum map is tied to unit plans and performance indicators are aligned with content and standards, the instructional program is sequential, skills are based on prior student knowledge and skills, and assessments are accurate measures of student knowledge and predictors of future success.

The current map was developed collaboratively by teachers who actually use the resources, standards, and frameworks it is designed to support. That process created both camaraderie among those involved and commitment to use of the product. Interviewees reported that students in the alternative program last year had passed their courses, but failed their SOL tests. This raises the possibility that their failure was the result of a lack of alignment of what was being taught with what is tested on those Virginia assessments and reinforces the division’s initiative in developing a curriculum map at the elementary level. Research shows that people at all levels of a system must be involved so that they are more likely to use the new resource rather than continue with business as usual. In no arena of education is this more essential than curriculum planning.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **Recommendation 5-4:**

**Continue development and augmentation of the curriculum map that is the foundation for instructional and related student performance improvements at the elementary level and expand it through the secondary level.**

This recommendation builds on the strong foundation that DCPS has already begun. This action will move the map incrementally toward development of additional tools that detail specific lessons and assessments for teachers to use in their classrooms. The process should help them identify resources that correlate with learning outcomes and supplement textbooks. As tools become more refined, instruction will continue to

improve with concomitant improvement in student learning. The process will educate those involved about resources and instructional strategies; will merge state objectives across content areas into more challenging assessment outcomes; and, when returned to the DCPS classrooms, will improve instruction across the division. The map, too, must be expanded beyond the elementary level with discussions and ongoing communication channels created not only at the division level, but also among school personnel from elementary through high school regarding the preparation and needs of students.

**Recommendation 5-5:**

**Develop a process by which teachers at each grade are given feedback from teachers in subsequent grades regarding student readiness for that content area.**

The tests that are currently administered at the beginning of the school year could serve dual purposes of informing receiving teachers of their students' abilities and needs and secondly, as a feedback instrument to sending teachers regarding the effectiveness of their instruction in terms of student readiness for subsequent instruction and standards. It could further guide the selection of instructional supplements to reinforce skills and knowledge or bridge gaps. Formalizing the use of such data as a communication tool among teachers will help to further refine curricular articulation and inform instruction at all grades.

When time is provided for teachers to develop and use feedback mechanisms between grades based on student performance data, instructional and programmatic decisions can be continually fine-tuned and teachers can better tailor instruction to individual student needs. Information from those meetings can contribute to revisions to the division's curriculum map for the benefit of all students.

**FISCAL IMPACT**

Implementation of these recommendations can be accomplished with existing resources.

***5.2.1 Middle School***

**FINDING**

Dinwiddie Middle School (DMS) has been accredited with warning by the Commonwealth and did not make AYP with respect to NCLB either this year or last. Many factors exacerbate the academic challenge faced by that staff and the division in supporting them. Many responses relating to middle school concerns reverted to discipline being at the heart. In many respects, too, it was used as a reason for failings in other areas such as student achievement. It is true that students cannot learn in a disruptive environment. However, in many violent schools across the country, adults have developed procedures and a sense of community among students and transformed both climate and learning. Many of the strategies that have been adopted at DMS were facets of those efforts. However, despite upgrading the School Improvement Plan, offering relevant staff development, developing instructional planning processes, and reviewing data from benchmark tests, there has neither been an exhaustive examination of all factors impinging on the current situation nor a comprehensive plan developed that is inclusive in its examination of all possible factors and that ties those disparate pieces

together. Personnel interviewed said they did not know whether some of these possible factors have been examined. Monitoring does not occur on a regular daily basis to ensure that initiatives are being used as a matter of course.

The school has the highest teacher turnover rate in the division, losing an average of 38 percent of its new teaching staff each of the past three years. In response, it has devised and received a hard-to-staff grant targeting retention of new teachers as well as improved student achievement. It also has a mentor program for new teachers. The program has been used in the division for years, though, so is apparently having no impact on retention at DMS. One possible factor for the turnover is the lack of student discipline noted by most interviewees. This element of the school's environment not only has a potential impact on staff turnover, but also student achievement since disruptive students interrupt instruction for all students.

In the 2003-04 school year, 38 students were recommended for expulsion from the middle school and 37 from the high school. In August and September 2005, 15 students have been recommended for expulsion from the middle and 13 from the high school. An additional 17 students were recommended for expulsion from the middle school during those periods, but the expulsions were not completed due either to paperwork not having been completed to afford due process or because they were special education students for whom manifestation hearings had not been held. In the past three years, the number of physical violence fights at the middle school reported on the Virginia Department of Education's Discipline/Crime and Violence Verification Report were 120, 86, and 75 respectively. In 2004-05, those and other behaviors resulted in 277 short-term suspensions. One interviewee, when asked, expressed a belief that behavior was better in career and technical courses where students are engaged in hands-on activities. A comment made at the public forum during the visiting team's site visit was that, "Classroom discipline at the middle school level needs to be reviewed and improved. Students who are causing the disruptions need to be addressed individually. Students who want to learn should not be punished due to the actions of their classmates."

Many interviewees reported that the school is overcrowded. Another possible contributing factor posited is the presence of reading and math specialists for instructional support at the elementary level, but not for students when they reach DMS. The entire administrative staff, too, is relatively new to administration with one assistant principal having a little over one year's experience, the other two being new this year, and the principal in her second year after two years as assistant principal there. This paucity of administrative experience possibly exacerbates the school climate. As administrators are learning the myriad responsibilities of their respective positions, responding to division and parent requirements, and learning broad content-, school reform-, and leadership-related aspects of their positions, they are also faced with the immense challenges of a rambling, disorderly school campus, as noted by many interviewees. Related administrative staffing recommendations are discussed in Chapter 2 of this report. An additional challenge the staff faces is the layout of the school on a large, multi-building, multi-story campus with many areas that make supervision a challenge.

The number of special education students referred for placement from the middle school is high, considering that students have already progressed through at least six grades

prior to attendance in middle grades. In the 2003-04 and 2004-05 school years, a total of 220 DMS students were referred for consideration of placement in Special Education programs. Those numbers are far higher than other division schools. The questions need to be answered regarding whether this is resulting from either:

- the division receiving high numbers of new students;
- students not being identified earlier in division elementary schools;
- middle school teachers needing additional skills to provide interventions at the school; or
- that special education, at the middle school is being considered a place to send students who do not fit teachers' expectations.

In October 2004, the Virginia Association of School Superintendents conducted an administrative organization study, noting concerns at the middle school in terms of accreditation, SOL scores, instructional practices, and overcrowding "that is perceived to cause discipline issues." They recommended that the school re-organize into a true middle school with strong instructional teams, use instructional methods geared for 6-8<sup>th</sup> graders and increase professional development in differentiated instruction and other strategies. Four months later, as a consequence of the school's accreditation status, an Academic Review Technical Assistance visit resulted in similar findings and recommendations.

In response, the middle school implemented a team approach at the beginning of this school year with teams assigned in close proximity to minimize student travel time between classes. Bells were also eliminated and class change times staggered with teachers expected to walk with students between classes. Compliance with those expectations is reported to be inconsistent. They added a Gear Up Program to provide an alternative learning setting for students needing small group instruction and less movement within the building. Considerations in placement are: age, number of retentions, and discipline history. Two teachers teach 30 students in the four core areas and students also receive instruction in Related Arts.

Instructionally, the school has formulated processes to ensure that the instructional elements necessary for an effective lesson plan are in place to guide teaching. The goal is to develop lesson plans that focus on research-based strategies, infusion of technology into instruction, and the use of various instructional methods that address different learning modalities. Each administrator is responsible for one core content area and meets on Mondays to plan with teachers in that subject. Wednesdays, plans are turned in to department chairs for review for pacing, inclusion of research-based strategies, and interventions. The plans then go to administration for review and classroom observation purposes. However, when asked if administrators were assigned classes to visit on a schedule, several interviewees stated that, although the intention existed, reality dictated that regular classroom visits do not occur because of time spent on discipline issues.

The Middle School Improvement Plan that resulted from the accreditation warning includes three strategies directly related to student achievement:

- implementation of research-based instructional strategies daily;
- perform ongoing classroom assessments and modify instruction according to data; and
- implement focused, applicable professional development.

The school has moved toward the use of data, using Edu-test and Plato last year and Pearson Benchmark software this year to disaggregate performance by subgroup and strand. The Instructional Technology teacher at the middle school developed a guideline exercise to help teachers know how to use the data. Many interviewees testified that the Director of Secondary Instruction spends extensive time at the middle school to support their efforts and provide needed resources.

Two of the three include as Action Steps monitoring the strategies. Professional development on research-based instructional strategies has been offered teachers. This has given department chairs knowledge regarding lesson plan content for their reviews of lesson plans. The central office has provided administrators “Walkabout” forms to target classroom observations and give teachers feedback. They are accumulated in notebooks for personnel evaluations. However, interviewees at the school and elsewhere report that no schedule of regular monitoring is taking place. Best practices in changing teaching practices occur when classroom evaluation and feedback systems are strong and student performance data is regularly used to measure and improve teaching performance. Both of those take place when effective, regular monitoring systems are in place and active. Then the key elements identified in the improvement plan will become embedded in practice.

Many responses relating to middle school concerns reverted to discipline being at the heart. In many respects, too, it was used as a reason for failings in other areas such as student achievement. It is true that students cannot learn in a disruptive environment. However, in many violent schools across the country, adults have developed procedures and a sense of community among students and transformed both climate and learning. Many of the strategies that have been adopted at DMS were facets of those efforts. However, despite upgrading the School Improvement Plan, offering relevant staff development, developing instructional planning processes, and reviewing data from benchmark tests, there has neither been an exhaustive examination of all factors impinging on the current situation nor a comprehensive plan developed that is inclusive in its examination of all possible factors and ties those disparate pieces together. Personnel interviewed said they did not know whether some of these possible factors have been examined. Monitoring does not occur on a regular daily basis to ensure that initiatives are being used as a matter of course.

Examinations should include at a minimum:

- exit interviews of teachers leaving DMS to identify root causes for the high turnover rate;
- special education intervention and referral procedures that might be improved to keep students behaving and in school;

- the history of Special Education middle school referrals in terms of whether they are transfers, unidentified DCPS elementary students, or students that teachers do not want in their classrooms or know how to intervene with, thus refer them;
- locations and times in the school where the majority of disciplinary actions take place;
- discipline data relative to the kinds of referrals individual teachers or teams are making—whether they are taking care of minor offenses across the board in their classes or there are some teachers who either need counseling, additional classroom management training, or visitations to effective teachers' classes;
- comparison of discipline data between regular and career and technical classes;
- the perceptions of the teachers on underlying causes of the problems. Knowing this could lead to agreement on a uniform approach to student expectations and behavior using a program such as Terry Alderman's or Randy Sprick's research-based proactive approaches to student behavior;
- actions that teachers themselves could take to create uniformity of supervision in all areas of the campus;
- analyze student performance by question, benchmark, teacher, etc. to correlate it to staff development needs or requirements; and
- identify each teacher's strengths and needs so they can be paired for coaching and mutual observations.

When the underlying issues are well understood by all stakeholders, then some of the following steps that have been effective in other disruptive schools in which students are not succeeding academically but are not in regular use at DMS might be included as part of a comprehensive approach to improving student behavior and achievement:

- get teacher agreement on the need for everyone uniformly holding themselves and students to the same set of rules and consequences;
- explore pro-active approaches to clearly setting expectations for student behavior, procure training, and monitor results in terms of application of program components;
- make professional development an integral part of the school's culture by setting aside time in every meeting for growth experiences; learning new skills, then practicing them and coming back together to discuss what worked and challenges teachers encountered so that they are learning together and from each other as they try new skills;

- use professional time together to examine student work and agree on what good work looks like so they can diagnose stumbling blocks. This time should also be used to discuss instructional strategies and individual student needs;
- all teachers stand at their doors during class change so they can monitor the halls and their classes;
- give students a script they use to call their parents when they misbehave, so that they are held accountable to adults for their actions;
- daily administrative examination of discipline data, and immediately consulting with teachers not complying before the day is over;
- set a few school-wide non-negotiable rules that all agree on so that students know expectations are the same in all classes and areas of the campus; post them; and agree on behaviors teachers will handle in their classes;
- examine the layout of the school and identify the areas that are most prone to disruptive behavior and have the most traffic as well as the number of teachers it will take each period to cover them. Assign teachers on a rotating schedule during all or half of their planning time to monitor those areas. Provide them desks so that they can still do their work when not dealing with students in the area;
- require and hold teachers to using passes that state the destination as well as the sending teacher so that monitors can tell if students are on a direct route or straying;
- teach teachers how to write uniform, accountable referrals and what an appropriate referral process is;
- create discipline committees where all of a student's teachers meet with the student and parent to discuss the exhibited behavior and agree on steps each will take to change it, engendering a sense of partnership between the school and home;
- leadership make a practice of being visible instructional leaders for teachers, parents, and students to create a stronger sense of community and possibly defuse disciplinary situations before they escalate;
- division and school administrators examine baseline student achievement data and place all teachers whose students have a history of low performance on improvement plans to ensure they receive sufficient levels of targeted assistance and to provide administrative accountability at both levels for their development;

- all DMS administrators every day should have a schedule of “5x5s” in which they go into five classrooms for five minutes to monitor instructional methods, grouping, re-teaching, enrichment, student engagement, use of research-based strategies, and instructional technology;
- inform teachers of instructional practices they will be looking for in observations and, if they are not occurring, re-schedule a time to observe the skill;
- hold ongoing discussions between administrators, individual teachers and teams based on data regarding strengths and needs;
- at the division level, only grant requests for resources, new programs, or staff development when they are directly related to school needs;
- develop accountability documents that tie such requests to quantified school needs;
- examine longitudinal student achievement data for trends that might stimulate other strategies; and
- examine long-term, research-based reform approaches such as Effective Schools or Teacher Expectation Student Performance for their possible integration into the school’s reform process.

Studies show that schools in which students feel as though they belong and that people in the school care about them experience less disorder and student misbehavior. Students who bond with positive people and institutions are less likely to become involved in violence and other behavior. Schools that actively respond to problem behaviors and cultivate a positive, healthy environment have lasting effects on students’ long-term behaviors in adolescence and beyond.

Best practices find that, when teachers receive training in their content areas and learn to deploy delivery strategies appropriate to the learners’ developmental needs, they fulfill the research conclusion that the single largest factor affecting the academic growth of student populations is the effectiveness of the individual teacher. Michael Fullan notes that principals should try not to do anything that someone else in the building can do because they need to spend their time on what others are not in a position to do—that is to monitor the high priority needs of the school and to support other administrators in doing the same.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

### **Recommendation 5-6:**

**Assign responsibility to appropriate administrators in the division to fully examine factors relative to their roles that may be contributing to DMS’s challenges.**

Subsequent to those determinations, convene them, with middle school personnel, to analyze all aspects of the middle school's operations, research successful schools and programs, and expand the existing plan to reverse current negative trends that affect the students and the community.

A thorough analysis of all major issues in the school (e.g. teacher turnover, discipline, achievement, suspensions and expulsions of students including a high number of special education students) is essential to build a structure that ties the pieces of the school's current efforts together into a cohesive, systematic process. A process for ongoing monitoring of elements that are deemed critical must be a key component of the plan. Without investigating the source of all possible factors impacting the school, strategies are likely only addressing symptoms instead of the underlying root causes that, when addressed, will lead to comprehensive solutions. When the multiple strategies that are being utilized are coordinated, targeted and monitored, the resources that are being expended will be maximized rather than fragmented.

Procedures should be developed to create a focused approach to prioritized goals, establish monitoring processes that will be applied, and include accountability for compliance. Once leaders within the division examine factors contributing to the myriad concerns expressed by interviewees across the DCPS and develop a plan, a structure must be set in place to ensure that the most critical issues affecting student behavior and performance are the center of attention and resources. Time needs then to be set aside daily by administrators to see that those are the majority of the issues in the school that are attended to. In schools where priorities are clear, before any action is taken, it is weighed in terms of its contribution to achievement of the school staff's agreed upon foci. If it does not, then no resources are expended on it, thus, all time, energy, attention, and resources are channeled into achievement of the most important goals identified by the school staff.

## **FISCAL IMPACT**

Implementation of this recommendation can be accomplished with existing resources.

### **5.2.2 Data Analysis, Testing, Student Achievement**

Strategies to analyze and use data differ between the elementary and secondary level with little cross-level analysis, planning, or articulation regarding identified patterns from PreK-12. Both levels use the Commonwealth's data disaggregator to break down student performance by grade, subject, strand, and teacher for further analysis at the school level. At the elementary level, using SOL and benchmark data as they are available, teachers identify subgroups who are not performing. Elementary teachers administer benchmark tests every six weeks that are scored at the central office, conduct item correlations based on pacing guides, then, at their grade level, look at their data with their principal. All teachers, including special education and LEP are involved in the process. Their analysis is then sent to the central office. Data include students in inclusion classes, but that from self-contained classes may or may not be included although it is reported to be tracked. In the fall, the division takes state data regarding individual items by school and compares it to division performance. The Elementary secretary then develops a local report that mirrors the Commonwealth's and is then sent to schools. Based on that, grade level teachers develop follow-up and strategies to

address weaknesses in student performance using forms provided to guide their discussions. The data is also used to design after school programs at each school. Having examined student performance data, the Director creates a list of teachers who may need additional assistance and consults with principals regarding strategies and professional development to help them grow. Schools receive performance data by teacher by grade and by SOL items and strands. They also receive reports detailing the success of student subgroups tested. Teachers receive similar reports on individual students.

## **FINDING**

Elementary benchmark tests are professionally printed to emulate SOL tests. The tests include stories in textbook adoptions with questions that may also include either released items or items from the Flanagan Test of Higher Standards. At the fourth grade, writing is included although it is not tested by the state until fifth grade. Each teacher has an Excel spreadsheet that even computes calculations and includes student names and subgroup information so that they can examine student data. They are submitted to the county office where they are examined for patterns and needs. Reports then go to schools without teacher names and either the Director or lead reading teacher follows up where student scores differ widely from the norm. The Director keeps all data in a notebook for ready access for parent consultations. The division has used this process on math since 2000 and reading since last year. Although no evaluation has been conducted to validate the process, student performance is documented to have been increasing. The Director dedicates the first two weeks after assessments to examine and consult on benchmark results.

At the secondary level, data are used to redirect instruction, determine course offerings, revise curriculum and for guidance purposes. They are also used by the remediation coordinator and teachers, the Director of Secondary Education, principals, and the Director of Assessment. Those uses form a solid foundation for extension of elementary practices and forms to further embed data as a foundation for curricular and instructional decisions at the middle and high school levels.

At the middle school, one outcome of the school's not meeting accreditation and AYP was a Technical Assistance (TA) visit and recommendations made by a state team. School and division staffs are developing specific strategies to address some of the findings. The new Director of Assessment and Student Services and the Director of Secondary Education met with the staff regarding the recommendations and specific performance data. Teachers and administrators are beginning to write content tests using released items and Flanagan Tests for Higher Standards items for administration of six weeks tests for analysis of student and teacher needs. Teachers are then to use that data for re-teaching, remediation, working with subgroups, and reinforcement of SOL expectations.

Interviewees in key positions acknowledge that there has been little longitudinal data or its analysis and that this is a need within the division. Staff has examined science items in which less than 70 percent of students and item construction, across the division, but found no pattern. Such an analysis still needs to be conducted in other content areas.

In response to the ongoing need to enhance student success, the division has purchased Coach books, SOL support books, and encouraged teachers to mirror SOL

question formats on their own constructed tests. Other strategies include a focus on Bloom's taxonomy and higher order thinking skills. Interviewees, though, also noted a need for more hands-on learning experiences for students and a relationship of learning to life. Additionally, the division has recognized the importance of the use of data by including as one of its measurable objectives for its consolidated federal application that each administrator will participate in staff development activities related to data analysis, improving students achievement, technology integration, and/or inclusion of special education students.

Student performance on SOL tests in all schools with the exception of science in one elementary school and the middle school are between 80-100 percent, so it is clear that the division is using effective practices that need to be either refined or targeted in specific content areas or grades and for subgroups of students. Documents provided MGT demonstrate that the division's approach is focused on specific analysis of items on which students did not perform well at each school. Specific subgroups, however, need also to be targeted with strategies likely to assist them in raising achievement.

Data collected by division level personnel from schools regarding student enrollment in advanced courses shown in Exhibit 5-2 shows that a far higher percent of Black students receive standards and special diplomas than any other ethnic group, although White students receive more modified standard diplomas.

**EXHIBIT 5-2  
DINWIDDIE COUNTY DIPLOMA TYPES AND ENROLLMENT IN ADVANCED  
PLACEMENT COURSES BY STUDENT ETHNICITIES  
2004-05 SCHOOL YEAR**

	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>ALASKAN/ AMERICAN INDIAN</b>	<b>ASIAN</b>	<b>BLACK</b>	<b>HISPANIC</b>	<b>WHITE</b>
High School Enrollment	1456	4	8	643	17	784
<b>Diploma Types</b>						
Standard	150	1	2	60	0	37
Advanced	71	0	2	22	0	47
Special	30	0	0	20	0	10
Modified Standard	4	0	0	1	0	3
Certificate of Completion	5	0	0	5	0	0
GED	37	0	1	7	1	23
<b>Advanced Placement Courses</b>						
English 12	13	0	0	7	0	6
Calculus	17	0	1	2	0	14
US History	30	0	0	10	0	20
Government RBC	25	0	1	4	0	20
Total Students Enrolled in AP	85	0	2	23	0	60
<b>Percent of AP Students</b>		<b>0%</b>	<b>2.3%</b>	<b>27%</b>	<b>0%</b>	<b>70.5%</b>

Source: Dinwiddie County Public Schools Office of Secondary Education, November 2005.

**COMMENDATION**

**The DCPS has instituted processes at the elementary level that have moved data analysis to the school and classroom level and provided teacher support and a level of monitoring to ensure follow-through.**

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **Recommendation 5-7:**

**Schedule the analysis and discussion of student performance trends across elementary and secondary grades as a topic at principals' meetings at least quarterly.**

Adopting a regular schedule for collaborative examination of division-wide data will create an insight among all division administrators into strengths available to build on, areas of need, resources available in other division schools, and help to create a cohesive approach to identification and delivery of professional development. It will also identify individual and groups of teachers and students needing additional support and strategies so that students with similar needs for remediation or enrichment can be grouped across grade level and teachers with strengths can be used as resources for those needing additional assistance.

### **Recommendation 5-8:**

**Systematically extend the data analysis and benchmark testing replication processes from the elementary level through the middle and high school levels.**

Using procedures and forms that have been developed and proven useful for instructional and curricular purposes at the elementary level through the rest of the school division will systematize and make the use of data to drive decisions uniform throughout students' PreK-12 experiences in DCPS. It is likely that excellent processes have also been developed at the secondary level, as well. Purposefully merging practices that use data to inform instruction at all grade levels will ensure that both individual and group performance are constantly monitored and will lead to concomitant changes in instructional practices, professional development planning, curricular design, and the purchase of resources.

### **Recommendation 5-9:**

**Expand the systematic collection and analysis of data on student enrollment in programs and courses at the division level.**

The division conducts regular, systematic analyses of student performance data. Ensuring that the analysis also includes an examination of student subgroups such as those referred to special programs or participating in advanced level programs, will assist it in identifying longitudinal patterns. Analyzing such trends will enable leaders at the division level to identify the need for additional recruitment strategies into advanced courses to ensure equitable representation of the entire student body. It will also provide valuable information that can be used to raise awareness of anomalies and develop procedures that will create consistency in referrals to programs for students with special needs.

## **FISCAL IMPACT**

Implementation of these recommendations can be accomplished with existing resources.

### **5.2.3 Collaborative Instructional Practices**

Collaborative instructional methodologies used in some division programs are not universal throughout all programs but hold promise for extending into other areas of instruction. Several documents provided MGT detail Dinwiddie's approach to services for Gifted and Talented students and demonstrate a commitment to differentiate instruction for them while, at the same time, allowing other students to benefit from their instructional experiences. The delivery model is inclusive with cluster grouping, individual goal setting and center-based pull-out programs. Two gifted specialists, one serving K-5<sup>th</sup> graders and one serving grades 6-12 provide those services. At the high school, students are largely served in Advanced Placement (AP) classes and independent studies. Students in the 8<sup>th</sup> grade can also apply for admission to the Appomattox Regional Governor's School for Music and Technology. Twenty Dinwiddie students currently attend.

Since gifted teachers are itinerant, Dinwiddie County Public Schools have developed an approach to enriching the education of high achieving students with documents that facilitate collaborative planning between regular and gifted teachers. A sample elementary schedule shows that the week is divided approximately 50:50 between inclusion and small group instruction with some time being dedicated to preparation, resource gathering, research and testing and groups meeting for special topics. Interviews confirm that delivery approach. The secondary schedule also shows a day dedicated to collaboration with middle school teams. An additional document entitled "Gifted Integration Pre-Planning Guide" has been developed to solicit information from regular education classroom teachers so that the Gifted Teacher can use it to plan lessons that support and supplement classroom instruction for the next grading period. It asks for:

- the area of focus/topic for each week, including the SOL,
- a brief description of what the teacher is doing with that topic;
- resources that will be used, including whether the teacher would like technology integration during each week; and
- the kind of collaboration/inclusion that the teacher deems would be appropriate for each lesson.

Another document, a Collaborative Teaching Plan, provides a smorgasbord of practices for content specific information regarding content, process, product, and evaluation. However, interviewees report that common planning between gifted and regular teachers is difficult to schedule and even more difficult to achieve on a regular basis.

In effective schools, administration ensures that school time is used for focused instruction. Student needs and school instructional goals serve as the foundation for instructional planning. Teachers are provided time for collaboration and planning in teams both within and across grade levels.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

### **Recommendation 5-10:**

**Examine alternate schedules for teachers of gifted students to create joint planning time that is protected for consultation with the regular education teachers of their children.**

The documents that have been developed to solicit instructional information from regular education teachers are a useful tool in planning enrichment lessons for gifted students. However, far richer integration of learning experiences that will benefit both regular and gifted students will take place when teachers have time set aside to share their knowledge of students and instructional strategies in jointly planning lessons. With the small numbers of students in the DCPS that necessitate itinerant service to schools, daily planning with teachers at every school is not reasonable to expect. However, by developing a rotating schedule or protecting a day each week, bi-weekly or even monthly for planning with teachers at each school, lessons for academically advanced students will be more targeted to their individual and/or small group needs.

## **FISCAL IMPACT**

Implementation of this recommendation can be accomplished with existing resources.

## **FINDING**

The division espouses a desire to encourage collaborative practices for students and has developed a solid foundation within its program for gifted students that could be utilized in other areas to further assimilate all students into instructional delivery models that benefit all students. ESL students are fully immersed in regular classrooms with pull-out intensive instruction in language as deemed appropriate for the individual student. Some Virginia school divisions also provide for co-teaching between Title I and regular education teachers. In DCPS, an estimated 90 percent of Title I students are served by their Title I teacher working with small groups of Title I students in their regular classes. The other 10 percent are served in a pull-out program on an as needed basis and are largely transfer students, those who are behind others, or sometimes ESL students. Instruction and instructional groups change regularly depending on student needs and data from six weeks tests.

The division uses the Targeted Assistance Title I model in four of the division's five elementary schools. DCPS employs 13 Reading Resource Teachers, 11 of whom are Title I so can only work with Title I identified students. As a consequence, the two reading resource teachers who work in Midway Elementary School can serve all of the students in that school while, in the other four elementary schools, Lead Reading Teachers can only be used to the benefit of identified Title I students. Resources purchased with Title I funds, however, are used by all teachers. Since 2001, the division has been realizing a decrease in Title I funding, forcing the division to tighten its belt with respect to services offered students with available funds.

Title I, Part A of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (ESEA) provides local education agencies (LEAs or school divisions) with extra resources to help improve

instruction in high-poverty schools and ensure that poor and minority children have the same opportunity as other children to meet challenging state academic standards. NCLB also holds schools accountable for academic achievement.

The federal government decided that schoolwide delivery of Title I services was a means of supporting reform by eliminating the need for Title I students to be specifically identified and funds to be targeted solely for their benefit. The stated intent of allowing schoolwide programs is to “provide comprehensive instructional reform that will enable all students to meet challenging state standards.” That one change in federal regulations has, according to the Title I handbook significant consequences in program delivery and administration, allowing, “educators to provide extra help to students when and where they need it without waiting for them to test into the program.” DCPS leaders express the same commitment to service to all students and may, at this time, want to re-examine their Title I delivery system to extend its reach to all elementary students in the division.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

### **Recommendation 5-11:**

**Examine the flexibility offered for using Title I and other federal funds to support increased proficiency among all students through provision of schoolwide Title I programs.**

When students are served in targeted assistance schools, extensive record-keeping reflecting care to serve only Title I students and families with Title I funds is required. Benefits of moving to a schoolwide delivery model are the use of funds for raising the proficiency level of all students in eligible schools as noted in the Title I handbook, a reduction in record-keeping focused on only Title I identified students, and a move toward heightened levels of inclusion of all students.

## **FISCAL IMPACT**

Implementation of this recommendation can be accomplished with existing resources.

### **5.3 Program Evaluation**

Requested documents that provide evidence of program evaluations reveal that two departments in the division, the Departments of Elementary Education and Human Resources, have developed documents that routinely solicit evaluative information relative to programs and initiatives to be used, potentially, for program improvement. Multiple survey forms and compilations of responses demonstrate that evaluation is an integral part of the Elementary Education Department’s operations. The results from Title I parent and teacher surveys, for example, were provided. Following survey administration, response documents are then returned to individual elementary schools for use in program revision. A notebook of evaluations of staff development, too, was provided. What is done with those evaluations is not clear. Beyond those papers, the only external evaluation that was provided was on the Lifeskills drug prevention program conducted by the company. Interviewees substantiated the paucity of evaluative processes used systematically in the division. One noted that the talent was present in

the division to conduct program evaluations, but that they have not yet been scheduled. Without a regular examination of the results of practices and programs throughout the school year or program period, ineffective strategies can be continued without accruing the benefits for which they were initiated and resources were expended. In contrast, when interim, systematic scrutiny occurs, adjustments can be made throughout implementation so that the program is implemented with fidelity and, therefore, the desired results for students are likely to occur.

In school systems that are committed to continuous improvement, programs are identified for systematic examination, and provide for formative and summative evaluations to be performed on a rotating schedule. Those processes ensure that programs are meeting actual current educational needs and purposes for which the initiatives were undertaken and that interim and end-of-year examinations give feedback on the effectiveness of processes and program impact. With that data, adjustments can be made throughout implementation to continually focus resources on intended outcomes. Furthermore, evaluations provide information that is useful in making determinations regarding continuation, expansion, or termination of ineffective programs and practices. Upon adoption and implementation of new programs, effective organizations also include as a fundamental part of program planning, evaluative processes that cycle information to administration regarding ongoing effectiveness.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

### **Recommendation 5-12:**

**Identify programs to be evaluated for effectiveness and establish a schedule for examination of a set number each school year.**

Once a cycle of program evaluation is undertaken, the division will have a means by which to be sure that its resources, both fiscal and human, are being expended to garner the results for which they were initiated. It can then be certain that it is targeting efforts into actions that are meeting the division's prioritized goals. Procedures that track the success of students in programs such as Preschool over time should also be included to determine program effectiveness and furnish data that can be used for program revision. Data is becoming an underpinning of division, school and classroom instructional decision making in DCPS. Similarly, it can inform decisions about the programs that support classroom instruction and assist division leadership in budgeting, staffing, programmatic, and even policy decisions. Reporting program evaluations to the board would provide an additional level of accountability. When evaluation becomes an integral part of program adoption, the division can be certain that its resources are channeled toward its intended impact on student performance and teacher efficacy.

## **FISCAL IMPACT**

Implementation of this recommendation can be accomplished with existing resources.

### ***5.4 Instructional Technology***

In 2004, the Virginia General Assembly expanded Standards of Quality to include a provision for staffing standards related to technology. They became effective on July 1,

2005, requiring two positions per 1,000 students in grades K-12; one is to provide technology support and one as an instructional resource for classroom teachers. The intent of the resource position is to train teachers to effectively integrate technology into their instruction and further integrate technology into curriculum. They are not intended to serve as technology classroom teachers.

## **FINDING**

Technology within DCPS, including instructional technology, is primarily discussed in Chapter 10 of this report. Implications for teaching and learning are discussed in this section. The division has committed resources to increasing availability of technology to teachers and students including professional development in order to infuse technology into instruction and assessment. However, little data exist to provide evidence regarding the extent and effectiveness of its use. Nor are expectations other than job descriptions explicit to guide Instructional Technology Teachers (ITTs) and their principals as they plan for instructional technology in their schools. Needs assessments of staff development are conducted. The question is what is done then with those results to refine and target additional staff development to infuse technology transparently into instruction.

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

- good tech program but not enough push from faculty;
- working on possibly adding component to teacher observations to ensure technology training is being used in delivery; and
- require all staff to take training for certification in technology.

Subsequent to the site visit, the division reported that it is pursuing the possibility of adding a component to teacher observations to ensure that technology training is used in delivery of instruction. A representative also clarified that, despite the observation that teachers needed to be required to be trained for technology certification, the Human Resources department works with those who have not yet met Virginia standards.

The division has gone above and beyond Virginia Standards of Quality (SOQ) in assigning one ITT to each school regardless of student enrollment. They have, in the past, worked with classroom teachers upon request to provide instruction using portable carts taken into classes and developed modules to begin instructional differentiation. They have also included lessons correlated to SOLs and DCPS's pacing guide that are available on its Web site. The Coordinator of Instructional Technology is a former elementary principal and reports to the Assistant Superintendent for Instruction so understands its importance in education and is located where technology can be easily integrated into division instructional decisions. Division leadership has also thematically applied technology needs to various funding sources to procure extensive amounts of technology for instruction. Programs such as a grading program to make teachers more effective and a parent-teacher communications system have been added to the division's instructional toolbox.

Probably the most frequently used technology tool currently in the division is Pearson's Benchmark for testing every six weeks and disaggregation of the results for re-teaching and grouping purposes for classroom teachers and instructional leaders. Although one principal reported that the addition of this program has diverted much of their technology teacher's time toward testing rather than instruction and staff development, others were enthusiastic about the job done by their ITTs and its instruction in their building. Quizdom, too, was cited by several interviewees as a means frequently used by teachers and students to make presentations and pique higher order thinking skills.

Interviewees report that they have developed curriculum materials that integrate technology into classroom instruction and that expertise and level of use are increasing. No systematic evaluation, again, is conducted to affirm this perception. Additionally, subsequent to examination of student performance data, they identified an anomaly in US History results at the division level. Instructional Technology personnel assisted in developing strategies aligned with the pacing guide to develop curriculum resources and lessons. It is apparent that the instructional technology teachers in DCPS make contributions to an improved, more focused approach to student instruction.

Students avail themselves of distance learning to a limited extent through on-line courses. Documents provided MGT show that seven students are participating in seven courses offered by either Brigham Young University or the Chesterfield Public Schools in subjects ranging from Algebra I to Economics and US History. Considering the high school's projected enrollment of 1,901 for the 2006-07 school year, this number of students taking advantage of distance learning courses represents .004 percent of the student body. Personnel interviewed stated that students had been encouraged to take more courses via distance learning, but have not, to date, been interested.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

### **Recommendation 5-13:**

**Develop an evaluation instrument that provides the division feedback regarding instructional technology's use, impact, and integration into classroom practice.**

Systematically gathering data will guide professional development decisions and fine-tune instructional technology for equity of educational opportunity for students in all schools. Implementing this recommendation will provide a solid foundation for students in all elementary schools as they proceed to middle and high school. It will also give all teachers facility with all forms of technology in the division to enrich their instruction and target their professional development as technology resources in the division increase.

## **FISCAL IMPACT**

Implementation of this recommendation can be accomplished with existing resources.

## ***5.5 Instructional Staffing***

### **FINDING**

In order to maintain equity across the division in its elementary schools, DCPS has already before the midpoint of the school year, examined current pupil: teacher ratios

and projected additional staffing needs for the 2006-07 school year. Projected elementary class sizes for that year range between 15 and 22.75. All elementary class sizes are within Virginia Standards of Quality (SOQ) class size requirements. The division is also examining middle and high school class sizes and making plans for the 2006-07 school year to reduce them to no more than 25. Exhibit 5-3 shows a comparison of teachers per 1,000 students in DCPS with divisions selected for their similarity with the division. It shows that Dinwiddie currently has fewer teachers per 1,000 students than the average of comparable divisions and the state average.

**EXHIBIT 5-3  
TEACHER STAFFING LEVELS  
PEER SCHOOL DIVISIONS  
2003-04 SCHOOL YEAR**

<b>SCHOOL DIVISION</b>	<b>TOTAL TEACHERS PER 1,000 STUDENTS</b>
<b>Dinwiddie County</b>	<i>77.7</i>
Caroline County	77.0
Pulaski County	88.7
Mecklenburg County	86.8
Isle of Wight County	75.7
Lee County	97.0
<b>PEER SCHOOL DIVISION AVERAGE</b>	<b>83.8</b>
<b>STATE AVERAGE</b>	<b>81.45</b>

Source: 2003 Superintendent's *Annual Report for Virginia*,  
Virginia Department of Education, Web site, 2005

Best practices reflect that combining a reduction in class size with changes in teaching methods promises to result in improved student achievement. Dinwiddie is making strides to address both of those factors in its intent to raise student achievement.

**COMMENDATION**

**Dinwiddie is cognizant of the need to maintain low pupil: teacher ratios at the same time teachers learn and apply new skills and knowledge and taking a long-range approach to meeting those needs.**

**FINDING**

Documents provided MGT reflect that the turnover rate at the middle school of an average of 38 percent over the past three years and the hiring of a new ESL teacher each of the past three years are far larger than those of other division positions and schools. The mentor program at the middle school has been in place for many years, so is not meeting desired retention goals. When over one-third of the teachers at a school change from year to year, there is little opportunity to build a sense of community and shared values among staff, new personnel are constantly having to be trained with respect to school processes and procedures, and consistency of programs is continually interrupted as new teachers arrive with various experiences and needing program-specific training. Furthermore, if a school staff has reached agreement on things such as uniform disciplinary procedures and infractions that will be handled by teachers in their own classes, changes in staffing interrupt that uniformity and leave students with inconsistent expectations and consequences for the same actions in different

classrooms. This, consequently, contributes to increased disciplinary referrals through inconsistent application of rules from teacher to teacher. Additionally, when there is almost annual turnover of the only staff member serving a special population of students such as ESL, program continuity is disrupted and each year has to be re-developed as the new staff member learns students and division expectations and procedures and as students learn his/her teaching style and expectations.

In successful schools, staff has developed a culture of teamwork and collaborative planning and problem solution. Through those joint actions, a common sense of ownership of practices and goals is developed along with shared responsibility for improved student achievement and behavior. Success builds upon success and a sincere belief in student and teacher abilities heightens expectations. The challenge of achieving that school culture with high turnover rates is immense even excluding other trials faced by middle school staff.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

### **Recommendation 5-14:**

**Examine exit interviews of middle school teachers and ESL teachers to uncover a pattern that would inform school or division actions to ameliorate the issues underlying high turnover rates.**

The division's mentoring program for new middle school teachers is well-intended to provide a support system to integrate new teachers into the school and make them feel a part of the DMS community. Examining already available data from exit interviews will enable the division to tailor the mentoring program to specific reasons stated by teachers who leave the school and more specifically develop strategies likely to retain teachers. The same is true for past ESL teachers who have experienced high rates of turnover. The Roanoke County School Division uses retired teachers as mentors and has an excellent program that is cost efficient and should be used as a model.

## **FISCAL IMPACT**

Implementation of this recommendation can be accomplished with existing resources.

## **5.6 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. The Virginia resources on the Department of Education Web site provide guidance in developing plans that address those critical factors and assign accountability for implementation of the plan.

## **FINDING**

Currently the division has no written expectations or procedures for development of improvement plans that guide schools in improving education for students in a purposeful, cohesive manner that provides accountability for execution. Nor is there a systematic structure in place for consistently monitoring other division programs or priorities. The Superintendent has expressed a desire for continual progress for student achievement. A data request submitted prior to the site visit included sample School Improvement Plans and procedural guidelines as well as program evaluations. Three documents: a NCLB Division Improvement Plan, a Middle School Improvement Plan, and a Secondary CTE Local Improvement Plan were available for review by the team. After requesting additional School Improvement Plans for comparison, a division administrator called principals to request their submission. None were available.

The division strategic plan for 2002-08 that was provided apparently has not been updated since construction. Nor does it include comprehensive elements and measurements that would lead to accountability for achievement. An action plan that includes two strategies supported by action steps provides additional evidence of the intent to plan. It includes a projected timeframe (although the entire school year is noted); person(s) responsible; needed financial and other resources; evidence of implementation and, projected implementation, review, and evaluation dates on the form, although only some were completed. Many findings in the February 2005 Middle School Academic Review Technical Assistance Report, discussed previously in Section 5.2.1 of this chapter, note the need for an administrative practice of monitoring to stimulate desired results and create consistency of practice at the school. If monitoring systematically occurred throughout the division, the finding would be ameliorated. Without explicitly detailed plans based on data, monitoring cannot occur because what is monitored is unspecified. Also, without written plans, guiding procedures, and timelines, assignment of accountability for actions is not viable.

Many interviewees acknowledged a need within the division for monitoring and evaluation to become integral operations. Remarks made during the diagnostic visit also reflect a concern for:

- a lack of consistencies for most processes (instructional and financial) for the 7 schools, and
- a need to develop a procedures manual for school administrators.

Practices, programs, and training have been initiated that promise to result in even more effective practices and higher student performance. Best practices demonstrate that creating a system that ensures monitoring, and formative and summative evaluations provides fidelity in implementation, opportunities for interim revisions in response to assessment, and leads to achievement of the results intended upon implementation. Monitoring implementation of desired practices (i.e. lesson plans, professional development, etc.) also provides an assurance of more equitable educational experiences for all students, instead of dependence on individual educators' commitment. In divisions where ongoing improvement is the underpinning of school and division reform, a key topic of discussion by division leaders with principals is progress in meeting the goals of the school's improvement plan. In some divisions, administrators' professional development plans are their school improvement plans.

The Commonwealth of Virginia provides a comprehensive guide to the development of a school improvement plan that includes all essential components to guide in the development and implementation of a plan that will stimulate ongoing continuous school improvement. It is located at [http://www.doe.virginia.gov/VDOE/Accountability/AEL\\_SIPGuideFinal2003.pdf](http://www.doe.virginia.gov/VDOE/Accountability/AEL_SIPGuideFinal2003.pdf).

## **RECOMMENDATION**

### **Recommendation 5-15:**

**Develop procedures, timelines, and elements deemed critical for goal achievement and a uniform format for schools, division units, and the division as a whole, to attain continuous improvement.**

The action plan template DCPS has created reflects consideration of key elements required to move from intention to achievement of planned actions. It is clear that division leadership has the goal of a continuous improvement cycle. By implementing this recommendation, it will add more specificity to its existing form, raising the level of accountability and therefore the likelihood that school improvement goals will be realized in every school in the division. A well-constructed plan such as the one that the Virginia Department of Education has compiled to guide school improvement provides:

- details of goals and strategies it has identified as critical to improve student performance;
- an analysis of various sources of student performance data and demographic subgroup information;
- assignment of explicit responsibility to individuals or groups; and
- includes periodic timelines for examination of progress so that interim adjustments can be made based upon newly collected data.

Many schools find having a checklist to use as they write their plans a useful tool. The implementation of this recommendation should result in providing direct assistance to schools and having the benefit of providing a means to ensure that plans are consistent with school system goals. Exhibits 5-4 and 5-5 provide examples of two best practices checklists for ensuring that plans have all of the necessary components.

When the regular, universal use of improvement plans to drive ongoing progress across the division is required, non-negotiable due dates are assigned, associated reports to the board are scheduled, and school improvement progress become a part of administrative meetings and evaluations, then accountability, monitoring and expectations for continuous improvement will be clear to all educators in the division as well as to the public and processes will be in place to promote continuous progress.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

### **Recommendation 5-16:**

**Consider using the Commonwealth's academic review process as a training tool for all division and school administrators.**

The Winchester Public Schools trained all principals in the process, even though their schools did not need to go through the review because of accreditation problems. Principals and division leadership reported that participating in the training clarified all components that contribute to school reform for their administrators. It further enabled them to see how all of the pieces of reform fit together for planning for continuous improvement. Understanding the elements of the review process should 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.

## **FISCAL IMPACT**

Implementation of this recommendation can be accomplished with existing resources.

**EXHIBIT 5-4  
FREDERICK COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS  
CHECKLIST FOR SCHOOL/FEEDER/DIVISION IMPROVEMENT PLAN**

<b>A. Improvement Plan Cover Sheet</b>		
1. Required representation from constituent groups is indicated.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
2. Chairperson(s) has been designated.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
3. Length of time for which plan was written has been indicated.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
<b>B. Improvement Plan Development, Review, and Consensus</b>		
1. Student achievement is the focus of the plan.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
2. The plan makes sense, given the school's recent performance.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
3. Data sources support the identified achievement focus:		
a. Trend data support the achievement focus.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
b. Disaggregated data support achievement focus.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
c. A copy of your school's data page from the most recent <u>Progress Report on Continuous Improvement</u> with the focus areas highlighted is included or data displays are included.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
4. The Leadership Team's involvement in developing the School Improvement Plan is described.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
5. The strategies used to obtain staff input and consensus are described.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
6. The strategies used to share the plan with and gain input from parents/community are described.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
<b>C. Components of the Improvement Plan</b>		
1. All <b>system goals</b> whose evidence of progress does not shown an improvement over a 3-year trend are addressed or a justification is provided.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
2. <b>Objectives</b> are specific, measurable, and related to the evidence to support progress toward achievement of the system goal. A separate sheet has been used for each objective.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
3. <b>Specific activities or action plans</b> are designed to accomplish the measurable objectives. These activities are research based and proven best practices.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
4. <b>Personnel responsible</b> for implementing each activity are listed.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
5. The <b>time frame</b> for implementation of each strategy is appropriate.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
6. <b>Formative evaluation</b> includes milestone to monitor progress toward meeting the specific measurable objective.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
7. <b>Summative evaluation</b> indicates the evidence/data used to measure the progress toward the attainment of the system goal?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
<b>D. Professional Development Plan Summary</b>		
The Professional Development Plan Summary sheet outlines a focused professional development plan directly related to specific outcomes in the improvement plan.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
<b>E. Organization</b>		
1. Plan is well organized.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
2. All pages are numbered.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
3. Sections are clearly labeled.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
4. Charts and graphs are used to display data.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
5. Two copies have been submitted in 3-ring binders.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
<b>FOR DIRECTORS' USE ONLY</b>		
<b>Commendations:</b>		
<b>Recommendations:</b>		
<b>Requested Revisions/Missing Items:</b>		
<b>Action Taken:</b>		
<input type="checkbox"/> Plan approved		
<input type="checkbox"/> Plan approved pending receipt of requested revisions/missing items.		
<input type="checkbox"/> Plan not approved. Please submit requested revisions/missing items.		
<input type="checkbox"/> Plan not approved. Please schedule a conference to discuss changes or additions.		

Source: Frederick County Public Schools (MA), Department of Curriculum, Administration, and School Improvement, 2001.

**EXHIBIT 5-5  
SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PLAN CHECKLIST**

School Name: _____		Date: _____
Division: _____		
Instructions: Circle "YES" or "NO"		
YES	NO	1. Does the school improvement plan indicate that a needs assessment was conducted to determine needs and strengths?
YES	NO	2. Does the plan address the division and state education goals and standards (either through the needs assessment or objectives and strategies)?
YES	NO	3. Is the school improvement plan comprehensive in reflecting issues relative to:
YES	NO	budget?
YES	NO	training?
YES	NO	instructional materials?
YES	NO	technology?
YES	NO	staffing?
YES	NO	student support services?
YES	NO	specific school safety and discipline strategies?
YES	NO	other matters of resource allocation?
YES	NO	4. Does the school improvement plan contain objectives that address the critical needs of the school?
YES	NO	5. Is each objective written to reflect gain/improvement that is substantive and allows opportunity for growth, yet attainable and realistic for the school?
YES	NO	6. Are the objectives measurable?
YES	NO	7. Do the strategies have a direct connection to the objectives?
YES	NO	8. Are the number of strategies adequate and are the strategies of high educational quality? Will the strategies result in a change in the quality of teaching and learning?
YES	NO	9. Are the evaluation procedures appropriate for the objectives?
YES	NO	10. Does the plan include an appropriate adequate progress statement?
YES	NO	11. If applicable, are recommendations from the division assistance and intervention plan incorporated into the School Improvement Plan?
YES	NO	12. If applicable, are recommendations of the community assessment team incorporated into the School Improvement Plan?
YES	NO	13. If the school has a dropout prevention and academic intervention program, is that program reflected in the School improvement Plan?

Source: School Site Study, Crown Region Area Center for Educational Enhancement, Northeast Florida Educational Consortium, and Duval County Public Schools, 2001.

## **5.7 Instructional Staff Development**

### **FINDING**

Interviewees reported that staff development provided over the years in DCPS has focused on critical skills and knowledge such as data analysis, reading, inclusion, differentiation, cooperative grouping and co-teaching, but that there has been little on-going professional development focus, process, or monitoring to embed what teachers learn into their practice in the classroom. Attendance is open to all teachers and administrators, but is seldom required. On the division-wide staff development day that occurred during the site visit, one administrator noted that she had projected attendance to include some special education teachers but that ten more than anticipated attended. In one instance, funds have been budgeted for teachers to attend what is deemed important training, but no funds have been set aside for principals to attend. Interviewees also noted that there continues to be a need for teachers to learn and use a variety of hands-on strategies for students with different learning styles. Some of the training topics mentioned during the site visit should have given teachers a repertoire of skills to teach interactively had they been systematically supported after initial training. The same is true for instructional technology training. One concern raised in the public forum during the site visit was that “New teachers to the field or division need more mentoring. Also, if there are career switchers, they need to have training and mentoring in classroom management, especially at the middle school.”

In conjunction with Virginia Commonwealth University’s Training and Technical Assistance Center (TTAC) the division has developed content academies for special education teachers to gain content knowledge to become highly qualified teachers. They are offered for two hours three times a week after school at no charge to teachers. Teachers can attend in one content area or all. Fifty-eight teachers are attending with 25 of them attending all content training. The Director of Special Education and her secretary attend, as well. Institutes are also offered teachers after school on topics such as classroom management. Attendance is available for those with specific needs or interests and re-certification points are granted.

If principals are to support new skills and knowledge that are applied in their schools as instructional leaders, then they must attend the training with their teachers. This reinforces to the teachers the importance of the training and increases the credibility of the administrator as he/she provides feedback to improve instructional delivery. When training focuses on critical new skills and knowledge for teachers such as those that have been offered in DCPS over time, but does not provide time and support for teachers to practice new learning, nor is it purposefully monitored to ensure that they are using it in their instruction, then they are likely to take the path of least resistance and use strategies with which they are comfortable, thus rendering the same results in terms of student achievement. If a division determines that teaching new skills and competencies to teachers is worthy of investment of time and funds, but does not follow through with support and monitoring, then resources have been wasted and no improvement in either teacher competency or student knowledge is likely to occur.

Successful schools create time for professional development activities focused on improving instruction with strategies that address the needs of all students. Specific topics that are intended to increase teacher knowledge and skills are delivered over

time, with additional time for reflection, discussion, and more practice between trainings so that teachers learn from practice and each other. Each training session is supported by technical assistance that gives teachers feedback on their use of the new skills and an opportunity to refine them early to prevent ineffective implementation or, frustration that leads to disuse of them. Professional development also includes a variety of activities to address the interests and learning styles of adult learners.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

### **Recommendation 5-17:**

**Formalize the division's approach to instructional professional development related to curriculum and instruction by using five research-based components of staff development.**

The five research-based components that should be used in this recommendation 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. All essential elements of staff training processes that will ensure that teachers use them to change their delivery must be considered in planning and executing professional development. Principals should be required to attend specific identified professional development opportunities that their teachers attend. If staff development is deemed important enough to expend division funds on and require that teachers attend for expansion of their instructional repertoires, then principals should know the desired skills and practice so that they can reinforce it or suggest modifications when they see it in their teachers' classes.

## **FISCAL IMPACT**

Implementation of this recommendation can be accomplished with existing resources. In fact, even though not quantifiable, it should earn greater returns by improving administrative observation skills and making certain that the skills and knowledge that are intended for teachers to learn will, in fact, become instructional tools.

## **5.8 Alternative/Remedial Education**

### **FINDING**

Concerns expressed by division level administrators during the on-site diagnostic visit relating to alternative/remedial education were:

- stronger options needed for students not going to college; and
- options needed for expelled students.

A large percentage of referrals for expulsions that go before the division's Executive Director for Administrative Services and then the School Board are related to taking drugs onto campuses at the middle and high school. Recognizing that drugs in schools are only a symptom of a community drug presence, the school system has joined forces with other leaders and agencies in the county on a Dinwiddie Task Force for Gang Prevention and Community Policing to carefully analyze key causes in order to develop a collaborative, community-wide approach. Neither the community nor the school system can reduce or eliminate the use of drugs in isolation.

Similar, but expanded "shared services networks" initiated in Florida communities by the Florida Department of Education and a Children's Wraparound Initiative in Maryland have effectively addressed the social needs of students who are not necessarily in need of intensive services but whose family situations serve as barriers to academic performance. By creating councils of leaders of social service agencies that have resources and expertise in supporting families within each community, families are provided services for needs that detract from a focus on education. With those needs addressed, families can then more successfully attend to their children's educational needs. The networks create a seamless delivery of services, fill gaps, and reduce duplication among agencies. Some have even reached the sophistication of collaborative problem-solving around the needs of individual students. Monroe County, Florida, has created a Students-Outcomes-Services process in which feeder schools are involved with a student success team of agency members who collaboratively seek solutions and develop an integrated plan that includes aspects of each agency's plans and meets agency/school requirements as well as leveraging agency resources.

### **COMMENDATION**

**With an escalating intrusion of drugs into the community that has been manifested in student suspensions and expulsions, the DCPS has joined with local agencies to examine root causes in each community to develop a plan most likely to succeed.**

### **RECOMMENDATION**

**Recommendation 5-18:**

**Build on the joint task force to create a seamless support system for the families of students most commonly needing additional community services in order to focus on their children's educational needs. When community agencies coalesce to weave a fabric of support for family needs, student achievement will be positively impacted.**

## **FISCAL IMPACT**

Implementation of this recommendation can be accomplished with existing resources.

## **FINDING**

The division does not have an alternative school per se, but has a few programs for middle and high school students who are behind their peers academically or do not attend school for other reasons such as motherhood. For 9<sup>th</sup> grade high school students, the middle and high school staff work together to identify rising 9<sup>th</sup> graders who have failed their SOL core tests and are more than two years behind their peers or have severe attendance problems. They receive intensive instruction in English and study skills one semester and Math and study skills the second. Many of last year's 80 students had been passing their classes, but failing the SOL tests. After the intensive instruction they received last year, they passed their SOLs at higher rates than their peers. The school plans to follow them to ensure that they continue to succeed without that level of intervention. This year the transition program is serving 50 students. In order to provide those classes with low student numbers of approximately 15, other class sizes are being raised. The Middle School Gear Up program is similar, examining 7<sup>th</sup> grade students and offering them instruction in small groups in core content areas. Many of the high school's transition students have come from the Gear Up program.

Also, beginning in October of this year, middle and high students who are not suspended or expelled, but may be over-aged or parents and meet screening criteria, can attend a GED preparation course at the adult education center located near Dinwiddie Elementary School. Twenty middle school students attend from 12:30-3:30 receiving instruction, training in decision-making and support from Division 19, a local health provider with a psychologist and sociologist who are with the students and two teachers during their class time. From 3:30-5:30, they then go to Dinwiddie Elementary for instruction in English and Math while high school students attend alternative programs at the adult education center. High school students are enrolled in one class per semester taught alternate days by two different instructors. They receive some instruction using computers and distance learning, but have no access to additional hands-on learning experiences other than those created by the teachers. A program away from the traditional setting in which they have not experienced success benefits students by giving them opportunities to continue their education in a setting that is different from where they have experienced continuing failure. Students, though, are at home during the mornings when they are not in the programs. Having no productive activities planned for students during the mornings when they have no school to attend has the potential to be contributing to the drug issues the community is concerned about. At the least, it provides no productive outlet for their energies for several hours a day when their peers are in school.

Dinwiddie's high number of students expelled or long-term suspended also creates a need for effective alternative programs that prevent students from losing hope of graduating. When they are long-term suspended for the remainder of a school year and at least an additional year, students effectively return to school two years behind their age-level peers, creating motivational as well as academic challenges for them that often translate into problems for the schools they attend. Interviewees noted that neighboring divisions have effective alternative schools that counter the motivational, academic and

behavioral issues that arise from placing students in the position of being so far behind their peers.

Studies have found that in order for a prevention program to be effective, it needs to be delivered over a long period of time to continually reinforce skills. Programs that use a combination of (1) normative education, (2) information about the consequences of drugs and violence and (3) social skills training, including social influences training (especially peer pressure resistance skills) are more successful in preventing drug use, crime and delinquency than using a single approach.

Virginia's compilation of effective practices states:

In effective schools...students are given additional learning time in a variety of settings with varied approaches to instruction. Family members and other key persons in the lives of students are encouraged to support the intervention strategies.

To meet those needs, some schools provide opportunities for students to double up on credits by compressing content or by integrating remedial content in core subjects into career and vocational coursework. Dinwiddie's students deserve the same opportunities that Virginia notes exist in effective schools. Programs DCPS has initiated are a beginning, but must take a more comprehensive look at programming, scheduling, instructional strategies, social needs of all students, not just middle schoolers, and teacher characteristics. Without taking that long-range, comprehensive approach to meeting the needs of its students who are not proficient and are falling behind others their age, it will not only fail to meet the intent of NCLB's proficiency expectations, but it will also fail to meet its community's need for a literate, educated, informed citizenry.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

### **Recommendation 5-19:**

#### **Study components of effective alternative programs and develop a plan to expand nascent efforts in DCPS to a full-scale alternative and dropout prevention program in grades K-12.**

Current programs meet the needs of a segment of DCPS's academically and behaviorally challenged student body. However, to decrease the number of students needing such programs in their middle and high school years, a broader approach is required that identifies and tracks students at risk of failure earlier in their DCPS experiences, providing academic and counseling support in elementary school. A successful alternative program provides hands-on experiences, selects teachers for their sensitivity to student needs and having the abilities to provide for them, and gives students hope of attendance leading to graduating with their peers. Using book talks begun with administrators to examine and discuss alternative strategies pertinent to Dinwiddie's students would be one approach. Visiting successful programs in the state or even joining neighbors with effective programs are others. In conjunction with the Task Force for Gang Prevention and Community Policing, developing a comprehensive plan to keep students in school and successful will benefit students, their families and the community.

Smyth County Public Schools has developed a time-proven, tiered approach to meeting the needs of students with various academic, social, family, attendance, and behavioral needs for learning in alternative settings that has led to a dropout rate of 21 percent that could serve as a model for DCPS or at the least, for information regarding practices that are effective in providing alternatives to traditional classes for middle and high school students in Dinwiddie County.

**FISCAL IMPACT**

Implementation of this recommendation can be accomplished with existing resources.

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## **6.0 SPECIAL PROGRAMS**

This section reviews the organizational structure of Special Programs in the Dinwiddie County Public Schools. Special Programs are those programs that provide supplemental or extended support for students and their families and enhance student performance and academic achievement. In the DCPS, besides Special Education, they include nursing services, guidance, English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) and health services at each school. The Director of Special Education and the Director of Assessment and Student Services are the administrators at the division level responsible for oversight and implementation of the division's special programs. Special Education is provided to supplement, accommodate, or modify the general academic course of study and is aimed to provide adequate support to ensure the academic success of students with disabilities.

This chapter provides a summary of the delivery and evaluation of services to students receiving special services in the Dinwiddie County Public Schools (DCPS). The five major sections of this chapter are:

- 6.1 Special Education
- 6.2 Professional Development Related to Special Education
- 6.3 Program Expenses and Receipts for Medicaid and Related Services
- 6.4 Testing of Students with Special Needs
- 6.5 Guidance Services

### **CHAPTER SUMMARY**

The organizational structure of the DCPS with respect to Special Education includes the Director and a Coordinator of Special Education as well as psychologists, social workers and speech therapists at the division level. The Directors of Special Education and Assessment and Student Services work with the Directors of Elementary and Secondary Education to coordinate instruction, curriculum and staff development to integrate Special Education, support services, and regular education. The pupil personnel role entails providing supplemental or extended support for students and their families that contribute to enhanced student performance and academic achievement. Those responsibilities are conducted by the Director of Assessment and Student Services.

Recommendations contained in this chapter relate to creating procedures and monitoring processes to ensure that the division's goals relating to students with special needs are met. Key suggestions that should assist the division in achieving a more seamless service delivery include:

- Develop procedures to ensure the acquisition of skills relating to inclusive practices in schools division-wide;
- Examine eligibility and placement practices and provide related training so that placements best meet the needs of individual students in the least restrictive environment;
- Determine the possible benefits of developing a coalition of community agencies serving children and their families to leverage

skills and resources for development of a community-wide support system.

- Examine best practices regarding school schedules to revise DCPS schedules so that ESL, Special Education, and regular education teachers have time for collaboration;
- Quantify potential revenues that could be collected by billing for Medicaid services for eligible students and determine whether the costs of filing would make the revenues worthwhile; and
- Capture best practices that are taking place in the division and systematically share them for the benefit of students in all schools.

## **INTRODUCTION**

The organizational structure of the Dinwiddie County Public Schools with respect to special programs includes one Director of Special Education who reports to the Director of Instruction and a Special Education Coordinator who reports to and shares many responsibilities with the Director. The Director and Coordinator have actually divided DCPS schools between themselves to provide support, testing, attendance at eligibility and IEP meetings, and consultation with staff.

The DCPS has made a strong commitment to inclusive practices in all schools and is buttressing that commitment with the establishment of a collaborative task force with representatives from schools and relevant positions within the division and community. The challenge is heightened by the number of small schools with small Special Education staffs in the division.

The Director of Special Education works informally with the other instructional leaders in the division to coordinate instruction and curriculum and staff development to try to integrate Special Education with regular education. The pupil personnel role of supplemental support for families and students is largely assumed by guidance counselors and the Director of Assessment and Student Services to whom they report.

### **6.1 Special Education**

#### **FINDING**

The Office of Special Education directly aligns with other supplemental programs under the supervision of the Assistant Superintendent for Instruction. These programs and services are related to supplementing, accommodating, or modifying the general academic course of study and are aimed to provide adequate support to ensure academic success of students with disabilities.

Concerns expressed during the diagnostic visit regarding Special Education were:

- Staff development needed regarding inclusion;
- Need more consistency in Special Education;
- Moving to more inclusion models; and
- Special needs students passing the state testing.

In a survey conducted by MGT, DCPS central office administrators, principals and teachers were asked to rate the quality of Special Education and other federal programs. In their responses, only 26 percent of central office administrators felt that the programs needed *some or major improvement*, as opposed to 47 percent of teachers and 63 percent of principals. When asked if “sufficient student services are provided by the school division (e.g., counseling, speech therapy, health),” 63 percent of central office administrators, 56 percent of principals, and 46 percent of teachers either *agreed* or *strongly agreed* with the statement.

Students in low incidence Special Education programs in DCPS are served largely in self-contained classes. Some are included to an extent in mainstream classrooms. In recent years, the division has begun a concerted effort to integrate Special Education students into regular education classes as much as is possible. Inception of the division’s inclusion process began with the three instructional directors showing a united front in encouraging teachers and principals to move toward fuller inclusion. Even at the high school although they are served largely in self-contained classes for core content areas, Educable Mentally Disabled (EMD) and Trainable Mentally Retarded (TMR) students are integrated into regular classes for PE, chorus, band, and art. Although, at the high school, there is no structure in place to ensure that joint planning occurs during the 90-minute block, teachers are paired year after year so that those who work together in inclusion classes have the opportunity to establish relationships and instructional rhythm.

At the middle school, math and English inclusion classes are in place at all three grades with a focus on tested subjects. Since the middle school is departmentalized, teachers do move with students and they are dispersed around the campus. Most of them are staffed by a certified Special Education teacher and content area teacher. In the rest, a highly qualified paraprofessional is paired with a content area teacher. Classes range from 28-31 students with approximately 1/3 with either IEPs or 504 plans. Special Education teachers often teach both self-contained and inclusion classes, which helps them to become more knowledgeable about content and content-specific instructional strategies to enable them to relate SOLs in their self-contained classes. As at the high school, EMR and TMR classes are, for the most part, self-contained. Interviewees reported that approaches to collaboration differed across the division. Personnel interviewed acclaimed Southside Elementary’s success in inclusion at the 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> grades that was only begun last year. Other elementary schools are using inclusion depending on teacher numbers and other factors impinging on implementation. Division leadership promotes successful integration of Special Education students into regular education classes for content instruction by providing Special Education teachers the same pacing guide, curriculum materials, and textbooks that content area teachers have.

Strategies used to encourage inclusion include using administrators who have experienced success and teachers effectively using inclusion for the benefit of regular and Special Education students to make presentations to others and direct support for teachers willing to try inclusion. In an effort to develop a more uniform approach and further equip DCPS staff for heightened inclusion across the division, a new Collaborative Task Force has been created with the goal of every school having a collaborative model by the 2006-07 school year. An agenda of the first meeting provided the following topics for discussion, of:

- roles and responsibilities of those involved;
- identification of materials and resources available;
- paraprofessional staff development; and
- visitation to other sites.

Participants identified key issues that will influence the success of the initiative including:

- lack of co-planning time between inclusion teachers,
- lack of materials and resources available for Special Education teachers,
- small numbers of Special Education teachers in the schools,
- scheduling,
- communication among teachers,
- sufficient amounts of differentiation to meet the needs of special needs students, and
- introducing teachers to the concept.

The committee's stated plans include examination of exemplary models, visitation of sites, researching essential components contributing to success, and collection of models to examine.

In school systems and classes where special education and regular education teachers collaborate, instructional strategies for both teachers are expanded with all students benefiting. When collaboration moves to co-teaching between regular and special education students, benefits such as total integration of special education students into regular education classes even result in inability to discern special education students from regular education students.

### **COMMENDATION**

**Dinwiddie County Public Schools demonstrate commitment to full inclusion with creation of a Collaborative Task Force and planned research to develop an effective plan for division-wide implementation.**

### **RECOMMENDATION**

#### **Recommendation 6-1:**

**Prioritize elements that will support acquisition of skills over time in plans to embed inclusive practices division-wide.**

The division has identified key concerns that currently impede development of teacher repertoires of practices that contribute to differentiation of instruction for all students and co-teaching between teachers. To effectively address them, it is essential to develop procedures that create time for co-planning, monitor and support teachers as they learn

and apply new skills, and encourage sharing among teachers who are more reticent in trying new practices with those who have embraced them skillfully.

**FISCAL IMPACT**

Implementation of this recommendation can be accomplished with existing resources.

**FINDING**

Data provided MGT regarding percentages of DCPS students who are identified and placed in Special Education classes show a slight increase in placement percentages between 2002-03 and 2004-05. Exhibit 6-1 shows that, in 2002-03 the percent of DCPS students who were in special education was 12.9 percent; the following year, that percent increased to 14 percent and last year was 14.6 percent.

**EXHIBIT 6-1  
DINWIDDIE COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOL  
SPECIAL EDUCATION STUDENT ENROLLMENTS  
2002-03 THROUGH 2004-05**

	<b>TOTAL STUDENT ENROLLMENT</b>	<b>NUMBER OF SPECIAL EDUCATION STUDENTS ENROLLED</b>	<b>PERCENTAGE OF SPECIAL EDUCATION STUDENTS</b>
2002-03	4,423	569	12.9%
2003-04	4,469	624	14%
2004-05	4,530	660	14.6%

Source: Dinwiddie County Department of Special Education, 2005.

Exhibit 6-2 displays details of referral rates in contrast to placement rates by school for the years 2001-02 through 2004-05. These data raise additional concerns regarding knowledge and procedures used by staff across the division with respect to student eligibility determinations leading to referrals for Special Education services. They also reveal a strong lack of consistency in referrals and placements. Ineligibility determination rates range from highs of as much as 78 percent of students referred to lows routinely for the past three years at the high school from 7 percent to 18 percent. Each referral number represents time that is not spent on instruction and instructional support by people at the division and the schools. It also represents time that parents must take from work and undue concern particularly on the part of those whose students do not qualify for services. Procedures and expectations must be developed and accountability assigned in order to reduce that lost instructional time and focus. Training underlies a move toward creating requisite consistency in all schools regarding students referred for Special Education to better utilize instructional time available.

**EXHIBIT 6-2**  
**REFERRAL AND PLACEMENT RATES BY SCHOOL**  
**DINWIDDIE COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS**  
**2001-02 THROUGH 2004-05**

SCHOOL	2001-02		2002-03		2003-04		2004-05	
	REFERRALS/ PLACEMENTS	PERCENTAGE	REFERRALS/ PLACEMENTS	PERCENTAGE	REFERRALS/ PLACEMENTS	PERCENTAGE	REFERRALS/ PLACEMENTS	PERCENTAGE
Sunnyside Elementary School	11/23	48	5/13	38	8/27	30	10/22	45
Midway Elementary	10/17	59	6/14	43	21/37	78	10/20	50
Southside Elementary	12/22	55	12/25	48	31/86	36	23/43	53
Rohoic Elementary	2/12	17	11/24	46	18/36	50	19/46	41
Dinwiddie Elementary	10/28	36	10/27	37	43/70	61	23/37	62
Dinwiddie Middle School	12/46	26	23/68	34	44/115	38	30/105	28
Dinwiddie High School	14/30	47	4/55	7	15/84	18	12/76	16

Source: Dinwiddie County Public Schools Office of Special Education, November 2005.

In successful schools, administrators and teachers ensure that school time is focused on instruction with time allotted on actions related to educational goals and student learning needs. Teachers are not pulled from instructional responsibilities for meetings that do not result in positive educational benefits.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

### **Recommendation 6-2:**

**Consider requiring attendance at trainings relative to interventions and eligibility and placement practices so that all staff across the division have a fundamental understanding that will ensure appropriate referral and placement of students.**

Currently, the division has been creative in offering training opportunities at a variety of times and locations by various members of the Special Education staff. Attendees doubtless have benefited as have their students. However, the division's referral vs. placement rate indicates a need for more staff to be conversant with existing procedures. This benefits staff and students in instructional time not lost in meetings and parents in undue concern when their children are referred but not found eligible. Two tiers of training should be considered for staffs at schools across the division to contribute to closer congruity between referral and placement rates:

- training for teachers in strategies to differentiate instruction for all students and in characteristics of Special Education criteria for eligibility and placement; and
- annual training for all child study team members relative to student eligibility procedures.

Much teacher, counselor, and school and division administrator time is currently being consumed with meetings that do not lead to placement of students in Special Education programs. Teachers must become equipped with skills and knowledge that will assist them in providing educational experiences for students of varying needs and with knowledge of behaviors and learning difficulties that are and are not associated with eligibility for Special Educational services. Then, time can be recovered for all personnel currently involved in those meetings to then dedicate to instructional foci. Implementation of this recommendation should also alleviate the referral concerns noted in Chapter 6 of this chapter at the middle school.

## **FISCAL IMPACT**

Implementation of this recommendation can be accomplished with existing resources.

## **FINDING**

Data shown in Exhibit 6-3 from the Virginia Department of Education April 2005 Totals for Students With Disabilities By Disability and Age Report as of December 1, 2004, show that the majority of students with disabilities in DCPS are identified as Specific Learning Disabled (SLD) with 227 reported. However, in contrast to many other divisions, the second most prevalent disability identified in DCPS is Mental Retardation

with 111 (16.8 percent) students. Following MR in prevalence are Other Health Impaired with 110 students (16.6 percent), and Speech/Language Impaired with 110 (16.0 percent).

**EXHIBIT 6-3  
DINWIDDIE COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS  
SPECIAL EDUCATION STUDENTS BY DISABILITY  
DECEMBER 1, 2004 STUDENT DATA REPORT**

<b>EXCEPTIONALITY</b>	<b>NUMBER OF STUDENTS</b>	<b>PERCENTAGE OF SPECIAL EDUCATION POPULATION</b>
Mental Retardation	111	16.8%
Hearing Impaired	5	0.8%
Speech/Language	106	16.0%
Visually Impaired	1	0.0%
Emotional Disturbed	39	5.9%
Orthopedically Impaired	0	0.0%
Other Health Impaired	110	16.6%
Specific Learning Disability	227	34.4%
Deaf-Blind	0	0.0%
Multi-Disabled	1	0.0%
Traumatic Brain Injury	0	0.0%
Autistic	10	1.5%
Developmentally Delayed	46	6.9%
Severe Disabilities	4	0.6%
<b>TOTAL STUDENTS IN SPECIAL EDUCATION</b>	<b>660</b>	<b>14.6%</b>

Source: Virginia Department of Education Totals for Students With Disabilities By Disability and Age, Ages 0-22+ State Totals and Individual Division Totals, as of December 1, 2004.

Exhibit 6-4 displays a comparison of students by disability from the December 2001 count. It shows that Dinwiddie's percentage of students identified as MR is higher than both the Commonwealth average (8 percent) and that of comparable divisions. In comparable divisions, excluding DCPS, the range of percent of students identified as MR is between 6 percent and 17 percent with all but three being below 10 percent. In SLI, DCPS has 20 percent of students identified compared to other divisions' ranges from 12 percent to 23 percent and the state average of 18 percent. DCPS has 32 percent of its Special Education students identified as SLD compared to all similar divisions serving between 40 percent and 45 percent of their Special Education students in the SLD program and a state average of 42 percent.

**EXHIBIT 6-4  
COMPARISON OF STUDENTS BY DISABILITY  
IN DINWIDDIE COUNTY WITH SIMILAR DIVISIONS AND THE STATE  
STUDENT DATA REPORT DECEMBER 1, 2001**

SCHOOL DIVISION	MENTAL RETARDATION		SPEECH AND LANGUAGE IMPAIRED		SPECIFIC LEARNING DISABILITY	
	ENROLLMENT	PERCENTAGE OF EACH DISABILITY	ENROLLMENT	PERCENTAGE OF EACH DISABILITY	ENROLLMENT	PERCENTAGE OF EACH DISABILITY
Virginia	13,314	8%	30,071	18%	69,705	42%
Dinwiddie County	112	20%	112	20%	179	32%
Caroline County	28	6%	99	23%	197	45%
Isle of Wight County	55	9%	112	17%	258	40%
Lee County	103	12%	147	18%	357	43%
Mecklenburg County	119	17%	82	12%	292	41%
Pulaski County	82	9%	162	18%	393	43%

Source: Virginia Department of Education Web Site, 2005.

One strategy that the Director of Special Education has devised to try to ensure that students who are referred for placement in Special Education classes are appropriately identified is that either she or the Coordinator of Special Education attend all eligibility meetings and adhere strictly to criteria for each disability. In each of those meetings, participants use checklists that delineate the characteristics of each disability so that all can see and collaboratively determine eligibility based on those criteria. One of the two of them also attends each initial Individualized Educational Plan (IEP) meeting to ensure that accommodations that are discussed and included in those plans are essential for meeting the individual student's educational needs.

Beyond attendance at eligibility meetings and initial IEPs, the Director and Coordinator have divided the DCPS schools between themselves for direct service. Each has a designated number of schools for which they are responsible for teacher and administrative support, consultative service, and even test students at schools where teacher schedules are not flexible because of the small population of Special Education students.

An examination of students by ethnicity who are placed in Special Education in DCPS in Exhibit 6-5 shows a slightly higher percentage of American Indians in Special Education than are represented in the general student population. Otherwise, it shows that ethnicities seem to be represented in approximately the same percentages in Special Education as in the general population. However, numbers in some ethnicities in both Special Education and the student body as a whole are so low as to make conclusions difficult to draw with any reliability.

**EXHIBIT 6-5  
DINWIDDIE COUNTY SPECIAL EDUCATION STUDENTS  
BY ETHNICITY  
2004-05 SCHOOL YEAR**

<b>ETHNICITY</b>	<b>NUMBER IN SPECIAL EDUCATION</b>	<b>PERCENTAGE WITHIN SPECIAL EDUCATION</b>	<b>TOTAL DIVISION ENROLLMENT</b>	<b>PERCENTAGE IN DIVISION SCHOOLS</b>
American Indian	3	4.5	8	1.7
Asian	2	3.0	20	4.4
Black	272	41.0	1,833	40.4
Hispanic	14	2.0	79	1.7
White	369	56.0	2,583	57.0
Total	660	N/A	4,530	N/A

Source: Dinwiddie County Public Schools Department of Special Education, November 2005 and Virginia Fall Student Membership Report, September 30, 2004.

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) 1997 mandates that special education services be provided to students with disabilities in the general education setting to the greatest extent possible.

### **RECOMMENDATION**

#### **Recommendation 6-3:**

**Examine eligibility and placement practices that have contributed to identification of a high percentage of DCPS students as Mentally Retarded in comparison to other divisions in the state.**

Division-level Special Education administrators have taken steps to ensure that students are appropriately identified for programs in which they are served. They are providing documents that clearly specify eligibility criteria and are personally attending those meetings in order to place students most appropriately in the least restrictive environment for their educational needs. There could be a plausible explanation for DCPS's extraordinarily different percentages in SLD and MR placements; however, considering the variance with percentages of students throughout the Commonwealth and in divisions selected for their commonalities with DCPS in those two categories of disabilities, it would be prudent for the division to explore past placements and practices to refine its eligibility procedures and determinations. A determination that the numbers and processes are accurate might lend itself to reaching out to additional community service agencies for assistance for those students and their families.

### **FISCAL IMPACT**

Implementation of this recommendation can be accomplished with existing resources.

### **FINDING**

Implementing the above recommendation would address two issues to some extent, but would not address the needs of MR students should the numbers accurately represent students in need of education in MR classes. The high percentage of students identified

as MR in DCPS has two possible effects on the students. It has the potential to contribute to a high percentage of DCPS students being served in self-contained classrooms rather than being served in the general education setting. It also raises the possible need for more, and more comprehensive services for those students and their families.

Particularly in a small division with many schools, having a high number of Special Education students served in self-contained classes precludes those Special Education teachers from being able to work with regular education teachers either in inclusion classrooms or to counsel with them regarding inclusive strategies they could use with Special Education students mainstreamed into their classes. One school in DCPS only has two Special Education teachers available for collaboration for inclusion purposes. One is a self-contained teacher while the other attempts to work inclusively with regular education teachers in the school.

Other states have developed coalitions similar to Dinwiddie's community task force on drugs to provide additional support to families of Special Education and other at risk students. In Maryland, the Education Commission for the States has identified a Children's Wraparound Initiative intended to provide "better and more efficient service delivery for 'at-risk' children and their families." Two demonstration projects in Baltimore City and Montgomery County, Maryland, link children and families with intensive needs to community-based teams for flexible treatment and services. The goal is to provide services in home communities rather than more expensive institutions that may not address root causes. An inter-agency plan and fund and a streamlined review process ensures that children requiring out-of-home placements are quickly placed in an appropriate setting.

Similar "shared services networks" initiated in Florida communities have effectively addressed the social needs of students who are not necessarily in need of such intensive services but whose family situations serve as barriers to high academic performance, whether because of disabilities or other impediments. By creating councils of leaders of social service agencies that have resources and expertise in supporting families within each community, families are provided services for needs that detract from a focus on education. With those needs addressed, families can then more successfully attend to their children's educational needs. The networks create a seamless delivery of services, fill gaps, and reduce duplication among agencies. Some have even reached the sophistication of collaborative problem-solving around the needs of individual students. Monroe County, Florida, has created a Students-Outcomes-Services process in which feeder schools are involved with a student success team of agency members who collaboratively seek solutions and develop an integrated plan that includes aspects of each agency's plans and meets agency/school requirements as well as leveraging agency resources. Such a county-level collaboration could assist both in meeting the needs of families of special education students and those needing alternative placement.

## **COMMENDATION**

**DCPS is commended for participating in the Family Assessment Planning Team to provide community support for its families.**

## **FINDING**

Dinwiddie County Public Schools have experienced a shortage in speech positions this year, but have been vigilant in recruitment and accommodations. One position has been vacant the entire year. The division has advertised in agencies, hospitals, contacted universities and colleges with speech program, participated in job fairs, shared potential candidates with other divisions, and even asked parents working in agencies with contact with speech therapists to recruit for DCPS, to no avail. They have attempted to work with neighboring divisions facing similar challenges. Knowing that the service available to students provided by less than adequate numbers of therapists is deficient for meeting both student needs and Commonwealth and national expectations for level of service, the division has been extremely pro-active in communicating with parents and providing them tools to use with their children in the absence of prior levels of speech service. They have sent letters to parents explaining the situation and the steps they have taken to try to locate and hire another speech therapist. Additionally, they have developed "Speech-Language Workbooks" for parents of elementary, middle, and high school students that offer suggested activities to conduct with their children in order to improve speech and language skills. They have also offered to provide supplemental services in the summer to, in some way, make up for the lack of services during the school year.

## **COMMENDATION**

**DCPS has surpassed expectations in reaching out and communicating with parents about the lack of speech services for students and giving them tools to use as a stop-gap measure. They have also been creative in using all possible resources to recruit a replacement therapist.**

## **RECOMMENDATION**

### **Recommendation 6-4:**

**Take leadership among neighboring divisions facing similar speech therapist recruitment challenges in investigating the possibility of having a university develop a branch speech program in the area.**

Many small divisions in the Commonwealth are experiencing the same difficulty in finding sufficient therapists to meet student needs. Others have reported it as a topic of concern discussed in the VDOE. Limitations in the number of students programs can accept, but exploring novel ways to meet the need for additional speech therapists. Some courses are on-line, so a mix of on-site and on-line instruction might benefit the university, interested teachers, and the division.

## **FISCAL IMPACT**

Implementation of this recommendation can be accomplished with existing resources.

## **FINDING**

Support identified for regular education teachers to assist them in individualizing instruction for Special Education students in their classes is that modifications and accommodations are shared with them at the beginning of the year, but subsequent follow-up and support is, for the most part, either before and after school, or during planning time when teachers can get together. One Special Education teacher has devised a form that she asks the teacher to sign that she has been apprised of accommodations. In Special Education meetings, the form has been shared for possible adoption by others as a check that regular education teachers are aware of necessary accommodations for Special Education students. While sharing is beneficial for those who choose to use the form, it does not create uniformity of service to students or universal skill development among all teachers in the division who have Special Education students in their classes. Other divisions also require teachers to sign such a form as an assurance that they are aware of instructional modifications their students need and that they are aware that special education teachers are available to provide assistance in those modifications. Time needs to be devoted to collaborative planning for meeting the individual needs of students who are in regular education classes, either for support by the classroom teacher for the student, or for co-teaching by the regular and Special Education teachers. Without protected time in which teachers can share ideas and instructional strategies to differentiate learning opportunities for the students placed in regular classes, students will not fully benefit from inclusion nor will teachers develop the comfort or the capacity to teach in a truly successful inclusive nature.

Successful schools examine scheduling options and creatively allocate time for teachers to focus on instruction. Time is set aside for collaboration and planning among teachers within subject areas, grade levels, and across instructional responsibilities.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

### **Recommendation 6-5:**

**Provide principals time and research on scheduling alternatives to help them carve out time in their school schedules for at least periodic collaborative planning between regular and special education teachers.**

The interests, skills, and knowledge of teachers and students are met when opportunities exist for professional staff to tap each others' expertise and brainstorm ways in which they can jointly meet student needs. When two teachers who understand students' unique instructional needs and potential motivators work together to devise lessons, they are richer and more effective.

## **FISCAL IMPACT**

Implementation of this recommendation can be accomplished with existing resources.

## **6.2 Professional Development Related to Special Education**

### **FINDING**

Minutes of an instructional meeting reveal that expectations for administrators are that they “do the same thing, follow the same procedure;” however, little evidence was available that the division has placed the same expectation on delivery of professional development to realize its prioritized goals including the creation of a collaborative model at all schools. This may be occurring, but documentation is scarce to show that all staff who need training and inculcated skills are required to attend training and are supported in developing the ability demonstrate acquisition of necessary expertise.

Interviewees during the diagnostic visit expressed the following concerns regarding practices and staff development regarding Special Education:

- staff development needs regarding inclusion; and
- moving to more inclusion models.

Training has been offered to administrators, regular education and Special Education teachers regarding topics related to Special Education such as inclusion, differentiation of instruction, and child study procedures with all encouraged to attend offerings. Institutes, summer institutes, and academies are also provided for various audiences. The division even pays textbook and tuition expenses for paraprofessionals, related service providers, and teachers working toward endorsements in their assigned areas. Division leadership has devised content academies this year to assist Special Education teachers in accruing content-related knowledge and skills to become Highly Qualified. Although they are voluntary and teachers are not being paid to attend, nearly 50 teachers are availing themselves of the opportunity.

An Administrative Organization Study by the Virginia Association of School Superintendents dated October 2004 noted that they had conducted two special education studies within the past year. The studies recommended:

Collaboration between general and special education staff at the administrative and school levels must be strong so that there is clear understanding that the Standard Diploma is accessible to all students including students with disabilities. This collaboration must also be strong so that the vision for special education students moves beyond the idea of ‘compliance’ with standards and becomes the idea of ‘excellent instruction’ for all students including those with disabilities. In services on differentiated instruction are key to having all students serviced by expert teachers.

The Report on the Implementation of the LEA Comprehensive System of Personnel Development shows a number of “requirements” related to increasing knowledge and skills with respect to special education for all teachers and training in collaboration. The impact “what difference did this professional development make?” and evidence of impact, though, are not quantified but broad (i.e. SOL scores, participation rates). The division’s intent to train people to include students with special needs in as many educational opportunities as possible is apparent and sincere. It will remain merely intent, however, if certain elements are not developed and required. They include:

- identification of measurable baseline, formative, and summative data that provide evidence of progress;
- development of processes that measure impact of training on teacher skills and student knowledge;
- identification of high priority professional development experiences that support and contribute to the achievement of the division's most critical goals;
- requirement that essential staff including principals attend those training sessions; and
- monitoring of key skills that were taught so that they are supported and become an integral part of teacher practice and administrator observation.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

### **Recommendation 6-6:**

**Continue the work of the recently established Collaborative Task Force to ensure that the division's goal of creating collaborative models in every school will be met.**

By addressing and tying together the above-mentioned aspects that are essential for acquisition of newly learned skills and knowledge, the division will have included all key staff in the process, provided them the requisite training, and monitored and supported them as they practice and refine the proficiencies that will provide the equity of education underlying this initiative.

## **FISCAL IMPACT**

Implementation of this recommendation can be accomplished with existing resources.

### **6.3 Program Expenses and Receipts for Medicaid and Related Services**

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 the regular contact with the child and the parent or guardian.

The Medicaid Administrative Outreach Program allows Medicaid reimbursement to local education agencies. The payments to the local education agencies 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 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 Dinwiddie County Public Schools.

**FINDING**

DCPS personnel stated that they had investigated the possibility of filing for Medicaid reimbursement on several occasions, but had never followed through. No documentation was provided that detailed an analysis of potential revenues that could be realized or numbers of students with reimbursable disabilities or potential administrative costs that could be billed.

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 division, it does estimate a range of numbers of students. Based on a “penetration rate” of 40.38 percent, the state estimates that, of DCPS’s 660 students in Special Education, 266 of them will be on Medicaid. They then estimate a range from 60 percent (160) to 30 percent (80) of them who will require billable Medicaid services.

Dollars reimbursed for services to students could be used to support additional services for DCPS students. MGT talked to representatives with the Department of Education and similar divisions to DCPS to inquire about their accessing Medicaid reimbursement. Exhibit 6-6 shows reimbursements for the 2004-05 school year by those divisions. Of comparable divisions called that provided information on their Medicaid reimbursements, three responded. Of those, one had billed and planned to resume billing in the near future. The other two currently bill with one receiving reimbursements of \$38,974 which was an increase from \$25,973 the previous year in Isle of Wight County and the other \$175,816 in Lee County. These figures from divisions selected for their comparability to DCPS demonstrate the potential fiscal benefits that can be realized from identifying Medicaid eligible students and services and collecting data to submit for reimbursement of funds. Both of the divisions that are receiving reimbursable funds use a contractor to submit documents for billing. One company that provides an IEP on-line system has a software program for assistance with Medicaid reimbursement that may also facilitate filing for those revenues.

**EXHIBIT 6-6  
MEDICAID REIMBURSEMENTS RECEIVED BY COMPARABLE DIVISIONS  
TO DINWIDDIE COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS  
2004-05**

<b>DIVISION</b>	<b>STUDENT ENROLLMENT</b>	<b>REIMBURSEMENTS RECEIVED</b>
<b>Dinwiddie County</b>	<b>4,530</b>	<b>\$0</b>
Caroline County	3,928	Has billed and will in the future
Isle of Wight County	5,167	\$38,974
Lee County	3,680	\$175,816
Mecklenburg County	4,931	No response
Pulaski County	4,939	No response

Source: Created by MGT of America, November 2005.

**RECOMMENDATION**

**Recommendation 6-7:**

**Quantify potential revenues that could be collected by billing for Medicaid services for eligible students and determine whether the costs of filing would make the revenues worthwhile.**

Lee County, a smaller division than DCPS, is reaping revenues of \$175,816, demonstrating the potential windfall revenues that carefully examining eligible students and services could render for DCPS. Only when the division takes the time to use Commonwealth projections and investigate the categories of students that actually receive reimbursable Special Education services in DCPS will a quantifiable determination be able to be made. That estimate must then be offset by potential costs of personnel in terms of record-keeping to document services and to file for reimbursement. However, there are organizations that either conduct those services themselves or provide software to facilitate collection of data for filing. The division should examine the potential costs vs. revenues in order to determine whether it would benefit from Medicaid billing for administrative and direct services to students.

**FISCAL IMPACT**

The experiences of Lee County, although smaller in size, might be interpolated to estimate funds DCPS might be reimbursed. In Lee County with close to 1,000 students fewer than DCPS, reimbursements in 2004-05 were close to \$176,000 although a representative noted they were still not billing for all eligible services and were still working on getting some teachers to document eligible services. With an enrollment of approximately 1,000 more students, a conservative estimate of 20 percent of Lee County's 2004-05 revenues would reap \$35,163 for DCPS. Revenues are likely to increase in future years.

<b>Recommendation</b>	<b>2006-07</b>	<b>2007-08</b>	<b>2008-09</b>	<b>2009-10</b>	<b>2010-11</b>
Begin Billing for Medicaid reimbursement	\$0	\$35,163	\$35,163	\$35,163	\$35,163

**6.4 Testing of Students with Special Needs**

**FINDING**

Interviewees during the diagnostic expressed a concern relating to the success of Special Education students on state testing. Anecdotal observations during the site visit reflected a sense that Special Education students were making “fantastic” progress, “even those in self-contained classes.” AYP data substantiate that perception. They show that the division’s Students With Disabilities made AYP in English and Mathematics with the Proxy Percent added. In Science, they made AYP. However, Limited English Proficient students did not make AYP in Science. The performance of both groups was also a contributing factor to the Middle School not making AYP. In several elementary schools, the populations of both groups of students were too small to report, but performance exceeded the Annual Measurable Objective (AMO). In other

schools, although performance is improving and the numbers are small, it is still below that of other subgroups. Although the numbers are small, all of Dinwiddie Elementary Schools Hispanic and LEP students achieved the AMO in Science, Math, and English as did Rohoic's in Math and Science. Midway Elementary's Students With Disabilities also achieved in all three subjects at high levels, in Math and Science at 94.44 percent.

Last year 30 DCPS students who were not on grade level took the Virginia Grade Level Assessment. This year, the division anticipates that approximately 70 will. Interviewees also stated that 2.75 percent of DCPS Special Education students took the Virginia AAP so the division had to apply for an exception which they justified because of the high MR population in the division and IEP teams had made the determination that was the appropriate assessment for those students.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

### **Recommendation 6-8:**

**Intentionally develop a practice of sharing best practices within the division.**

It is evident from student performance data that some schools' students are excelling regardless of subgroup. The division should make a concerted effort for all personnel to become aware of practices that are providing dividends in terms of student performance in other local schools. By allocating time in administrative meetings, setting up visitations in division schools, using division personnel whose special needs students are succeeding at high levels on staff development days, and adding their best practices to the division's Web site, more teachers will use ideas and practices generated by DCPS staff and more DCPS students will improve in academic performance.

## **FISCAL IMPACT**

Implementation of this recommendation can be accomplished with existing resources.

### **6.5 Guidance Services**

Guidance services are intended to offer lessons in life skills, problem-solving, and substance abuse prevention to students in elementary classrooms, to present students with challenging personal or family needs the opportunity for support through resources, personal or small group counseling, and to provide family support and referral to appropriate community agencies that can more specifically provide support services.

## **FINDING**

In Dinwiddie County Public Schools, counselors are doing all of that and more, but the time they spend on testing responsibilities is detracting from their true guidance responsibilities. Six out of eight months, counselors have scheduled classroom guidance time from 30 to 45 minutes based on a school needs assessment, character traits the division wants to focus on and principals' concerns. They instruct students in aspects of Family Life when requested as well as chair child study teams. They conduct parent outreach and parenting classes and serve as liaisons for homeless, foster families,

gifted, ESL, and in abusive situations. Most of them conduct both individual and group counseling, so they provide a great deal of student support through the myriad “hats” they wear. However, during October for an estimated two to three weeks, in January, March, May and June, they are responsible for testing coordination and administration, including SELP tests when administered to ESL students. They make every effort to provide the student services for which counselors were originally placed in schools. However, during those critical testing months, their time is diverted from providing support and instruction for students to “administrivia” responsibilities for testing. Those responsibilities are essential for accountability purposes to demonstrate student academic growth and to point out areas in which students have not grown academically in order for strategies to be developed to address areas where they have not progressed as expected. However, diverting guidance counselors from the counseling and student and family support responsibilities that are foremost counseling responsibilities toward testing tasks is counter-productive with respect to student social and emotional needs. Research shows that schools that focus on developing a positive, healthy environment impact student behaviors in adolescence and beyond in a lasting way. Counselors are critical to creation of that positive healthy environment and developing student resilience.

**RECOMMENDATION**

**Recommendation 6-9:**

**Conduct an evaluation of time that counselors actually spend on testing responsibilities and consider offering a stipend to other personnel for assuming testing responsibilities at each school.**

According to interviews, counselors have to re-allocate their time from counseling responsibilities that they conduct during parts of five months of the school year to testing. Other divisions have had counselors maintain logs of time spent on testing throughout the year in order to determine time that was sidetracked from counseling responsibilities. Should the division determine that counselors spend even 50 percent of their time during those five months, they should strongly consider paying a stipend to other employees for testing responsibilities. Many test-related tasks are clerical in nature and should not be conducted by personnel as essential to student mental health and graduation eligibility as school counselors.

**FISCAL IMPACT**

Estimates of the costs of paying stipends to individuals for testing coordination are based on a per school stipend of \$2,000 per year. However, depending on the percent of time the division finds that counselors are spending on testing rather than counseling responsibilities, costs would be offset by that percentage of each counselor’s salary. Conservatively estimating that a study will be conducted during the 2006-07 school year with stipends beginning to be paid in the 2007-08 school year, annual costs at that point is an estimated \$14,000 (7 schools x \$2,000 each).

<b>Recommendation</b>	<b>2006-07</b>	<b>2007-08</b>	<b>2008-09</b>	<b>2009-10</b>	<b>2010-11</b>
Pay One Staff Member at Each School a Stipend for Testing Coordination	\$0	\$0	(\$14,000)	(\$14,000)	(\$14,000)

## **FINDING**

The division has developed procedures to devise specific strategies for Special Education students and those with 504 Plans who display continuing disruptive behavioral characteristics. A Behavior Intervention Plan (BIP) is developed with participation by parents and school staff on the IEP committee to address intervention strategies and assign accountability for specific individuals including parents for changing the student behavior pattern. First a functional behavioral assessment is conducted. Then the committee identifies:

- prevention strategies to change the situations that may have contributed to the behavior;
- teaching strategies and coping skills that will be taught;
- additional management strategies;
- administration of both positive and negative consequences; and
- specific assistance parents will provide to modify the behavior.

Parents, teachers, and students sign off on the written agreement. The school's Special Education case manager is to review the BIP even as frequently as every six weeks, according to interviewees.

The written document and its development process hold the promise of remediating student misbehavior with the assistance and commitment of adults and the student for whom the plan is developed. However, the high numbers of recommendations for expulsions to the School Board who are Special Education students noted in Chapter 6 raise doubt as to the efficacy of the plans, regardless of intentions and group and individual agreements and provisions for accountability. Additional interviewees noted that they were well-intended documents and procedures, but could possibly be better monitored for more consistent adherence to written agreements. Those concerns lead one to conclude that, although the document is well-developed with identification of strategies intended to change the student misbehavior and assignment of specific accountability for follow-up from the IEP meeting, no uniform procedures exist that ensure that application and monitoring of the agreements are consistent either in individual schools or across the division. The diagnostic concern expressed regarding a lack of consistency in Special Education appears to be confirmed in the case of BIPs.

Successful schools develop processes such as those in the BIPs that create partnerships with parents to participate in and support intervention strategies. However, without monitoring, even exemplary procedures are not effectively implemented and do not garner the intended results.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

### **Recommendation 6-10:**

**Develop procedures and a schedule that will ensure that once Behavior Intervention Plans are developed, they are monitored so that there is an assurance that they promote intended results.**

BIPs hold promise of changing student behaviors in a very positive way with their thoughtful elements that assign responsibility, require commitment by parties involved in developing them, and itemize specific strategies intended to support and change student behaviors. Once elements are added to the process that schedule monitoring and assign responsibility for it, they will become more effective change agents to improve student behavior. Just as achievement data in successful schools is systematically collected and analyzed to change instruction, behavioral data, when collected and analyzed will also change behavior.

## **FISCAL IMPACT**

Implementation of this recommendation can be accomplished with existing resources.

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## **7.0 FACILITIES USE AND MANAGEMENT**

In this chapter the findings and recommendations for facilities use and management of Dinwiddie County School Division are presented. The major sections of the chapter include:

- 7.1 Management of Facilities Operations
- 7.2 Capital Improvement Planning
- 7.3 Maintenance Services and Operations
- 7.4 Custodial Services
- 7.5 Energy Management

### **CHAPTER SUMMARY**

Facilities use and management issues in the Dinwiddie School Division currently center on the need for both improved and additional space. The division is facing continuing growth while schools are above or near capacity with the greatest degree of overcapacity occurring at Rohoic Elementary School (38 percent over capacity), Dinwiddie High School (33 percent over capacity), and Dinwiddie Middle School (32 percent over capacity). In addition, recent facility evaluations show that many of the existing schools are in need of significant upgrades. The Board of Supervisors have allocated \$55,000,000 toward capital improvements; however, current estimates to complete all needed additions and repairs far exceed this amount. This presents the paramount facility challenge facing the division and the solution will require division staff to look at a variety of alternatives including:

- reduction of the scope of planned projects;
- possible phasing of projects;
- possible realignment of grade levels;
- redistricting of attendance boundaries to best utilize all current facilities;
- cost saving alternatives including value engineering, re-use of current facilities and joint usage; and
- alternative sources of funding.

The good news is that the division has data and information to make informed decisions. They have completed a master plan, involved staff and citizens in the development of the plan, and have completed facility evaluations.

Other areas regarding facilities use and management issues include the overall maintenance and operations, custodial services and energy management. Possible savings exist in the re-allocation of maintenance dollars, providing consistency among custodial duties and the implementation of a divisionwide energy management program.

## **INTRODUCTION**

The purpose of facilities management services in school divisions centers on providing a safe, secure, and educationally stimulating environment for the division's students. Typical functions include:

- maintenance of facilities and grounds;
- custodial services (often in a combined role with school administration);
- capital planning including the development of a long range facilities plan;
- demographics including enrollment forecasts and school capacities;
- development of educational specifications for school facilities;
- completion of minor facility upgrades/enhancements;
- contracting of services for major facility upgrades/enhancements;
- oversight of long range plan implementation; and
- energy management.

Depending on the size of the school division, the above functions may be completed entirely with division employees or the majority of the services can be provided on a contracted basis. The Dinwiddie School Division is organized so that the above functions are provided primarily by the Office of Facility Operations with the exception that custodians are managed by their school principal and energy management is largely left undone. The school division relies on architectural partners for much of the long-range planning, enrollment forecasting, and the oversight of the long-range plan. With the current identified need for major capital improvements and additions, Dinwiddie Public Schools will need to study all alternatives for meeting that need.

### **7.1 Management of Facilities Operations**

The Management function for facilities operations typically coordinates all the physical resources in the division. It should effectively integrate facilities with all other aspects of institutional planning. As such, plant operation and maintenance staff should be involved in design and construction activities, and capital planning personnel should be knowledgeable about operations and maintenance activities. To be effective, facilities managers must also be involved in division strategic planning activities.

School Facility Operations in the Dinwiddie County Public Schools is managed by the Director of School Facility Operations who reports to the Executive Director for Administrative Services. A Facility Operations Specialist and Maintenance staff report directly to the director. Custodians are directly supervised by school principals with assistance from the director. Maintenance staff consists of two electricians, two

plumbers, two groundskeepers, one carpenter/locksmith and one driver. Other facilities functions (e.g. pressure testing, telephones, elevator maintenance, etc.) utilize contracted services.

The general satisfaction with facilities operations is reflected in the survey of division staff with all staff categories of staff indicating by an approximate two-thirds majority that the maintenance of facilities is good or excellent.

## **FINDING**

DCSD had a position of Coordinator for Capital Improvement until a resignation left the position vacant three years ago. The division decided not to replace the position at that time giving some of the responsibilities to the Director of School Facility Operations and some to the Executive Director for Administrative Services. In addition, the Superintendent has taken on the cause of championing the Capital Improvement Plan. Interviews with the current staff indicate that this division of roles is loosely understood by the individuals involved, but have not been clearly defined. It is the intent of the division to consider utilization of their architectural firm for oversight of the capital improvement projects.

## **COMMENDATION**

**The Dinwiddie County School Division is commended for eliminating the position of Coordinator for Capital Improvement, which has resulted in a more cost-effective operation.**

## **RECOMMENDATION**

### **Recommendation 7-1:**

**Clarify the roles associated with capital improvement planning and include those roles in the job descriptions for the Director of School Facility Operations, the Executive Director for Administrative Services, the Assistant Superintendent and Superintendent.**

The need for oversight of the planned capital improvements is paramount and should be clearly stated, agreed upon and in place prior to the start of any projects. While the current model of capital improvement planning has been adequate to date, the division intends to embark on an aggressive improvement process in the near future. To do so will require that all aspects of Capital Improvement Planning and Oversight (e.g. Utilization analysis, facility condition analysis, educational suitability analysis, review of construction documents, site planning, bidding process, change order approval, financial oversight, etc.) be clearly identified. Use of the architectural firm would not be considered a best practice as it could result in a conflict of interest.

## **FISCAL IMPACT**

There is no new fiscal impact to implement this recommendation. It can be completed through the use of current staff and a construction manager or "clerk of the works" position. While there will be cost for this added position, it has been included in the current estimates for facility improvements.

## **7.2 Capital Improvement Planning**

The primary mission for capital improvement planning is to provide facilities that meet the needs of students at the lowest possible cost. To accomplish this, the goals for capital improvement typically include:

- establishing a policy and framework for long range facilities planning;
- providing valid enrollment projections on which to base estimates of future needs for sites and facilities;
- selecting and acquiring proper school sites and to time their acquisition to precede actual need;
- determining the student capacity and educational adequacy of existing facilities and to evaluate 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 needs of the curriculum;
- securing architectural services to assist in planning and constructing facilities;
- developing a capital planning budget that balances facility needs, expenditures necessary to meet those needs, and how expenditures will be financed; and
- developing and satisfactorily carrying out the goals of a facilities master plan.

### **FINDING**

Since the reorganization of the capital improvement planning (CIP) organization, the above processes in the division have been conducted with the assistance of architectural firms. A ten-year master plan was developed in 2002 that included the following projects to be completed over the ten-year period:

- completion of a new Rohoic Elementary School;
- additions and Renovations to Southside, Midway, and Sunnyside Elementary Schools;
- renovation of the existing high school for middle school use;
- completion of a new high school; and
- relocation of existing administrative, technology, headstart and alternative programs to the existing middle school.

The estimated cost of the plan (in 2002 dollars with inflation factor of three percent year) totals approximately \$88 million. The estimated cost of the first phase of the plan (Rohoic, new high school, existing high school conversion) totals approximately \$73 million.

The justification for the proposed facility improvements, as documented in the ten year plan, includes:

- enrollment growth, particularly in the north part of the county;
- new subdivision approvals that total 115 sites currently under construction, 429 currently under review and an additional 1,052 in the discussion phase;
- condition and age of current facilities; and
- the overcrowded conditions at many of the existing facilities (there are currently six portables used as classrooms at Dinwiddie High School, seven at Dinwiddie Middle School, four at Sunnyside Elementary, four at Southside Elementary and 16 at Rohoic Elementary).

At this time, the Board of Supervisors has committed a total of \$55 million toward the capital improvement plan. With initial estimates higher than this amount and inflation increasing at a higher rate than expected, the division finds itself looking for alternative plans. The stated goals, while looking at alternatives, include working within the \$55 million budget from the county (while seeking other sources of revenue if possible), to cut costs without sacrificing educational necessities, to provide spaces that are conducive to learning, and to improve the overall quality of facilities.

The division has studied alternative facility scenarios involving different grade level groupings, different uses of existing facilities, school size guidelines, different priority groupings and the scaling back of planned projects. Throughout this process, they have relied a great deal on the data and cost estimates supplied by their architects. While this is an appropriate source, there are likely other alternatives that need to be considered. To examine this, Exhibit 7-1 provides an analysis of the existing conditions. Exhibit 7-2 provides an overview of the division's original facility improvement plan with associated costs and new capacities. Exhibits 7-3 and 7-4 provide examples and possible cost savings associated with sample alternative scenarios.

The existing conditions described in Exhibit 7-1 include the 2005-06 enrollments at each school and the total capacity of each school based on the 2002 architectural study. It is important to note that the capacity of a school can fluctuate based on the programs that are currently housed. For example, if more special education programs are placed in a particular school, the number of students assigned to those classes would reduce, thereby reducing the overall capacity. Exhibit 7-1 also includes the current utilization of the facility which represents the enrollment divided by the capacity; and the number of portables in use at each facility. The portables are not included in the calculation of school capacity.

**EXHIBIT 7-1  
DINWIDDIE COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS  
SCHOOL ENROLLMENT / CAPACITIES\*  
2005-06 SCHOOL YEAR**

SCHOOL / GRADE LEVELS	ENROLLMENT	CAPACITY	UTILIZATION %	NUMBER OF PORTABLE CLASSROOMS
Dinwiddie Elementary / Grades K-5	387	472	82%	0
Midway Elementary / Grades K-5	362	356	99%	0
Rohoic Elementary / Grades K-5	493	356	138%	16
Southside Elementary / Grades K-5	490	472	104%	4
Sunnyside Elementary / Grades K-5	301	312	96%	4
<b>Total Elementary</b>	<b>2,033</b>	<b>1,968</b>	<b>103%</b>	<b>24</b>
Dinwiddie Middle Grades / 6-8	1,190	900	132%	7
Dinwiddie High / Grades 9-12	1,468	1,100	133%	6
<b>Total Secondary</b>	<b>2,658</b>	<b>2,000</b>	<b>133%</b>	<b>13</b>

Source: Dinwiddie County Public Schools, 2005.

\* Capacities Based on 2002 Architectural Study

Exhibit 7-1 clearly demonstrates the need for additional space overall at the secondary level and at particular schools at the elementary level. This is demonstrated by the high utilization percentages and number of portable classrooms at each secondary school, and similar conditions at both Rohoic and Southside Elementary Schools. Best practices indicate that planning for additional space should occur whenever a school reaches 90 percent of capacity or higher. Using this standard, the division should have a facilities plan in place that addresses all schools except Dinwiddie Elementary.

Exhibit 7-2 provides the detail regarding the division's current facilities master plan. As shown, the plan addresses all facilities except Dinwiddie Elementary through either a new facility, renovations, and/or additions. The projected cost, however, in 2002 dollars exceeds the current appropriation by over \$30 million. With inflation over the past three years, it is likely that the plan now exceeds funding by over \$50 million.

**EXHIBIT 7-2  
DINWIDDIE COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS  
PROPOSED TEN YEAR MASTER PLAN**

SCHOOL / GRADE LEVELS	PROPOSED CHANGE	PROPOSED CAPACITY	CURRENT ENROLLMENT	ESTIMATED COST**
Dinwiddie Elementary / Grades K-5	No Change	472	387	0
Midway Elementary / Grades K-5	Additions and Renovations	356	362	\$2,484,000
Rohoic Elementary / Grades K-5	New School	720	493	\$14,681,000
Southside Elementary / Grades K-5	Additions and Renovations	472	490	\$5,882,000
Sunnyside Elementary / Grades K-5	Additions and Renovations	356	301	\$4,409,000
<b>Total Elementary</b>		<b>2,376</b>	<b>2,033</b>	<b>\$27,456,000</b>
Dinwiddie Middle / Grades 6-8	Renovate Existing High School	1,350	1,190	\$19,280,000
Dinwiddie High / Grades 9-12	New School	1,400	1,460	\$38,690,000
<b>Total Secondary</b>		<b>2,750</b>	<b>2,650</b>	<b>\$57,970,000</b>

Source: Dinwiddie County Public Schools, 2005.

\*\*2002 dollars

As stated above, this proposed ten-year plan addresses the most pressing concerns (facility condition and capacity), but is at a cost well above the existing appropriation. Because the cost exceeds available funds, division personnel have been looking at alternatives that address the most pressing issues, concentrating on the needs at Dinwiddie High School, Dinwiddie Middle School and Rohoic Elementary School due to the extreme overcrowding conditions at those schools. Positives and negatives regarding the original plan include:

**Positives:**

- eliminates the use of the current Dinwiddie Middle School for regular instructional purposes—condition evaluations indicate this is the facility that is in most need of replacement and/or costs to renovate would exceed a realistic cost/benefit ratio;
- addresses the most pressing need for additional capacity (secondary schools and Rohoic Elementary);
- creates a secondary campus model where facilities and services can be shared;
- does not require redistricting of existing boundaries at the elementary level; and
- keeps in place the K-5, 6-8 and 9-12 grade configurations.

**Negatives:**

- cost exceeds existing funds;
- high school capacity will need to be increased over the term of the ten-year plan;
- creates school sizes that may exceed desired ranges, particularly at the new Rohoic Elementary and the existing Dinwiddie High School (converted to middle school);
- renovations at Southside and Midway Elementary Schools do not address possible future capacity issues.

Exhibit 7-3 below shows the possible savings utilizing the facility alternative that is in the discussion phases among division personnel. This alternative provides for the following changes to the master plan described in Exhibit 7-2 above:

- planned improvements to Midway, Southside and Sunnyside Elementary Schools are not included;
- the existing Rohoic Elementary School would continue to be used as a grades K-2 facility;
- the new Rohoic School would be reduced in scope and utilized for grades 3-5;

- the existing Dinwiddie Middle School would continue to be utilized as a grade 6 facility; and
- the existing Dinwiddie High School would be utilized for middle school grades 7-8 without the planned renovations.

**EXHIBIT 7-3  
DINWIDDIE COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS  
ALTERNATIVE MASTER PLAN**

SCHOOL / GRADE LEVELS	PROPOSED CHANGE	PROPOSED CAPACITY	CURRENT ENROLLMENT	ESTIMATED COST**
Dinwiddie Elementary / Grades K-5	No Change	472	387	0
Midway Elementary / Grades K-5	No Change	356	362	0
Existing Rohoic / Grades 1-2	No Change	356	165	0
New Rohoic / Grades 2-5	New School	400	328	\$10,000,000
Southside Elementary / Grades K-5	No Change	472	490	0
Sunnyside Elementary / Grades K-5	No Change	312	301	0
<b>Total Elementary</b>		<b>2,376</b>	<b>2,033</b>	<b>\$10,000,000</b>
Existing Dinwiddie Middle School	Use for grade six	900	400	0
Dinwiddie Middle / Grades 7-8	Utilize Existing High School	1,100	800	0
<b>Dinwiddie High / Grades 9-12</b>	<b>New School</b>	<b>1,400</b>	<b>1,460</b>	<b>\$38,690,000</b>
<b>Total Secondary</b>		<b>2,750</b>	<b>2,650</b>	<b>\$38,690,000</b>

Source: Dinwiddie County Public Schools and MGT analysis, 2005.

\*\*2002 dollars

The positives and negatives of the above alternative facility scenario include:

**Positives:**

- comes reasonably close to falling within current funding sources—assuming an average of 5 percent annual increase in construction costs since 2002 the total equals \$58,428,000—the number may actually be higher due to recent natural disasters driving the cost even higher;
- addresses the most pressing need for additional capacity (secondary schools and Rohoic Elementary);
- allows for phasing of projects to stay within current budgetary limits. The new high school and a smaller Rohoic can be completed currently as a phase 1;
- creates a secondary campus model where facilities and services can be shared; and
- does not require redistricting of existing boundaries at the elementary level.

**Negatives:**

- continues to utilize schools that are in major need of renovation without addressing those needs;
- high school capacity will need to be increased over the term of the ten-year plan; and
- creates grade level configurations that are different than those currently. While this may be appropriate this decision should come as a result of educational program planning, not as a reason to fit students into current facilities.

Exhibit 7-4 below provides a second alternative scenario that may be considered by the division. This scenario was developed by MGT staff based on discussions with division staff and a review of the data. This is not meant to reflect the “best” scenario for addressing the facility issues, as only the division staff and community can determine that. Rather, it is intended to reflect an alternate way of looking at the issue of capital needs throughout the division and may provide a master plan that lends itself to phasing of projects in order to address the current funding shortfall.

**EXHIBIT 7-4  
DINWIDDIE COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS  
POSSIBLE SECOND ALTERNATIVE MASTER PLAN**

<b>SCHOOL / GRADE LEVELS</b>	<b>PROPOSED CHANGE</b>	<b>PROPOSED CAPACITY</b>	<b>CURRENT ENROLLMENT</b>	<b>ESTIMATED COST**</b>
Dinwiddie Elementary / Grades K-5	No Change	472	387	0
Midway Elementary / Grades K-5	Renovations and Additions	400	362	\$3,000,000*
Existing Rohoic / Grades K-5	No Change	356	250	0
New Rohoic / Grades K-5	New School	400	250	\$10,000,000
Southside Elementary / Grades K-5	Renovations and Additions	500	490	\$5,000,000*
Sunnyside Elementary / Grades K-5	No Change	312	301	0
<b>Total Elementary</b>		<b>2,376</b>	<b>2,033</b>	<b>\$18,000,000</b>
Existing Dinwiddie Middle School / Grades 6-8	Eliminate Use of portables and cafeteria building, Addition for new cafeteria	750	600	\$3,000,000*
Dinwiddie Middle / Grades 7-8	Utilize Existing High School	1,100	600	0
Dinwiddie High / Grades 9-12	New School	1,400	1,460	\$38,690,000
<b>Total Secondary</b>		<b>2,750</b>	<b>2,650</b>	<b>\$41,690,000</b>

Source: MGT Analysis based on Dinwiddie County Public Schools data, 2005.  
\*MGT estimates \*\*2002 Dollars

The positives and negatives of the above facility scenario include:

**Positives:**

- keeps school sizes reasonably small which coincides with recent research regarding appropriate school size;
- addresses the most pressing need for additional capacity (secondary schools and Rohoic Elementary);
- allows for phasing of projects to stay within current budgetary limits. The new high school and a smaller Rohoic can be completed currently as a phase 1;
- keeps grade level configurations as they currently exist; and
- eliminates the use of facilities at Dinwiddie Middle School that are in highest need of replacement.

**Negatives:**

- overall cost exceeds current funding—assuming an average of five percent annual increase in construction costs since 2002 the total equals \$71,628,000—the number may actually be higher due to recent natural disasters driving the cost even higher;
- high school capacity will need to be increased over the term of the ten-year plan; and
- requires re-districting of attendance boundaries to accommodate a second school in the Rohoic area and to accommodate two middle schools.

**RECOMMENDATION**

**Recommendation 7-2:**

**Determine school size and grade level configuration criteria and develop additional alternative facility master plans based on those models.**

Existing master plans and corresponding facility plans have fluctuated based on meeting the budgetary requirements. While this is, of course, a paramount concern, it should not override the educational philosophy and goals of the division. As demonstrated in Exhibit 7-3 above, master plans can be created using a smaller school model that may not significantly increase cost. By determining the facility parameters, the division can then prioritize projects in order to stay within budgetary limits.

**FISCAL IMPACT**

There is no immediate fiscal impact to this recommendation

**FINDING**

The division is considering implementation of a value engineering process with their current facility plans. Within this process it is the intent of the division to involve their current architects. Value Engineering is a process that usually involves a team of professionals separate from the design architects that review the proposed documents to determine if alternative systems or methods can reduce the total costs without sacrificing quality. The team typically consists of an experience architect, appropriate engineering professionals and educational program specialists. Data has shown that value engineering typically results in savings in the range of 2 percent to 5 percent.

**RECOMMENDATION**

**Recommendation 7-3:**

**Engage a professional value engineering team to review proposed school designs.**

Value engineering is a review process that identifies areas of cost savings early enough in the design to make changes and adjustments in the construction documents without re-design fees. The process should be conducted by an independent consulting team comprised of architects, mechanical and electrical engineers, landscape designers, educational specialists, cost estimators and other professionals as appropriate. The value engineering process should be conducted early in the design development phase when enough information is available to determine costs accurately but there is still opportunity to make changes.

**FISCAL IMPACT**

Assuming a total construction budget of \$55 million spread over four years, less an estimated cost of \$30,000 per project for value engineering services, and a three percent savings due to the value engineering process, the potential cost savings are shown below.

<b>Recommendation</b>	<b>2006-07</b>	<b>2007-08</b>	<b>2008-09</b>	<b>2009-10</b>	<b>2010-11</b>
Hire a Value Engineering Team	\$0	\$382,500	\$382,500	\$412,500	\$412,500

**FINDING**

The division has been a leader in examining alternative sources of capital funding. Possibilities being examined have included foundation sources, grant sources and federal sources. Because of the possible impact of federal expansion within the county, division personnel have formed a coalition of school districts throughout the country that face similar circumstances. This coalition will result in a much stronger voice to express their concerns.

## **COMMENDATION**

**The Dinwiddie County School Division is commended for taking a leadership role in examining possible alternative sources of capital funding.**

### **7.3 Maintenance and Operations**

The primary mission for division maintenance and operations is to provide for a physical environment that enhances teaching and learning. Typical goals for maintenance and operations include:

- extending the life of facilities and maximize their potential use;
- maximizing the facility staff productivity;
- improving procedures;
- selecting the most cost-effective methods for operations;
- reducing and eliminating fire hazards;
- improving and maintaining the aesthetics of facilities;
- managing an automated and integrated work control system that allows for the analysis and audit of the operation and its functions;  
and
- to ensure the safety and security of buildings and people.

Maintenance and operations in the Dinwiddie County Public Schools are managed by the Director of School Facility Operations. In addition to the Director and Assistant, the staff consists of two electricians, two plumbers, two groundskeepers, one carpenter/locksmith and one driver. In addition to the staff functions, the division contracts maintenance services for tech support, HVAC backup, communication systems, elevators, and pressure testing.

## **FINDING**

The Dinwiddie School Division has instituted an on-line work order tracking system that is available divisionwide so each school can keep track of the status of work orders submitted. Work orders are submitted electronically by each school or department to the Office of Facility Operations where job tasks are assigned and included with the order. As tasks are completed the disposition and costs are recorded and included with the file. Each user then has the ability to track the progress of work orders.

While the number of staff and budgetary restrictions cause some work orders to be delayed, it is possible for the sender to see the disposition and look for explanation when necessary.

## **COMMENDATION**

**The Dinwiddie County School Division is commended for instituting an on-line work order system that is not often seen in divisions of this size.**

## **FINDING**

The Dinwiddie School Division has instituted maintenance staff training that includes:

- weekly “tool-box talks” with all maintenance staff;
- safety presentations;
- certification updates; and,
- annual custodial training.

This type of regular training allow the staff to communicate regularly with one another, keep up-to-date on current techniques, and maintain a good sense of camaraderie among all staff.

## **COMMENDATION**

**The Dinwiddie County School Division is commended for instituting a regular program of maintenance and custodial staff training.**

## **FINDING**

The division groundskeepers are responsible for grounds upkeep at all schools except Midway, Rohoic, and Sunnyside Elementary Schools. This has resulted in a discrepancy among custodial duties and responsibilities that are not necessarily dealt with when determining the number of custodians needed at each school (see recommendation 7.4 below). There are also few formal processes or procedures in place for determining the types of materials to be used and/or the equipment necessary for appropriate upkeep of the school grounds.

This issue goes hand-in-hand with the overall need for the division to define roles and responsibilities within the area of maintenance and operations and provide standards from which to evaluate performance.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

### **Recommendation 7-4:**

**Define the duties and set performance standards for division and custodial staff that takes into account the specific requirements at each school.**

There exists a degree of concern among division staff regarding the perceived unfairness of duties among similar staff members. Defining the roles and responsibilities associated with the different conditions at each school will help to alleviate this issue.

## **FISCAL IMPACT**

There is no immediate fiscal impact to this recommendation

## **FINDING**

The budgeting process for maintenance supplies currently is based on an equal set amount for each school. This results in confusion over the amount that should be provided as school needs vary and forces division staff, in terms of purchasing needed items, to “rob Peter to pay Paul”. This in turn causes perceived differences among schools. A process of budgeting based on the condition and square footage of each facility provides for an approach that will be seen as fair throughout the division.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

### **Recommendation 7-5:**

**Annually assess the maintenance needs at each school and budget accordingly.**

This recommendation requires the input of school level staff and redefine the duties and set performance standards for division and custodial staff that takes into account the specific requirements at each school. An annual assessment and corresponding budget process will require the input of school level staff which, in turn, will reduce the perceived unfairness that currently exists. The division has the systems in place currently to budget and report in this manner.

## **FISCAL IMPACT**

There is no immediate fiscal impact to this recommendation for improved budgeting. The assessment of needs, however, will likely result in the need for increased budget amounts.

## **7.4 Custodial Services**

Custodial services in the Dinwiddie School Division are directly supervised by each building principal with assistance from the Director of School Facility Operations. Each school has a head custodian with additional custodians based on the size of the school. Exhibit 7- 5 below provides an overview of custodial staffing at each school.

**EXHIBIT 7-5  
DINWIDDIE SCHOOLS CUSTODIAL STAFFING  
2005-06 SCHOOL YEAR**

SCHOOL	SQUARE FOOTAGE		CUSTODIAL STAFFING	SQUARE FT. / CUSTODIAN
	Without Portables	With Portables		
Dinwiddie High School	148,800	153,260	7	21,894
Dinwiddie Middle School	131,344	138,064	8	17,258
Dinwiddie Elementary	78,125	78,125	5	15,625
Midway Elementary	55,885	57,805	5	11,561*
Rohoic Elementary	41,445	52,005	4	13,001*
Southside Elementary	77,528	85,208	5	17,042
Sunnyside Elementary	39,352	43,152	2.5	17,261*
<b>Total</b>	<b>572,479</b>	<b>607,619</b>	<b>36.5</b>	<b>16,647</b>

Source: Dinwiddie School Division and MGT Analysis, 2005.

\*Custodial duties includes grounds

**FINDING**

Custodial staffing in the Dinwiddie School Division ranges from a high of 21,894 square feet per custodian at Dinwiddie High School to 11,561 at Midway Elementary. Custodians at Midway, Rohoic, and Sunnyside have the additional duty of grounds work, so assuming this requires .5 position, the square footage per custodian at those schools is 12,845; 14,859; and 21,576 respectively. The total average square footage per custodian assuming the .5 position for grounds at the three elementary schools is 17,361.

In previous performance reviews, MGT has seen school districts assign an average of between 12,600 to 23,000 square feet per custodian. Based on these averages and industry standards, MGT has determined that the best practice for custodial cleaning staff is approximately 19,000 gross square feet per custodian plus .5 FTE for elementary schools, .75 FTE for middle schools, and 1.0 FTE for high schools to cover head custodian duties. Exhibit 7-6 below shows the staffing level that would be required at each school utilizing this best practice standard.

**EXHIBIT 7-6  
DINWIDDIE COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS  
CUSTODIAL STAFFING UTILIZING BEST PRACTICE STANDARDS**

SCHOOL	TOTAL SQUARE FOOTAGE	CUSTODIANS AT BEST PRACTICE STANDARD*	CURRENT CUSTODIANS	DIFFERENCE
Dinwiddie High School	153,260	9	7	2
Dinwiddie Middle School	138,064	8	8	-
Dinwiddie Elementary	78,125	4.5	5	(.50)
Midway Elementary	57,805	3.5	5	(1.5)
Rohoic Elementary	52,005	3.5	4	(.50)
Southside Elementary	85,208	5.0	5	-
Sunnyside Elementary	43,152	2.5	2.5	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>607,619</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>36.5</b>	<b>(.50)</b>

Source: MGT Analysis, 2005.

\*Rounded to the nearest .5 position

## **RECOMMENDATION**

### **Recommendation 7-6:**

**Reevaluate custodial staffing to assure that assignments are based on a square footage basis to the degree possible.**

While it is the current practice in the Division to assign custodians on a square footage basis, there currently exists a wide discrepancy in custodial staffing levels among Dinwiddie Schools. The Division should review the duties of each custodian and re-evaluate staffing levels accordingly.

## **FISCAL IMPACT**

There is no immediate fiscal impact to this recommendation. Exhibit 7-6 above indicates the possibility of a half-time position savings, but until the duties (including grounds) are defined, this cannot be certain.

## **7.5 Energy Management**

Efficient energy management is a vital tool for the distribution of the division's utilities. Energy audits and other sources of data are essential to control energy costs. Such data will help to determine priorities and will help to monitor and evaluate the success of a program. While the purpose of the energy management program is to minimize waste and reduce costs, the program also should ensure comfort in occupied spaces and encourage energy awareness across the division.

Energy management strategies are implemented in a fragmented manner in the Dinwiddie County Public Schools. Some schools have energy management control systems for operating Heating, Ventilating and Air Conditioning (HVAC) systems while others do not. Still others have them in some portions of the buildings while other portions do not. There is no designated individual(s) responsible for implementing energy management programs, either at the division or individual school level.

## **FINDING**

Dinwiddie School Division does not have an aggressive, comprehensive energy management program fully in place. Therefore, the division is not taking advantage of possibly significant opportunities to save energy dollars by having an aggressive energy management program. If implemented properly, an energy management program will provide substantial energy savings, without sacrificing comfort, and better information on which to make capital improvement decisions based on the knowledge gained through better understanding of each facility's energy use patterns.

Common energy management programs include the following components:

- coordinating with utilities to ensure best rates;
- monitoring utility use for irregularities which may indicate leaks;

- preparing and distributing facility checklists during holiday periods;
- checking heating, ventilating, and air conditioning units in schools and portable classrooms;
- training staff in thermostat operation;
- consulting on design of new schools;
- overseeing scheduling of times of operation for HVAC equipment at all schools;
- checking all utility meters;
- checking utility bills for accuracy; and
- conducting education programs for building users.

Some of the above functions can be stated through participation in the US Department of Energy's "Rebuild America" program. To fully realize the potential of energy savings, however, a more aggressive plan will need to be put in place.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

### **Recommendation 7-7:**

**Institute an aggressive energy management program throughout all schools and facilities.**

An aggressive energy management program will consist of three fundamental components. They are:

- *Supply side efficiency*: Purchasing energy at the lowest available dollars;
- *Operating efficiency*: Operating the equipment that consumes energy as efficiently as possible; and,
- *Demand side efficiency*: Upgrading existing equipment with more energy efficient equipment when it is cost effective to do so.

Items to be included in an aggressive energy program may include:

- researching billing irregularities;
- researching energy efficient lighting retrofits;
- researching energy saving office equipment;

- energy education programs for staff and students;
- energy use and tracking software; and,
- incentive rebate programs for school that reduce energy consumption.

**FISCAL IMPACT**

A recent proposal to the division estimated an annual savings of \$1.00 per square foot with a start-up and study cost of \$65,000. Assuming these estimates, a total division square footage of 550,000 square feet (excluding portables), and 50 percent rebate to the schools the fiscal impact is shown below.

<b>Recommendation</b>	<b>2006-07</b>	<b>2007-08</b>	<b>2008-09</b>	<b>2009-10</b>	<b>2010-11</b>
Institute an Energy Management Program	(\$65,000)	\$225,000	\$225,000	\$225,000	\$225,000

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## **8.0 TRANSPORTATION**

One of the primary responsibilities of a school division is to transport its students safely and effectively. School buses in the United States transport nearly half of all school aged children on an annual basis. Nationally, the annual cost for public school bus transportation is nearly \$10 billion. School divisions collectively operate one of the safest forms of transportation in the country, better than any other form of mass transit and nearly 2,000 times safer than a family car. Nationwide, there are fewer than 10 school bus passenger fatalities each year. In contrast, more than 600 school-aged children are killed each year in passenger cars or other private vehicles during school hours.

Yet, in the face of growing public expectations and ever-shrinking public dollars, this superior national achievement is at a crossroads in many schools across the country. School division budgets continue to shrink while public expectations continue to rise. Parents expect door-to-door, timely service, while transportation directors struggle with employee absenteeism and buses that are in service from before dawn until past dusk, with few spares in their lots. Meanwhile, in their efforts to improve student achievement, school boards across the country are pressuring transportation departments to do more with less and achieve ever-greater efficiencies so that saved dollars can be spent in the classroom.

This chapter presents the major findings, commendations, and recommendations for the transportation function in Dinwiddie County Public Schools (DCPS). The five major sections of this chapter are:

- 8.1 Organization and Staffing
- 8.2 Planning, Policies, and Procedures
- 8.3 Routing and Scheduling
- 8.4 Training and Safety
- 8.5 Vehicle Maintenance

### **CHAPTER SUMMARY**

Overall, the DCPS Transportation Department provides effective and efficient student transportation services. The department is in compliance with most VDOE policies and procedures. The department does an effective job training drivers, maintaining buses, maintaining its commercial fleet, and delivering students to and from their destinations; however, MGT found some areas that could be improved. Making the recommended improvements outlined in this chapter should increase the operational efficiency and effectiveness of the Transportation Department.

Notable accomplishments of the DCPS Transportation Department are:

- The staff of bus drivers in DCPS are highly-experienced, with many having served more than a decade in the same position.
- The Transportation Department has maintained a good safety record.

- The vehicle maintenance program implemented by the Shop Foreman has resulted in high levels of satisfaction among DCPS staff.

MGT found that the division needs to improve in the areas of bus routing, school scheduling, and the payment of overtime for bus drivers. Specifically:

- DCPS does not use a routing software package to plan student transportation bus routes. This practice has resulted in inefficiencies in transportation operations that are costing the school division substantial amounts in bus costs, driver salaries, maintenance, and fuel.
- The current DCPS school start and end times preclude the operation of double bus routes, resulting in a high number of buses operating unnecessarily. The implementation of a staggered school schedule would reduce costs for the Transportation Department.
- DCPS pays a substantial amount in annual overtime for bus drivers who perform other duties within the school division. The situation should be rectified by reducing the number of bus routes needed to transport DCPS students on a daily basis.

## **INTRODUCTION**

The Code of Virginia, Section 22.1-176 states “County School Boards may provide transportation of pupils, but nothing herein contained shall be construed as requiring such transportation.” In compliance with this policy, DCPS provides bus transportation to and from school within the student’s attendance area. The DCPS Transportation Department serves a small student population within a large geographic area. Dinwiddie County encompasses approximately 550 square miles, much of which is comprised of rural areas. The lack of population density necessitates that DCPS buses travel a high proportion of miles to students in order to complete daily routes.

In the 2004-05 school year, the school division is responsible for providing transportation to the approximately 4,500 students nested in seven DCPS schools. The Transportation Department also provides transportation for school related field trips, sporting events, and other activities requiring student transportation. In addition to regular bus routes, the Department also runs Special Education routes for students with disabilities that transport these students both between home and school and to special program sites located throughout the area.

MGT conducted a survey of DCPS administrators, principals, teachers as part of this efficiency review. These staff members were asked to assess the quality of the transportation function within DCPS. As is shown in Exhibit 8-1, 50 percent of administrators and principals, along with 45 percent of teachers stated that the transportation function *needs some improvement* or *needs major improvement*. Conversely, 50 percent of administrators and principals with 39 percent of teachers stated that DCPS transportation services are *adequate* or *outstanding*. In comparison with over 100 school divisions completing the same survey during other MGT efficiency reviews, DCPS staff have a less favorable view of transportation quality overall.

**EXHIBIT 8-1  
TRANSPORTATION COMPARISON SURVEY  
RESPONSES OF ADMINISTRATORS, PRINCIPALS AND TEACHERS**

<b>RESPONDENT GROUP</b>	<b>PERCENT INDICATING NEEDS SOME OR MAJOR IMPROVEMENT</b>	<b>OTHER SCHOOL DIVISIONS</b>	<b>PERCENT INDICATING ADEQUATE OR OUTSTANDING</b>	<b>OTHER SCHOOL DIVISIONS</b>
Dinwiddie County Public Schools Administrators	50%	21%	50%	65%
Dinwiddie County Public Principals	50%	43%	50%	54%
Dinwiddie County Public Teachers	45%	32%	39%	46%

Source: MGT Survey, October, 2005.

The most recent data available from the Virginia Department of Education (VDOE) was for the 2003-04 school year. These data were used to compare the performance of DCPS transportation to the performance of five selected peer school divisions. Exhibit 8-2 provides a comparison of total students transported in each school division. As can be seen, DCPS transported 3,792 students in 2001-02, 3,985 students in 2002-03, and 4,136 students in 2003-04. The peer group averages for the three year span were 3,805 students in 2001-02, 4,062 students in 2002-03, and 3,956 students in 2003-04.

**EXHIBIT 8-2  
STUDENTS TRANSPORTED ANNUALLY  
2001-02 THROUGH 2003-04 SCHOOL YEARS**

<b>SCHOOL DIVISION</b>	<b>2001-02</b>	<b>2002-03</b>	<b>2003-04</b>
<b>Dinwiddie County</b>	<b>3,792</b>	<b>3,985</b>	<b>4,136</b>
Caroline County	3,238	3,378*	3,517
Pulaski County	3,803	3,793	3,767
Mecklenburg County	4,692	4,853	4,591
Isle of Wight County	4,233	4,586	4,586
Lee County	3,074	3,092	3,141
<b>PEER SCHOOL DIVISION AVERAGE</b>	<b>3,805</b>	<b>4,062</b>	<b>3,956</b>

Source: Commonwealth of Virginia, Department of Education, 2005.

\*29,755 students were incorrectly reported for this year. An average of 2001-02 and 2003-04 was used in place of this number and was used for all other comparisons of this year.

A review of annual transportation expenditures was conducted to compare the cost associated with student transportation in each of the school divisions. Yearly transportation costs for DCPS and the peer divisions are shown in Exhibit 8-3. As is shown in the exhibit, DCPS spent \$1,337,037 for transportation in 2001-02, \$1,654,843 in 2002-03, and \$1,076,352 in 2003-04. In comparison, the peer school division average cost was \$1,176,679 for 2001-02, \$1,203,325 for 2002-03, and \$1,192,136 for 2003-04.

Exhibits 8-4 and 8-5 provide comparisons of regular students and exclusive (Special Education) students transported in DCPS and the comparison peer school divisions.

**EXHIBIT 8-3  
ANNUAL TRANSPORTATION COSTS  
2001-02 THROUGH 2003-04 SCHOOL YEARS**

SCHOOL DIVISION	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04
<b>Dinwiddie County</b>	<b>1,337,037</b>	<b>1,654,843</b>	<b>1,076,352</b>
Caroline County	1,611,786	1,457,601	1,478,927
Pulaski County	1,038,396	855,144	1,145,706
Mecklenburg County	1,200,389	1,313,415	1,426,841
Isle of Wight County	1,491,419	1,567,481	1,472,093
Lee County	1,176,679	1,203,325	1,192,136
<b>PEER SCHOOL DIVISION AVERAGE</b>	<b>\$1,176,679</b>	<b>\$1,203,325</b>	<b>\$1,192,136</b>

Source: Commonwealth of Virginia, Department of Education, 2005.

**EXHIBIT 8-4  
REGULAR STUDENTS TRANSPORTED  
2001-02 THROUGH 2003-04 SCHOOL YEARS**

SCHOOL DIVISION	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04
<b>Dinwiddie County</b>	<b>3,763</b>	<b>3,950</b>	<b>4,089</b>
Caroline County	3,228	3,475	3,517
Pulaski County	3,689	3,678	3,679
Mecklenburg County	4,660	4,825	4,548
Isle of Wight County	4,143	4,487	4,486
Lee County	3,001	3,014	3,020
<b>PEER SCHOOL DIVISION AVERAGE</b>	<b>3,747</b>	<b>3,905</b>	<b>3,890</b>

Source: Commonwealth of Virginia, Department of Education, 2005.

**EXHIBIT 8-5  
EXCLUSIVE STUDENTS TRANSPORTED  
2001-02 THROUGH 2003-04 SCHOOL YEARS**

SCHOOL DIVISION	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04
<b>Dinwiddie County</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>47</b>
Caroline County	10	N/A	9
Pulaski County	114	115	88
Mecklenburg County	32	28	43
Isle of Wight County	90	99	100
Lee County	73	78	121
<b>PEER SCHOOL DIVISION AVERAGE</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>71</b>	<b>68</b>

Source: Commonwealth of Virginia, Department of Education, 2005.

As the exhibits show, in 2001-02, DCPS transported a total of 3,792 students, of which 3,763 were regular students and 29 (less than one percent) were exclusive (Special Education) students. In 2002-03, DCPS transported 3,950 regular students and 35 exclusive students (again, less than one percent). In 2003-04, DCPS transported 4,089 regular students and 47 exclusive students (one percent). In comparison, the peer division average total in 2001-02 was 3,805 of which 3,747, or 97 percent, were regular students and 58, or two percent, were exclusive students. In 2002-03, the peer division average of total students transported was 4,062 of which 3,905 (96 percent) were regular students and 71 (approximately two percent) were exclusive students. In 2003-04, the peer division average of total students transported was 3,956 of which 3,890 (98 percent) were regular students and 68 (approximately two percent) were exclusive

students. Over the three-year span, DCPS increased the total number of students transported by eight percent, compared to the peer average of only four percent. Similarly, exclusive student transportation increased by 38 percent in DCPS whereas the peer average only increased by 15 percent over the three-year period.

The cost per mile for regular and exclusive students is shown in Exhibit 8-6.

**EXHIBIT 8-6  
COST PER MILE FOR REGULAR AND EXCLUSIVE STUDENTS  
2003-04 SCHOOL YEAR**

SCHOOL DIVISION	REGULAR STUDENTS COST PER MILE	EXCLUSIVE STUDENT COST PER MILE
<b>Dinwiddie County</b>	<b>\$0.60</b>	<b>\$16.87</b>
Caroline County	\$2.10	\$2.10
Pulaski County	\$1.87	\$2.60
Mecklenburg County	\$1.53	\$2.28
Isle of Wight County	\$1.82	\$2.41
Lee County	\$1.91	\$1.91
<b>PEER SCHOOL DIVISION AVERAGE</b>	<b>\$1.64</b>	<b>\$4.70</b>

Source: Commonwealth of Virginia, Department of Education, 2005.

Exhibit 8-7 provides a comparison of bus usage among the peer school divisions. VDOE data from 2002-03 was used because more recent data were not available. As is shown, DCPS is just above the average student population (3,985 compared to the average of 3,948), but has the second highest number of buses (91 compared to the average of 79). DCPS also reports the lowest average number of pupils per bus and has the highest average miles per bus per day.

**EXHIBIT 8-7  
PUPILS, BUSES AND SPARE BUSES  
2002-03 SCHOOL YEAR\***

SCHOOL DIVISION	PUPILS	BUSES	AVERAGE PUPILS PER BUS	AVERAGE MILES PER BUS PER DAY
<b>Dinwiddie County</b>	3,985	91	44	83
Caroline County	3,378**	68	50	64
Pulaski County	3,793	62	61	63
Mecklenburg County	4,853	108	45	75
Isle of Wight County	4,586	78	59	77
Lee County	3,092	69	45	78
<b>PEER SCHOOL DIVISION AVERAGE</b>	<b>3,948</b>	<b>79</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>73</b>

Source: Commonwealth of Virginia, Department of Education, 2005.

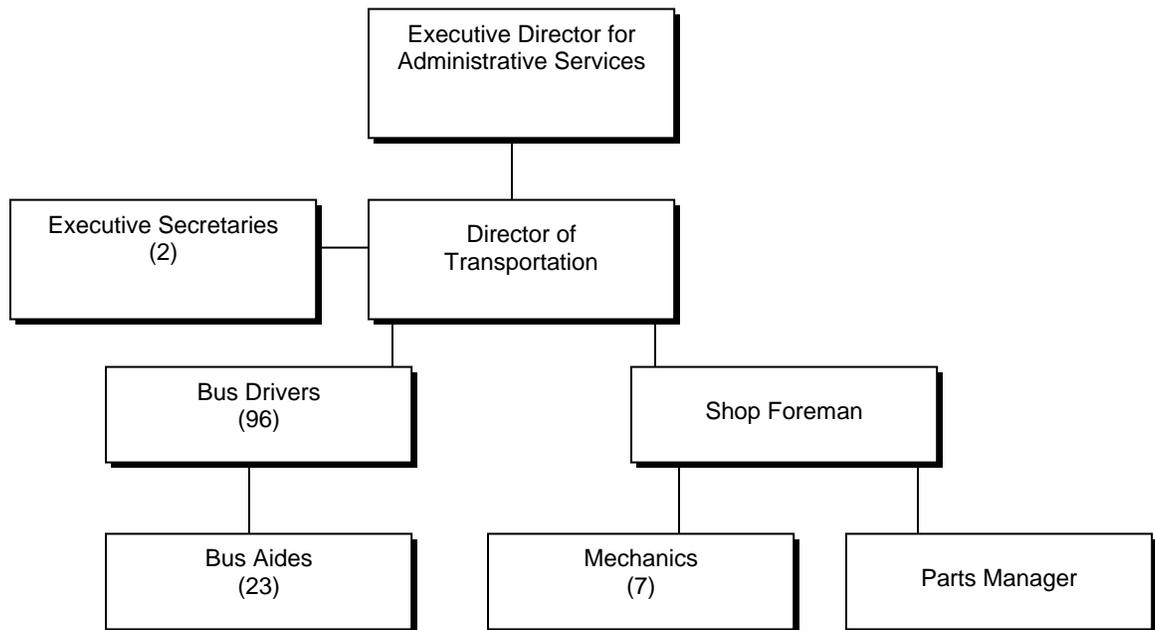
\*2004-05 data were not available for this comparison.

\*\*The average of total pupils reported for 2001-02 and 2003-04 was used to calculate this number.

The major goal of transportation departments needs to be to deliver their services efficiently, effectively, and safely. Greater efficiencies will potentially return dollars to the classroom and greater effectiveness will lead to higher quality transportation services. An efficient and effective DCPS Transportation Department will directly support the achievement of systematic goals.

Exhibit 8-8 shows the organizational structure of the DCPS Transportation Department. The Director of Transportation reports to the Executive Director for Administrative Services. Of the 96 full-time drivers, 25 are full-time employees, the remaining are part-time bus drivers. These drivers work as cafeteria employees, teacher's aides, or other school division positions and are paid for that work from the budgets of the schools they serve.

**EXHIBIT 8-8  
ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE – TRANSPORTATION OPERATIONS  
DINWIDDIE COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS  
2005-06 SCHOOL YEAR**



Source: DCPS Transportation Department, February 2005.

**8.1 Organization and Staffing**

**FINDING**

Dinwiddie County Public Schools has an experienced crew of bus drivers and experiences almost no driver turnover. Many drivers have been employed by the school division for more than 10 years, with some in excess of 20 years. In addition, employees of the Transportation Department display a high level of morale and job satisfaction. Interviews and a driver focus group conducted by MGT revealed that there are few issues of concern among department employees and that a level of cooperation exists that is rarely observed in many other school divisions.

**COMMENDATION**

**Dinwiddie County Public Schools is commended for cultivating a high level of department employee morale and retaining a stable crew of bus drivers.**

## **8.2 Planning, Policies, and Procedures**

Effective policies guide a school division's transportation department in the execution of its duties. Transportation policies should include procedures to ensure that public funds are spent in the most effective manner possible. By so doing, DCPS would directly support the achievement of academic and other professional goals.

### **FINDING**

DCPS does not currently contract with any private vendors for services related to student transportation, significant outside maintenance, or the leasing of buses and other vehicles.

In general, there are often numerous opportunities in school transportation to outsource. MGT has developed screening criteria for determining whether a function should be considered for outsourcing or should remain in-house. These are shown in Exhibit 8-9.

The practice of contracting for services is often a cost-effective alternative for school divisions. This alternative allows school divisions to leverage the forces of market competition to provide a potentially less expensive service, while freeing itself of many management responsibilities that are not central to the systematic goals of teaching and learning. Valuable fiscal and personnel resources are often recouped in the transition from internal services to contracted services.

Interviews with department staff indicate that these options are not part of the central planning discussions for the department; however, the same interviews unanimously cited significant current challenges in providing sustainable quality transportation services in light of limited funding and increasing responsibilities resulting from the addition of programs.

### **RECOMMENDATION**

#### **Recommendation 8-1:**

**Develop standards for evaluating the potential of outsourcing transportation operations.**

While DCPS is performing needed transportation services adequately within the current situation, changes in Dinwiddie County may necessitate a rethinking of this costly operation. Outsourcing should be considered when striving to provide optimal transportation services within a limited budget. Many functions of the Transportation Department could lend themselves to effective and efficient privatization under appropriate circumstances. It is critical that division administrators routinely evaluate the potential success of outsourcing departmental responsibilities

Standards should include cost factors developed by DCPS and some of the considerations previously outlined in Exhibit 8-9 to ensure that non-monetary factors have been appropriately considered. Consistent standards would include a method for fairly comparing in-house costs with those of an outside contractor.

**EXHIBIT 8-9  
SCREENING CRITERIA FOR IDENTIFYING OUTSOURCING OPPORTUNITIES**

- 1. Competitive Market Exists**  
A relatively large competitive base will provide government with the best opportunity for savings. A function with few competitors may enjoy a competitive advantage that may not produce the desired savings. A large pool of competitors also ensures that initial bids will not be substantially increased in future years after the public sector no longer has the immediate ability to provide the good or service. If a competitive market cannot be identified, it is probably not worth the cost of developing specifications and pursuing bids.
- 2. Determinable Service Delivery Measurement**  
If the nature of the good or service is uncertain or likely to require revision as the program proceeds, it may be difficult to convey the terms of service delivery in a contract or performance agreement. Similarly, it may be difficult to hold the provider accountable for errors or inefficiencies. Also, if the service cannot be adequately defined, it will be impossible to identify the associated costs and determine if competition would yield increased savings or a better product.
- 3. Legal Authorization**  
Programs considered for increased competition must be those free from existing Constitutional or case law requirements to the contrary. Statutory changes may be necessary to implement others, and the costs of developing and pursuing legislation should be considered.
- 4. Contract Management/Monitoring Division Defined**  
The ability to properly supervise the work of a provider must exist.
- 5. Existing Costs Determinable**  
If it is impossible to determine the existing costs of providing the service, it will also be impossible to determine if savings can be realized through increased competition. Obtaining accurate, verifiable cost information is critical to the decision for competition. This screening criterion is strongly linked to the service description since costs must be obtained for the service described.
- 6. Local Area Economic Impact**  
Conversion to competitive delivery should not result in a significant increase in the unemployment rate of a municipality, county, or region or loss of an essential local market. Economic changes of special interest, such as the elimination of a traditional minority business industry, are not recommended for competition.
- 7. Financial and Liability Risks**  
Competition is best pursued when the financial and liability risks are equal to or lower than those experienced in public sector delivery. State laws or constitutional provisions sometimes limit state liability unless provided through a claims bill. Additional risks, insurance costs, and differences in financial conditions and legal liabilities must be considered.
- 8. Size of Programs**  
High dollar amount programs or staff intensive programs may reap the greatest benefit from savings generated through competition. Larger programs may have a greater chance for inefficiencies to develop due to larger spans of control and less frequent oversight by upper level managers.
- 9. New Program or New Service Requirements**  
These programs would offer the organization an immediate opportunity to avoid growth. New demands placed on services will ultimately lead to increased resource allocations which are seldom, if ever, reversed.
- 10. Level of Policy Discretion**  
Activities which require low levels of policy setting, judgment or discretion are better suited for administration by outside providers. Routine application processing, data entry, maintenance and fee collection are examples of activities which are not influenced by political processes and do not require sensitive treatment by an agency employee.

**EXHIBIT 8-9 (Continued)**  
**SCREENING CRITERIA FOR IDENTIFYING OUTSOURCING OPPORTUNITIES**

11. **Security Requirements**  
 Activities for which special security is unnecessary are most conducive to increased competition. These activities do not provide the possibility of manipulating sensitive information such as student records or lab results. If the information is sensitive, adequate controls must exist to protect data.
12. **Not Currently Subject to Competition**  
 Large portions of programs may already be privatized or subject to market pressures and are less likely to benefit from further competition. Programs which are entirely in-house operations, perhaps in a monopoly-like environment, are strong candidates for competition.
13. **Alternative Delivery Methods**  
 If alternative methods of production exist to provide the desired final product, increased competition can lead to innovative methods to save costs or improve services. Programs which require product or service delivery in a specific fashion to accomplish specific goals may be better handled by the public.
14. **Satisfaction with Current Service**  
 Services where significant concerns exist about the quality, timelines or costs are candidates for outsourcing/privatization. Evidence of concern includes complaints by customers, customers trying to provide service with their own resources, or customers reducing their use of the service.
15. **Comparative Cost of Services**  
 If current costs per unit (e.g., cleaning cost per sq. ft.) are above the per unit costs of similar services being provided by private vendors, then the service is an attractive candidate for privatization.
16. **Costs and Ease of Conversion to Private Vendor**  
 Some services are relatively easy and cost little to convert to a private vendor. Other services may be very difficult to convert or may cost a large amount to convert. Those that are easy and cost little to convert are good candidates for outsourcing/privatization.
17. **Ease and Cost of Conversion Back to In-house**  
 The possibility always exists that the outsourcing/privatization of a service will not work out for an agency or organization. When this happens, it may become necessary that a service be moved back in-house. When major difficulties exist or costs are high for conversion back to in-house operations, the organization may find that it is forced to put up with poor performance because of the difficulties and/or high costs of conversion. In these cases, outsourcing/privatization is less attractive.
18. **Impact on Employee Morale**  
 If outsourcing will cause major employee morale problems throughout the organization, careful consideration must be given to outsourcing or perhaps finding a way to minimize the employee morale impact.
19. **Mission Service Function**  
 A function determined to be highly critical to the overall mission of the agency may be determined to be a function that should remain in-house because of the higher degree of control inherent with in-house performance.
20. **Stability of Market Place**  
 A high level of stable vendors in the market place indicates that the outsourcing of a service has been successful and that the vendors can generally be relied upon to produce quality services at competitive rates.

Source: Developed by MGT of America, 1996 (Updated 2004).

## **FISCAL IMPACT**

There is no specific fiscal impact for this recommendation; however, privatizing departmental responsibilities could possibly free up resources while providing a high level of service. The Transportation Department might realize significant cost savings over time if outsourcing this function for the school division.

## **FINDING**

Throughout the on-site review, MGT consultants searched for evidence of effective cost analysis and evaluation, but were provided only a few isolated documents related to specific issues, such as bus replacement and the provision of special program transportation services. There was no evidence found in departmental records or staff interviews to suggest that comprehensive cost analyses are conducted to evaluate program efficiency. Although Transportation Department staff discussed cost issues with appropriate specificity to suggest that they consider them in the execution of their jobs, there is little documentation of a unified effort on this issue.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

### **Recommendation 8-2:**

**Develop a formal process for evaluating cost efficiency in departmental operations and document all activities and findings.**

Budgetary restraints, coupled with the increasing demands on transportation resources in DCPS, necessitate precise fiscal monitoring and evaluation within the Transportation Department. The current level of fiscal monitoring, evaluation, and planning within the Department is insufficient to ensure a high level of efficiency. The Transportation Department must develop and implement a systematic approach to address these important issues.

## **FISCAL IMPACT**

There is no specific fiscal impact for this recommendation; however, fiscal efficiency can only be promoted by increased precision in planning, monitoring, and evaluation activities. Therefore, it is likely that the Transportation Department should realize significant cost savings over time with the implementation of this recommendation.

## **FINDING**

While Transportation Department staff are interested in maximizing the effectiveness of the transportation function in DCPS, the Department does not regularly track, compile, or publish its findings on performance indicators. The Department does collect a portion of these statistics, as required by the state for funding reasons, but does not report them in an open forum, such as a board meeting. Although the Department has access to a portion of these statistics for various purposes, it does not organize them in a useful manner. Overall, the level of data collection and reporting is insufficient to promote quality transportation management.

Many high performing school divisions use indicators to assess ongoing performance in key management areas. Performance indicators allow departments of transportation to track service quality and make adjustments where required. Improvements in performance can be documented to demonstrate progress. Accurate and timely performance indicators help management allocate funds to the most critical needs. They also provide assurances to the central office, the School Board, and the public that the Transportation Department is using its resources in the best possible manner.

Transportation Department staff complete the *Annual Transportation Worksheet* for VDOE which contains some data that would be useful in analyzing performance locally. However, these data fall short of those needed to produce a comprehensive understanding of transportation effectiveness and efficiency.

Some of the transportation performance indicators typically used by school divisions are shown in Exhibit 8-10. Indicators can assist the Transportation Department in consistently tracking and monitoring performance. The department can then compare these statistics to those of peer school divisions and its own history. Ideally, the Department would annually select a target goal for each indicator and track progress towards that goal.

**EXHIBIT 8-10  
SAMPLE STANDARD  
TRANSPORTATION PERFORMANCE INDICATORS**

PERFORMANCE AREA	PERFORMANCE INDICATOR
<b>Safety</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Accidents per 100,000 miles</li> <li>■ Incidents per 100,000 miles</li> <li>■ Number of first, second, and third student discipline referrals</li> </ul>
<b>Cost Efficiency</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Operation cost per route mile</li> <li>■ Annual operation costs per route</li> <li>■ Operation costs per student for regular education, Special Education, magnet, and diversity busing</li> </ul>
<b>Cost Effectiveness</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ On-time performance</li> <li>■ Average rider trip time in minutes</li> <li>■ Average bus occupancy</li> </ul>
<b>Customer Service</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Number of complaints by category</li> <li>■ Statistics on contractor response to complaints</li> </ul>

Source: Created by MGT of America, 1999 (Updated 2004).

It is clear from conversations with DCPS employees that many of these issues are frequently discussed and informally tracked internally; however, there is no formal, centralized source of performance information that could be used for strategic planning and monitoring purposes. This same information could be used to build a stronger understanding of DCPS student transportation successes and challenging issues among parents, schools, and the school division.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

### **Recommendation 8-3:**

#### **Implement an annual report card on the Dinwiddie County Public Schools Transportation Department.**

MGT survey results show that the Transportation function in DCPS is thought to be effective by only half (or less) of school division staff. Currently, little data are available to support the perception of effectiveness. More importantly, little data exist to combat perceptions of ineffectiveness. The department must implement the collection, analysis, and reporting of vital performance statistics to illustrate the current status of operations. Such an annual review of its operations should provide assurances that the department is performing up to standards, both in comparison to its past and in comparison to its peers. The report card should serve to highlight solid performance and areas in need of improvement.

The Transportation Department should also use the production of this report as a key planning milestone, when the previous year's performance can be evaluated and strategic planning for the upcoming year begins, based on performance data.

## **FISCAL IMPACT**

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources; yet it is possible that the Transportation Department will achieve some cost savings as it works to achieve the goals identified by the report card.

## **FINDING**

In its present state, Board policy regarding student transportation functions falls short of ensuring that cost efficiency is a priority in the Transportation Department. Current Board policy regarding transportation references only the use of controlled substances by bus drivers and student discipline on buses. There no policy language that could be construed to address performance expectations or fiscal management.

Clear school division policies are essential for providing direction to the components of the division. In addition to describing overarching philosophies and duties of division functions, school board policy should also provide some detail regarding areas that are critical to the ongoing success of the function. An absence of this type of detail leaves departmental practice subject to misinterpretations and omissions.

A goal of Dinwiddie County School Board should be to provide quality student transportation services for the school division in the most efficient manner possible. Cost inefficiencies in these support areas are a direct drain on resources that could be used to further the academic goals of the school division. The expectation of cost efficiency should be reinforced at every opportunity, and official school board policy should serve as the foundation.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

### **Recommendation 8-4:**

**Expand the Dinwiddie County Public Schools policy regarding student transportation to include more detailed reporting requirements.**

Student transportation is a costly service with many opportunities for fiscal shortfalls. Codifying the requirement for detailed cost and performance reporting will help to ensure that cost efficiency remains a part of the organizational culture of the DCPS Transportation Department and creates a formal layer of accountability for planning and monitoring activities. As transportation is a high-cost function, there is a particular interest in controlling costs now and in the future. A priority of this magnitude should not be left to the discretion of individual division employees, regardless of their level of competency.

The School Board, the School Division, and the Transportation Department will need to work together to determine which of the many possible reports are appropriate for DCPS to monitor critical areas of efficiency and effectiveness, as these are highly contextual issues. Some examples of special analyses that could improve the performance of the Transportation Department are quarterly total cost per transported student analyses, maintenance costs per transported student, fuel costs per mile driven, bus capacity measures, and cost per exclusive student transported.

## **FISCAL IMPACT**

There is no cost associated with this recommendation.

## **FINDING**

As a by-product of the lack of transportation impact analyses, interviews with Transportation Department administration confirm that school division plans for new academic programs do not include additional funding to pay for student transportation. Interviews and data analysis revealed that this situation has resulted in substantial changes in service delivery, especially in regards to exclusive student transportation.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

### **Recommendation 8-5:**

**Require all new programs to include funding for student transportation.**

The costs associated with moving students to and from academic programs is high, and overlooking these costs in division wide planning can create financial problems for the Transportation Department that will eventually have to be addressed by the school division as a whole.

**FISCAL IMPACT**

There is no additional cost associated with this recommendation, as all shortfalls in departmental budgets must eventually be dealt with on a divisionwide level. The implementation of this recommendation will avoid long-term consequences associated with underfunding student transportation, such as aging, overused buses and increased maintenance costs.

**FINDING**

DCPS does not have a funded comprehensive school bus replacement plan. The Transportation Department is currently using an informal ten-year plan to determine how many buses are requested from the School Board in any given year. DCPS staff indicated the bus replacement strategy was based on the shop foreman's experience in maintaining DCPS school buses for more than 30 years. Interviews revealed that there are no other DCPS employees with comprehensive knowledge regarding the condition of the bus fleet.

Exhibit 8-11 shows the most recent inventory of DCPS school buses. As can be seen in the exhibit, 39 of the current 108 DCPS are at least 10 years old, with 34 of these being older than 10 years old. It is apparent from this analysis that the informal guidelines for bus replacement are not being followed by DCPS.

**EXHIBIT 8-11  
DINWIDDIE COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS  
BUS INVENTORY**

<b>BUS NUMBER</b>	<b>MODEL</b>	<b>VIN NUMBER</b>	<b>CAPACITY</b>	<b>CHASIS TYPE</b>	<b>FUEL TYPE</b>
1	1991	1FDXJ65P1LVA33985	34	FORD	DIESEL
2	1993	1BAABCSAOPFO54776	42	B/B	DIESEL
3	2004	4UZAAXCN64CM82653	64	FREIGHTLINER	DIESEL
4	2006	N/A	65	B/B	DIESEL
5	2002	4UZAABWV92CJ62543	34	FREIGHTLINER	DIESEL
6	1993	1FDNJ65C9PVAO9751	34	FORD	DIESEL
7	2002	4UZAABWV02CJ62544	34	FREIGHTLINER	DIESEL
8	1994	1HVBBACN8RH574080	64	IC	DIESEL
9	2002	44UZAAXBV52CJ55109	64	FREIGHTLINER	DIESEL
10	1993	1HVBBPLN8PH491121	64	NAVISTAR	DIESEL
11	1993	1HVBBPLNXP491122	64	NAVISTAR	DIESEL
12	1993	1HVBBPLN1PH491123	64	NAVISTAR	DIESEL
13	2005	4DRBUAFN75B969873	64	IC	DIESEL
14	2000	4UX6CFAAOYCF63540	64	FREIGHTLINER	DIESEL
15	1993	1HVBBPLN5PH491125	64	NAVISTAR	DIESEL
16	2002	4UZAAXBCV12CJ55110	64	FREIGHTLINER	DIESEL
17	1993	1HVBBPLN7PH491126	64	NAVISTAR	DIESEL
18	1993	1HVBBPLN9PH491127	64	NAVISTAR	DIESEL
19	1993	1HVBBPLN0PH491128	64	NAVISTAR	DIESEL
20	1993	1HVBBPLN2PH491129	64	NAVISTAR	DIESEL

**EXHIBIT 8-11 (Continued)  
DINWIDDIE COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS  
BUS INVENTORY**

BUS NUMBER	MODEL	VIN NUMBER	CAPACITY	CHASIS TYPE	FUEL TYPE
21	2000	4UZ6CFAA2YCF63541	64	FREIGHTLINER	DIESEL
22	1994	1HVBBACN5RH573369	64	NAVISTAR	DIESEL
23	2000	4UZ 6CFAA4YCF63542	64	FREIGHTLINER	DIESEL
24	2000	1T88R4B2XY1084508	78	THOMAS	DIESEL
25	2000	1T88R4B2TY1084509	78	THOMAS	DIESEL
26	1994	1HVBBACN3RH573368	64	NAVISTAR	DIESEL
27	1994	1HVBBACN1RH573367	64	NAVISTAR	DIESEL
28	2000	1T88R4B29Y1089960	78	THOMAS	DIESEL
29	1994	1T79R4B22R1122212	72	THOMAS	DIESEL
30	1993	1GDM7T1JXPJ518963	64	GMC	DIESEL
31	1993	1GDM7T1J2PJ516589	64	GMC	DIESEL
32	2002	4UZAAXBV32CJ55111	64	FREIGHTLINER	DIESEL
33	1994	1FDNJ65C8RVA11395	34	FORD	DIESEL
34	2005	4DRBUAFN95A9827	34	IC	DIESEL
35	1996	1HVBBAA6TH431493	64	NAVISTAR	DIESEL
36	1996	1HVBBAA6TH431492	64	NAVISTAR	DIESEL
37	1998	1T88R4B23W1167033	78	THOMAS	DIESEL
38	1996	1HVBBAA6TH431489	64	NAVISTAR	DIESEL
39	1995	1HVBBAA8SH656643	64	NAVISTAR	DIESEL
40	1996	1HVBBAA0TH431490	64	NAVISTAR	DIESEL
41	1996	1HVBBAA2TH431491	64	NAVISTAR	DIESEL
42	1998	1T88R4B25W1167034	78	THOMAS	DIESEL
43	1995	1HVBBAA8SH684930	64	NAVISTAR	DIESEL
44	1997	1HVBBAA7VH453764	64	NAVISTAR	DIESEL
45	2000	4UZ6CFAA8YCG89936	64	FREIGHTLINER	DIESEL
46	1998	T88R4B27W1167035	78	THOMAS	DIESEL
47	2002	4UZAAXB52CJ55112	64	FREIGHTLINER	DIESEL
48	2000	1HBBAAL4YH273712	34	NAVISTAR	DIESEL
49	2002	4UZAAXBV92CJ62581	64	FREIGHTLINER	DIESEL
50	2002	4UZAAXBVO2CJ62582	64	FREIGHTLINER	DIESEL
51	2000	1HVBBAA2YH343308	64	NAVISTAR	DIESEL
52	1997	1HVBBAA4VH453768	64	NAVISTAR	DIESEL
53	2001	4UZAAXBV11CJ18587	64	FREIGHTLINER	DIESEL
54	1998	1T88R4B29W116703	78	THOMAS	DIESEL
55	1998	1T88R4B20W116703	78	THOMAS	DIESEL
56	2002	4UZAAXBV22CJ62583	64	FREIGHTLINER	DIESEL
57	2002	4UZAAXCN72CJ54137	64	FREIGHTLINER	DIESEL
58	1989	1FDXJ65P5KVA42119	64	FORD	DIESEL
59	2001	1FDXJ74NHVA19536	64	FREIGHTLINER	DIESEL
60	2005	4DRBUAFN05A982762	64	IC	DIESEL
61	2005	4DRBUAFN75A982760	64	IC	DIESEL
62	2006	N/A	65	B/B	DIESEL
63	2004	4UZAAXCCN33CL79852	64	FREIGHTLINER	DIESEL
64	2004	4UZAAXCN14CM82656	64	FREIGHTLINER	DIESEL
65	2006	N/A	65	B/B	DIESEL

**EXHIBIT 8-11 (Continued)  
DINWIDDIE COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS  
BUS INVENTORY**

BUS NUMBER	MODEL	VIN NUMBER	CAPACITY	CHASIS TYPE	FUEL TYPE
66	1989	1FDXJ65P9KVA42124	64	FORD	DIESEL
67	1990	1FDXJ65P6LVA32068	64	FORD	DIESEL
68	2005	4UZAAWCSX5CN68288	64	FREIGHTLINER	DIESEL
69	2005	4DRBUAFN85A982766	64	IC	DIESEL
70	2001	4UZAAXBV51CJ18589	64	FREIGHTLINER	DIESEL
71	1989	1FDXJ65POKVA42125	64	FORD	DIESEL
72	2006	N/A	65	B/B	DIESEL
73	2006	N/A	65	B/B	DIESEL
74	1990	1FDXJ65P9LVA33165	64	FORD	DIESEL
75	1991	1HVBBNKN6MH397434	64	FORD	DIESEL
76	2006	N/A	65	B/B	DIESEL
77	2005	4DRBUAFN45A982764	64	IC	DIESEL
78	2005	4DRBUAFN25A982763	64	IC	DIESEL
79	2006	N/A	65	B/B	DIESEL
80	2005	4UZAAXCS05N68287	64	FREIGHTLINER	DIESEL
81	1997	1HVBBAAAN9VH453765	64	NAVISTAR	DIESEL
82	2006	N/A	65	B/B	DIESEL
83	2006	N/A	65	B/B	DIESEL
84	1990	1FDXJ65P5LVA33339	64	FORD	DIESEL
85	1990	1FDXJ65P1LVA33340	64	FORD	DIESEL
86	1990	1FDXJ65P3LVA33341	64	FORD	DIESEL
87	1997	1HVBBAAAN0VH453766	64	NAVISTAR	DIESEL
88	2006	N/A	65	B/B	DIESEL
89	1990	1FDXJ65P1LVA33516	64	FORD	DIESEL
90	1997	1HVBBAAAN2VH453767	64	NAVISTAR	DIESEL
91	1997	1HVBBAAAN6VH453769	64	NAVISTAR	DIESEL
92	1990	1FDXJ65P3LVA33517	64	FORD	DIESEL
93	2005	4DRBUAFNX5A982767	64	IC	DIESEL
94	2005	4DRBUAFN15A982768	64	IC	DIESEL
95	1990	1FDXJ65P3LVA33520	64	FORD	DIESEL
96	1997	1HVBBAAAN2VH453770	64	NAVISTAR	DIESEL
97	1997	1HVBBAAAN4VH453771	64	NAVISTAR	DIESEL
98	1997	1HVBBAAAN6VH453772	64	NAVISTAR	DIESEL
99	2005	4UZAAXCS59CN68286	64	FREIGHTLINER	DIESEL
100	1990	1FDXJ65P7LVA33522	64	FORD	DIESEL
101	2004	4UZAAXCN34CM82657	64	FREIGHTLINER	DIESEL
102	2005	4DRBUAFN65A982765	64	IC	DIESEL
103	1998	1T88R4B22W1167038	78	THOMAS	DIESEL
104	2004	4UZAAXCN74CM82659	64	FREIGHTLINER	DIESEL
105	2004	4UZAAXCN54CM82661	64	FREIGHTLINER	DIESEL
106	2004	4UZAAXCN74CM82662	64	FREIGHTLINER	DIESEL
107	2004	4UZAAXCN84CM82654	64	FREIGHTLINER	DIESEL
A-1	2002	1GDJG31R521219382	15	GMC	GAS
				<b>TOTAL BUSES:</b>	<b>108</b>

Source: DCPS Transportation Department, November 2005.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

### **Recommendation 8-6:**

#### **Implement a School Board policy reflecting the current bus replacement cycle.**

School bus replacement cannot be left to fiscal convenience. Often the costs associated with maintaining older buses exceed the utility of those buses. There are also substantial safety concerns that go along with maintaining an aging fleet. While DCPS has many newer buses, a substantial number at or beyond the age of potential replacement. The issues, both fiscal and safety related, necessitate a formal Board policy that should be implemented and followed. Therefore, DCPS should work with the School Board to facilitate the development and implementation of a formal bus replacement policy. This will help to ensure adequate transportation resources for the future needs of DCPS.

## **FISCAL IMPACT**

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

### **8.3 Routing and Scheduling**

Some of the largest potential cost savings, or losses, in student transportation are realized due to the quality of routing functions within the division. Efficient and effective bus routing is critical to the success of a school transportation division. Optimized routes minimize student ride-time and decrease the total number of buses needed to transport student populations.

Effective routing and scheduling divisions can impact:

- efficiencies pertaining to student start and end times in coordination with bell times;
- bus routes' average ridership and miles driven;
- ride times for regular students and Special Education (exclusive) students;
- efficiency and effectiveness of regular routes; and,
- efficiency and effectiveness of Special Education routes.

## **FINDING**

Radio communications on buses, video cameras, and office computers are technological uses currently implemented to support the transportation operations in DCPS; however, computer-based technology to support routing and scheduling operations is not used. Experience in other school divisions has shown that when technology is employed, there are significant cost savings because of efficiencies in routing and scheduling. Further, the use of technology increases the potential for the reduction in the number of buses

required. In executing school bus transportation requirements, one of the most significant costs can be attributed to lack of an efficient routing and scheduling program. According to DCPS administrative staff interviewed by the MGT review team, routing and scheduling technology has been resisted because of costs.

Bus routes are now developed in DCPS without the assistance of transportation routing software. This practice allows bus routes to evolve over time and does not take advantage of technology that is designed to create efficient routes automatically. Interviews with Transportation staff reveal that DCPS bus routes have not substantially changed in 20 years. Currently, there is no way to determine if substantial changes should be made in routes. In addition, route distance and time can only be gauged using the feedback of bus drivers.

The DCPS Transportation Department has a process for school bus routing and scheduling. The director and executive secretary execute this responsibility that includes coordination of all regular and Special Education student transportation. At the beginning of each school year, or when new students enter a school after the school year has begun, transportation requests are sent to the Transportation Department. The director and executive secretary determine where the student lives in proximity to regular and exclusive routes currently in operation (these routes are usually from previous years) and schedules the student for bus transportation. Staff interviews, focus group responses, and observation of DCPS buses revealed that there are many buses running routes in the same areas at below capacity. It is clear that in the past 20 years changes have occurred that would allow for more efficient student transportation in regards to the alteration and consolidation of bus routes.

The existing process focuses on the student's address upon which a determination is made based on that location and its proximity to a current bus route. These proximity pickup points are determined manually and may or may not be the best location to pick up the student. This procedure has been in process for many years with very little change in routing. Staff in the Transportation Department find this manual process efficient because routes are the same, student populations centers remain in the same general locations, and the road networks have not changed.

Because dependence is made on routes from previous years and any changes are made manually, the school division does not take advantage of technology to improve the process and reduce costs. Technology solutions using routing and scheduling software/hardware can generate cost savings for the DCPS. Numerous MGT reviews and other studies conducted of school divisions moving from manual to a computer routing division have shown a consistent five to ten percent minimum reduction in number of routes and buses when using computer technology.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

### **Recommendation 8-7:**

#### **Purchase and use computer-based route scheduling software for all routes.**

A review of literature in the *Transportation* and *School Bus Fleet* Magazines provide information relating to successes of those school divisions moving from manual to computerized bus routing software. According to *School Bus Fleet* Magazine, school

divisions with at least 2,500 students can expect to achieve significant cost savings by implementing a computerized routing and scheduling program. These software divisions are intended for use by transportation divisions to cut costs, improve efficiency, and reduce the time and distance students travel on buses to and from school. This has an impact on many associated costs, including the purchase and maintenance costs of buses, driver and other employee salaries, fuel, insurance, as well as others.

**FISCAL IMPACT**

Based on the results of previous studies and transportation best practices seen in other divisions, the use of computer technology could be expected to result in reduction of approximately five percent to ten percent of routes with a corresponding reduction in the number of buses. The extensive amount of route miles driven in the DCPS, however, will likely increase the savings that could realistically be achieved. The MGT review team is using a conservative estimate of ten percent cost savings for DCPS. When this recommendation is implemented, the department will likely be able to reduce the number of buses in operation as well as bus drivers and associated costs such as fuel and maintenance in excess of the estimated ten percent.

Using the reported total cost for student transportation in the 2004-05 school year (\$2,931,146), the estimated ten percent cost savings could be expected to total \$293,115 per year. There would be a one-time expense of an estimated \$30,000 to purchase the routing software selected by the school division in the first year of implementation.

<b>Recommendation</b>	<b>2006-07</b>	<b>2007-08</b>	<b>2008-09</b>	<b>2009-10</b>	<b>2010-11</b>
Purchase Routing Software	(\$30,000)	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Increase Bus Route Efficiency by Ten Percent	\$293,115	\$293,115	\$293,115	\$293,115	\$293,115
<b>Total (Costs)/ Savings</b>	<b>\$263,115</b>	<b>\$293,115</b>	<b>\$293,115</b>	<b>\$293,115</b>	<b>\$293,115</b>

**FINDING**

DCPS currently allows individual school opening times to drive the routing of school buses within the division. This situation results in the creation of bus routes that could be eliminated by structuring a tiered division for school opening times. A tiered division would allow individual buses to serve more than one school in both morning and afternoon routes, ending the need for many buses currently operated on a daily basis, and resulting in a significant cost savings to DCPS.

In most instances, school opening times are the driving factors that dictate the routing of school buses. Elementary schools traditionally begin at one time, while secondary schools begin at another. Little consideration is given to the overall impact of school start times on the transportation needs of a school division. As school divisions have increasingly been forced to look for cost savings in all functions of the division, alternative bus routing in student transportation has emerged as a viable and efficient option for many school divisions.

In addition to inefficiencies created by the current school opening and closing times, buses are also delayed by a DCPS policy that keeps buses from unloading when they arrive at a school. Currently, buses are held to a student unloading time that keeps students sitting on buses in the school parking lot. Interviews on-site and observation of bus unloading procedure confirmed that some students sit in buses, at the school site, for up to 30 minutes before being allowed to enter campus. Students unload at one predetermined time, even though buses arrive at different times. DCPS staff cited safety and student supervision reasons for this policy.

Current school bus unloading, starting, and closing times are presented in Exhibit 8-12.

**EXHIBIT 8-12  
DINWIDDIE COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS  
SCHOOL OPENING TIME**

<b>SCHOOL</b>	<b>BUS UNLOADING TIME</b>	<b>SCHOOL START TIME</b>	<b>SCHOOL CLOSING TIME</b>
Diwiddie High School	7:30	7:35	2:30
Diwiddie Middle School	7:45	7:50	2:45
Dinwiddie Elementary	8:15	8:35	3:15
Midway Elementary	8:20	8:35	3:20
Rohoic Elementary	8:25	8:40	3:20
Southside Elementary	8:20	8:40	3:20
Sunnyside Elementary	7:40	8:15	3:00

Source: DCPS Transportation Department, 2005.

**RECOMMENDATION**

**Recommendation 8-8:**

**Modify procedures to allow the transportation schedule to determine the opening and closing times for Dinwiddie County Public Schools.**

Moving the high school and middle school start times back 15 minutes and moving the elementary school start time forward 15 minutes, while standardizing the time across the schools, allows sufficient time separation for secondary buses to run double routes and pick up elementary students. MGT identified 26 bus routes (and associated buses) that could be eliminated by using this strategy. To allow for this to occur, DCPS must abandon its policy of holding students on buses and allow buses to drop off secondary students as they arrive. This current practice is not common among school divisions and the proposed strategy should be easily implemented, as it is in most school divisions.

Exhibit 8-13 provides a breakdown of proposed changes to the school time schedules for each DCPS school.

DCPS should follow this trend in school transportation and move to a structured school opening time schedule. While the initial adjustment to new start times may be challenging, the transition should be completed without extreme difficulties as has been done in many school divisions in the country. Parents and students should quickly

become acclimated to the new times and adapt easily to the revised schedule. This plan, most likely in some revised form, should be pursued and implemented by DCPS.

**EXHIBIT 8-13  
DINWIDDIE COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS  
PROPOSED SCHOOL TIME CHANGES**

SCHOOL	CURRENT BUS UNLOAD TIME	NEW BUS UNLOAD TIME	CURRENT SCHOOL START TIME	NEW SCHOOL START TIME	CURRENT SCHOOL CLOSING TIME	NEW SCHOOL CLOSING TIME
Diwiddie High School	7:30	7:00-7:15	7:40	7:25	2:30	2:15
Diwiddie Middle School	7:40	7:10-7:25	7:50	7:35	2:50	2:35
Dinwiddie Elementary	8:15	8:30-8:45	8:35	8:55	3:15	3:25
Midway Elementary	8:20	8:30-8:45	8:35	8:55	3:20	3:25
Rohoic Elementary	8:25	8:30-8:45	8:40	8:55	3:20	3:25
Southside Elementary	8:20	8:30-8:45	8:40	8:55	3:20	3:25
Sunnyside Elementary	7:40	8:30-8:45	8:15	8:55	3:00	3:25

Source: DCPS Transportation Department, 2005.

The justifying rationale centers around the fact that significant savings can be achieved with no impact on the educational program of the school division. Given the change in current opening times, this recommendation may not be popular; however, when resources are limited in a school division, it is best to make the reductions that have the least impact on the classroom. This is one such reduction that has increasingly become the standard in public education.

The resulting savings from the implementation of this recommendation should be used by the school division to enhance programs directly concerning the primary mission of teaching and learning. These actions will demonstrate the prudence of the change and bolster the efforts to gain support from the relevant stakeholders.

**FISCAL IMPACT**

As was previously stated, 26 bus routes were identified for consolidation (four from Midway Elementary, 10 from Rohoic Elementary, six from Southside Elementary, and six from Dinwiddie Elementary). This number represents 27 percent of the total bus routes in DCPS (95). Eliminating this percentage of bus routes should be expected to save all of the associated expenses of these 26 routes. Using the reported total cost for student transportation in 2004-05 (\$2,931,146), the estimated 27 percent cost savings could be expected to total \$791,409 per year; yet some transportation costs that will not be reduced, such as the salaries for administrative staff. A conservative estimate of 20 percent (\$586,229 per year) can be used to represent the potential cost savings to DCPS. Following these calculations, DCPS could accrue approximately \$2, 931,146 in cost-savings over a five-year period.

Recommendation	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11
Structure School Start and Closing Times	\$586,229	\$586,229	\$586,229	\$586,229	\$586,229

**FINDING**

Due to the lack of available bus drivers in Dinwiddie County, DCPS has had no choice but pay substantial overtime to meet the transportation needs of the school division. DCPS currently employs 25 bus drivers who are also working in other positions within the school division. These drivers work during the school day after and before their daily routes. This situation has resulted in DCPS paying for a significant amount of overtime hours because these drivers regularly work over 40 hours for DCPS. MGT collected data on the most recent complete month of overtime pay. Interviews with Transportation staff confirmed that the totals for this month were representative of an average month for DCPS.

Exhibit 8-14 details DCPS overtime expenditures for September 2005. As can be seen, the use of full-time employees costs DCPS approximately \$8,369 per month in overtime pay. This translates into approximately \$83,690 in annual overtime pay as a result of this circumstance.

**EXHIBIT 8-14  
MONTHLY OVERTIME PAY  
TRANSPORTATION DEPARTMENT  
SEPTEMBER 2005**

TIME PERIOD	AMOUNT OF OVERTIME PAY
Week 1	\$2,381.29
Week 2	\$1,413.25
Week 3	\$2,250.90
Week 4	\$2,323.34
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$8,368.77</b>

Source: DCPS Transportation Department, 2005.

**RECOMMENDATION**

**Recommendation 8-9:**

**Eliminate overtime pay for bus drivers.**

The current lack of available bus drivers within DCPS has forced the Transportation Department to rely on drivers who have other part-time positions within the school division. The reduction of 26 routes detailed in Recommendation 8-8 will provide the flexibility needed to eliminate the need to pay overtime by allowing Transportation Department staff to assign shorter routes to these drivers, or by discontinuing their service as bus drivers.

**FISCAL IMPACT**

The implementation of this recommendation should result in the elimination of all overtime pay for bus drivers. This total could be expected to reflect the monthly total presented in Exhibit 8-14. Thus, DCPS could expect to recoup approximately \$83,690 per year.

<b>Recommendation</b>	<b>2006-07</b>	<b>2007-08</b>	<b>2008-09</b>	<b>2009-10</b>	<b>2010-11</b>
Eliminate Overtime	\$83,690	\$83,690	\$83,690	\$83,690	\$83,690

**8.4 Training and Safety**

DCPS transportation training and safety programs are the responsibility of the Safety and Training Specialist for the Transportation Department. This position has as stated goals to monitor all safety issues related to pupil transportation, investigate all accidents, and file accidents reports with VDOE. The Training and Safety Specialist is also responsible for the planning, integration, and implementation of all training for personnel assigned to the department.

The DCPS Transportation Department stresses the importance of maintaining an active and responsive program to keep its personnel highly trained. It also sets high standards of safety and has a stated policy to achieve zero injuries and zero chargeable accidents.

**FINDING**

The Transportation Department has an adequate training program. Training courses are provided on-site by experience Transportation staff during in-service meetings for DCPS bus drivers. Exhibit 8-15 details the number of bus accidents in DCPS over the past three years. Accident reports are maintained by the Transportation Department. These accident reports show whether injuries occur inside or outside the buses providing student transportation services.

**EXHIBIT 8-15  
BUS ACCIDENTS  
DINWIDDIE COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS  
2003-04 SCHOOL YEAR**

<b>SCHOOL YEAR</b>	<b>NUMBER OF ACCIDENTS</b>	<b>NUMBER OF FATALITIES</b>	<b>MILES FOR THE SCHOOL YEARS</b>	<b>STUDENTS TRANSPORTED</b>	<b>NUMBER OF ACCIDENTS PER 100,000 MILES TRAVELED</b>
2002-03	2	0	1,268,721	3,950	0.16
2003-04	11	0	1,362,599	4,089	0.81
2004-05	12	0	1,282,658	4,033	0.94
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>5,700,000</b>	<b>12,072</b>	<b>1.91</b>
<b>AVERAGE</b>	<b>8.3</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1,900,000</b>	<b>4,024</b>	<b>0.64</b>

Source: DCPS Transportation Department, November 2005.

The mileage data shown in the exhibit are for all miles traveled by buses with or without students aboard. This is because buses may have accidents related to deadhead miles or simply in-transit from the maintenance shop or could be impacted while parked with no one on board.

While DCPS statistics show an increase in the number of accidents, from 0.16 accidents per 100,000 miles driven in 2002-03 to 0.94 accidents per 100,000 miles in 2004-05, the average of 0.64 is commendable number considering the large number of buses the DCPS currently operates on a daily basis. In addition, Transportation staff related that the higher number of reported accidents in 2002-03 and 2003-04 were a result of a change in reporting policy to a more stringent standard.

#### **COMMENDATION**

**The Dinwiddie County Public Schools Transportation Department is commended for its safe operation of school buses.**

### **8.5 Vehicle Maintenance**

#### **FINDING**

DCPS vehicle maintenance responsibilities are performed by seven full-time mechanics. The Shop Foreman is a qualified senior mechanic and performs repairs and maintenance activities in addition to his supervisory role, providing a total of eight total mechanics. Additionally, there is a full-time parts manager who ensures adequate and timely parts availability to support the mechanics. The Shop Foreman has been in his position of responsibility for over 30 years and reports to the Director of Transportation.

The current fleet inventory consists of 108 school buses and 59 other vehicles for a total of 167 vehicles. There are seven full-time mechanics servicing these vehicles, plus the Shop Foreman is available as a qualified mechanic and may be counted as an additional mechanic for a total of eight. Therefore, DCPS has an effective mechanic to vehicle ratio of 1:29.

The transportation industry and majority of school divisions nationwide have a common ratio of one mechanic per 20 to 30 vehicles with the average being approximately 1:25. The DCPS mechanic to vehicle ratio is above the national average of 1:25 and is approaching the upper limit of industry standards. However, interviews and focus group comments reflected the understanding that DCPS vehicles are maintained at a high level of quality. This is a commendable accomplishment, especially considering the large workload of vehicles to mechanic.

#### **COMMENDATION**

**The Dinwiddie County Public Schools Transportation Department mechanics are commended for the outstanding service they provide in maintaining the fleet.**

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## 9.0 TECHNOLOGY MANAGEMENT

This chapter provides a summary of technology management in Dinwiddie County Public Schools. The three major sections of this chapter are:

- 9.1 Planning, Policies, and Procedures
- 9.2 Software, Hardware, and Infrastructure
- 9.3 Staff Development

When reviewing the technology resources of a school division, MGT examines the infrastructure that supports applications, the applications, and the degree to which they satisfy user needs, the manner in which the infrastructure supports the overall operations of the school system, and the organizational structure within which the administrative and instructional technology support personnel operate.

### CHAPTER SUMMARY

The homepage of the Dinwiddie County Public Schools Technology Department summarizes the mission and work of the department. As stated on the site:

*In keeping with the mission of Dinwiddie County Public Schools, the mission of the Technology Department is to support Dinwiddie County Schools' improvement efforts through the use of technology. This department provides technological training, guidance, service and information to school personnel and school administrators. This enables Dinwiddie County Public Schools to function more efficiently and assists individual schools as they use technology to improve the teaching and learning process for their students.*

The mission and statement of purpose accurately represents the activities of the department as evidenced by customer surveys, interviews with departmental and division personnel and reviews of policies and procedures, conducted by MGT. While there is a high degree of customer satisfaction with the services provided by the Technology Department, there are issues within the department that need to be addressed in order to maximize its efficiency and productivity.

There is a need for a written procedures manual that will allow the standardization of processes within the department as well as facilitate cross-training new and current departmental employees. There are a number of operational activities within the department that need improvement such as inventory control, monitoring of software site licenses, and the coordination of the work order request process. Recommendations made for improving the operation of the department include:

- modify, review, and evaluate the current Technology Plan;
- create and implement an accountability process for Dinwiddie County Public Schools user agreement forms;

- create and enforce a policy to ensure that all students are granted access to the Dinwiddie County Public School network during the first week of each new school year;
- create a technology-related procedural manual for Dinwiddie County Public Schools; and,
- require a regularly scheduled inventory of technology-related equipment for Dinwiddie County Public Schools.

## **INTRODUCTION**

In a study funded by the U.S. Department of Education, researchers examined the impact of technology on educational outcomes. Briefly stated, the study findings revealed:

*...successful technology-rich schools generate impressive results for students, including improved achievement; higher test scores, improved student attitudes, enthusiasm, and engagement, richer classroom content, and improved student retention and job placement rates.*

Evidence of the department's commitment to provide the level of quality technology services that put the division on track to reap the benefits cited in the federal study can be found in the responses to a divisionwide survey conducted by MGT.

The survey polled central office administrators, principals and teachers and asked them to rate the quality of technology services in the division. On a scale that ranged from *Good or Excellent* to *Fair or Poor*, these groups were asked to respond to the following statements: "The school division's job of providing adequate instructional technology" and "The school division's use of technology for administrative purposes." The positive response rate for both these statements from all three groups was extremely high. Eighty-eight percent of central office administrators and principals rated the first statement as *Good or Excellent*, with 75 percent of teachers giving it the same rating. Eighty-eight percent of central office administrators and principals also responded *Good or Excellent* to the second statement, with 64 percent of teachers responding the same. In another portion of the survey these groups were again asked to rate the quality of instructional technology in the division. Seventy-five percent of central office administrators rated the quality as *Adequate to Outstanding*, while 68 percent of teachers and 50 percent of principals provided the same rating.

Other ratings showed similar levels of satisfaction with the quality of technology services. When responding to the statement, "I have adequate equipment and computer support to conduct my work," 88 percent of central office administrators, 86 percent of principals, and 73 percent of teachers responded, *Agree or Strongly Agree*.

In contrast to these responses, when asked whether the school division requests input on the long range technology plan, only 25 percent of central office administrators responded, *Agree or Strongly Agree*. Responses to this statement from principals and teachers were also below the 50 percent level, with only 43 percent and 37 percent respectively responding *Agree or Strongly Agree*.

### **9.1 Planning, Policies, and Procedures**

Ten years ago, technology was seen as an add-on in school divisions, indeed in many organizations, including private businesses. Now, technology is a foundational aspect of almost every organization.

Successful technology planning and policies are the foundation for successful technology implementation and development. School division technology is not just a stand alone, long-term, ongoing project; it affects every aspect of school division operations. The technology planning and policy creation is complicated. There are many factors to consider, including consistent infrastructure, instructional integration, required data reporting, funding, training, and staffing for support.

By analyzing current trends in division demographics and available technology, planners can predict what the needs of the school division will be and what technology will be available to fill those needs. Technology is the fastest changing segment of our society, so frequent updates and revisions of any technology plans, policies, and procedures are required.

#### **FINDING**

The Dinwiddie County Public Schools Technology Plan was written by the previous Technology Director who then invited committee members to comment and approve the plan during the past school year; the plan is not reviewed on a regularly scheduled basis; positions responsible for implementation are not listed; and implementation dates are vague.

According to interviews with a variety of school division staff, the technology plan provided to MGT had been recently updated for the efficiency review. Former technology staff, including the former director, are listed as members of the Technology Plan committee. Goals are listed with specific strategies and indicators for progress; however, specific timelines and staff responsible for the implementation of each strategy are not included in the plan.

There are no formal reviews and evaluations for the Technology Plan for DCPS. The school division could more easily and practically establish roles for the planning committee to monitor and review the Technology Plan for the division on an ongoing basis.

#### **RECOMMENDATION:**

##### **Recommendation 9-1:**

##### **Modify, review, and evaluate the current Technology Plan.**

The Technology Plan should be considered a living document due to the rapid pace of change in technology, so frequent reviews to update and revise the plan is needed for all school divisions.

The Technology Planning Committee should meet on a quarterly basis and should assume responsibilities that include:

- revising the division's Technology Plan, including assigning responsibility for the completion of specific tasks, timelines for task completion, allocating resources for task completion, and verifying compatibility with the division's strategic plan;
- submitting the Technology Plan annually to the Board of Education for review and approval;
- determining the status on the implementation of the plan;
- providing advice on and helping set priorities for technology development and technology spending;
- reviewing and approving proposed new software and hardware implementation, and ensuring they are in accordance with current division infrastructure and the Technology Plan;
- monitoring the equitable distribution of technology among the schools; and
- recommending revisions in policies and procedures that impact technology use.

#### **FISCAL IMPACT**

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

#### **FINDING**

Currently, school administrators, teachers, technology resource teachers, and central office administrators can purchase technology-related equipment without the approval of the Director of Planning, Accountability, and Technology.

MGT team members found that teachers at the high school purchased a photo shop style of software without the knowledge and approval from the Technology Department. This software was not able to run on the current laptops and the division had to upgrade any laptop using the software for hundreds of dollars, which was an unexpected cost. DCPS uses administrative staff in the technology office to research and evaluate products prior to their purchase, yet all staff are not required to use this process.

The continuance of this practice can lead to costly purchases due to upgrades or workarounds needed to accommodate the new hardware or software. This can place an unnecessary financial burden on a school division.

Best practices in other school divisions enforce the prior approval of any and all technology-related purchases by the position overseeing technology. While no one software or hardware solution will meet all the needs of a particular division, care should be taken in the initial selection so that a school division does not fall into the trap of selecting a system that fails to meet many needs, necessitating additional purchases of other packages that must then be patched into the first system.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

### **Recommendation 9-2:**

**Require that the Office of Technology approve all potential software and hardware purchases by administrators and staff prior to the issue of a purchase order.**

The DCPS Technology Planning Committee should work with Office of Technology to develop a joint administrative and instructional software selection process. This process should require the educational or administrative value of the software being considered, the budget implications, its fit in the overall division Technology Plan, and the level of support necessary to ensure successful implementation. This recommended approval regarding technology-related software is a growing trend and among best practices according to *CDW-G*, a government technology publication providing computing solutions to educational institutions.

The division should include all technology-related purchases regardless of funding source, including those made with grant monies.

## **FISCAL IMPACT**

The implementation of this recommendation can be implemented with existing resources and should produce cost-savings due to the prevention of purchases that cost the division additional expenses, such as the photo shop software.

## **FINDING**

DCPS does not have a system in place to require staff to complete and submit a form acknowledging their understanding of the division's acceptance use policy.

Acceptable use policies provide a mechanism for staff to know the rules associated with technology use within the school division and the subsequent course of action that can be taken when a violation occurs.

Without a practice to ensure all staff have completed, signed, and returned user acceptance forms, DCPS may be prevented from taking action with staff that use technology-related equipment and/or software in an inappropriate manner.

An effective way to manage acknowledgement forms often used by other school divisions is to have administrative or Human Resources staff provide forms to new and returning staff on an annual basis and as part of routine employee and/or contract checklists. These forms are then retained by the technology staff within the central administration. HR staff in these school systems then monitor receipt of the forms and request the Office of Technology to revoke computer access for employees failing to return the signed forms.

Exhibit 9-1 shows a sample user agreement form that DCPS could require of staff.

**EXHIBIT 9-1  
SAMPLE EMPLOYEE ON-LINE NETWORK USER'S AGREEMENT**

I have read and understand the attached DISCLAIMER CONCERNING USE OF ON-LINE SERVICES and hereby release DCPS, and its employees and agents, from any and all claims of any kind arising from the use, misuse, or inability to use the on-line services provided by DCPS. I have read and understand the RULES OF ON-LINE NETWORK ETIQUETTE, and the LIST OF PROHIBITED USES OF ON-LINE SERVICES, and agree to abide by them. I understand that any violation of the above may constitute a criminal offense. I further understand and agree that if I violate any of the above, my access privileges may be revoked, and that discipline and/or legal action may be taken.

User Name (please print): \_\_\_\_\_

User Position Title: \_\_\_\_\_

User Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Location/School: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**SUBMIT COMPLETED FORM TO THE OFFICE OF TECHNOLOGY TO ATTAIN/RETAIN ACCESS TO THE DCPS NETWORK.**

Source: Created by MGT of America, 2005.

**RECOMMENDATION**

**Recommendation 9-3:**

**Create and implement an accountability process for Dinwiddie County Public Schools user agreement forms.**

The creation and implementation of an accountability process for technology-related acceptable use acknowledgement forms should assist DCPS in ensuring that all staff has been provided a copy of this agreement. This practice should allow for the school division to hold staff accountable for any noncompliance of the agreement and staff should only be granted access when such form is collected on an annual basis. The forms should be modified to include the date signed, and retained by the Office of Technology.

**FISCAL IMPACT**

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

## **FINDING**

Not every student has been provided with a network login by the time of our on-site visit in mid-November, which means some students still do not have access to the DCPS network.

According to staff interviews and the current organizational chart, the position that handles this particular process of providing student network accounts is vacant; however, there was no documentation provided for a back-up system for other staff members to handle this rather important role, which is paramount to successfully integrating technology into the classroom. MGT team members were also told that students lacking network access were not necessarily new to the school, but included returning students.

MGT was not provided with a policy or procedure stating the assurance that that student network access will be provided for all students at the start of each school year.

If this practice continues, it is likely that some students will not be granted access to the DCPS network prior to the end of the current school year, which would prevent students from learning or using network directories for retrieving data or storing their work. This is an unacceptable practice for any school division.

## **RECOMMENDATION:**

### **Recommendation 9-4:**

**Create and enforce a policy to ensure that all students are granted access to the Dinwiddie County Public School network within ten (10) days of their enrollment in the division.**

The Technology Planning Committee should create a policy stating that all students are to be provided access to the DCPS network. The Superintendent should enforce the policy and hold the Director of Planning, Accountability, and Technology responsible for ensuring that all students are granted access to the network within ten (10) days of their enrollment. The Superintendent should require the Director of Planning, Accountability, and Technology to provide access codes to students and their respective teachers and follow-up within 30 days of the granting access to ensure students have attempted and succeeded in gaining access to the network.

The implementation of this recommendation will ensure that all students are provided the basic needs to properly integrate technology into their class work.

## **FISCAL IMPACT**

The implementation of this recommendation can be accomplished by using existing technology staff within Dinwiddie County Public Schools.

**FINDING**

Procedure manuals have not been written for most of the technology-related functions and responsibilities within the Department of Technology.

Smaller school divisions often function without formal written procedures because someone has been responsible for a particular function for many years and others become dependent upon their institutional knowledge.

The only examples provided by DCPS listed the steps for ensuring backups were created correctly, and a preventative maintenance for division integration. These steps are used to review daily, weekly, and monthly backup files. These procedures were the only two provided by the division to MGT team members.

DCPS does not have a formal procedure manual that documents all technology-related operations and functions. In the absence of a procedures manual, technology employees cannot function outside of their area of responsibility. The lack of a procedures manual is a hindrance during times of prolonged illness or employee turnover, which has recently occurred in the Office of Technology for the division. When one individual suddenly leaves for unforeseen reasons, division administrators are often left without knowledge of how to perform certain tasks and by what deadline the task must be accomplished.

Best practices indicate that all functions should be documented in a procedural manual and with technology as a critical component to the continuance of school division operations, processes should be well documented.

**RECOMMENDATION:**

**Recommendation 9-5:**

**Create a technology-related procedural manual for Dinwiddie County Public Schools.**

Written procedures are created to assist division technology personnel in following a process from beginning to end should they need to perform that function suddenly. The division should also incorporate a schedule to annually review the manual to ensure that all processes are current. The implementation of this recommendation should assist the school division whenever staff changes occur to continue operating without any disruption of service.

MGT suggested topics for the manual include:

■ **Technology**

- Guidelines for Purchase
- Guidelines for Donations
- Maintenance
- Inventory
- Disposal
- Backups, Cleanups
- Disaster Recovery
- Year-End Procedures
- Peripherals

■ **Hardware and Software**

- Selection
- Standardization

■ **Telecommunications**

- Division Network
- Internet Use (Students and Employees)

■ **Web Pages**

- Goals/General Statement
- Web Publishing Procedures
- Webmaster Role/Duties
- 

■ **Division Technology Forms**

- Software Approval Form
- Charitable Contribution Form
- Request for Network Access Account
- Employee Internet Access Form
- Technology Maintenance Request
- Proposed Web Page Application
- Release Form for Student Work
- Student E-Mail Account Request

■ **Division Policies and Procedures**

**FISCAL IMPACT**

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources within the Office of Technology for the Dinwiddie County Public Schools.

## **FINDING**

The Technology Department has a Web page on the division Web site, but the site has limited information for users. There are no active links on the page that connect users to the information described on the site. For example, the five goals of the technology department—integration, professional development, connectivity, educational applications, and accountability—are listed with a brief, one-sentence description of each. Information related to these areas is located on the Intranet yet, each of these topics could be linked to documents and other materials that illustrate the department's achievements in each of these goal areas on the external site for the community to read. "Professional development" could link to the schedule of training activities happening in the division, while "Accountability" could link to student achievement data. With appropriate links, the Web site could serve as a one-stop for information on technology policies, procedures, and usage in the division.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

### **Recommendation 9-6:**

**Update and revise Technology Department Web site to include a greater breadth of information.**

A review of the Technology Department Web sites in peer divisions around Virginia found links to such information as "Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)," the division technology plan, maintenance request forms, instructional resources, the acceptable use policy, as well as links to contact all departmental personnel by email. Dinwiddie County Public Schools technology Web site could be set up in a similar fashion. Having such information readily available could relieve the technology staff from having to answer routine inquiries and focus their time in more productive areas.

## **FISCAL IMPACT**

With the resources currently available in the Dinwiddie County Public Schools Office of Technology, there would be no need for additional expenditures to accomplish this recommendation.

## **9.2 Software, Hardware, and Infrastructure**

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 serve an administrative function, as well, 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 divisions will make data-driven decisions. The data to make those decisions can only come from sufficient administrative software and hardware.

In software, one of the most important aspects of the technology revolution is the advent of e-mail. E-mail allows division personnel to communicate quickly with another individual or with the entire division. Central office administrators can use e-mail to communicate important news across the school division. Principals can use e-mail to

communicate with their entire school in an instant. Teachers can use e-mail to share information with other teachers across the building, across the division, or across the world.

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. This increase in cost is primarily because 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 difficulty is particularly true of an educational system because the types of software used are more diverse than software found in most other organizations.

### **FINDING**

The DCPS has created a proven infrastructure using a combination of T1 lines, DS1 lines, 10/100 meg Hubs, along with wireless access points within the division, and using specifications for equipment updates and replacements.

The DCPS has built an infrastructure that connects Central Administration offices, each of the seven schools, the Transportation office using vendor lines through the high school and through an ATM network. There are currently 119 wireless access points for staff and students to connect to the network and Internet using a wireless environment. Interviews with DCPS school and administrative staff indicated that connectivity speed was not an issue. Firewalls protect any outside user from accessing the network or Internet without the approval from the Technology Department. In fact, while the MGT team was on-site, access was not allowed to team members using wireless technology without providing internal system identifiers to the Director of Planning, Accountability, and Technology.

Specifications were provided by staff for switches, processors, and both thin and wide business notebooks. These specifications will ensure compatibility of infrastructure-related equipment purchases for the school division.

### **COMMENDATION**

**The Dinwiddie County Public Schools is commended for having a sound infrastructure and equipment specifications related to the infrastructure for the school division.**

### **FINDING**

Technology-related hardware inventory is not conducted on an annual basis within DCPS.

According to staff interviewed, a quick inventory on certain technology-related equipment was performed to prepare for MGT's visit as part of this evaluation study. Inventory reports provided contained the manufacturer, model, laptop versus desktop indicator, model and serial numbers, school location code, department and specific location.

Several staff also indicated that the division used a software to track all computers connected to the network and that this took the place of having to perform a physical inventory; however this software will only locate those computers connected to the network and not stand alone machines, nor will it track peripheral equipment and does not take the place of a physical inventory.

During the on-site visit, MGT team members noticed that not all computers had asset identification tags affixed. While some servers, computers, and printers had this information, not all were identified as property owned by DCPS.

The lack of a formal technology-related inventory process that includes detailed inventory lists can potentially lead to the loss or theft of equipment. If this happens, DCPS would have an increase in expenditures to replace the equipment. If theft is involved, legal fees and insurance rate increases are also likely thus having a negative financial impact on the school division.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

### **Recommendation 9-7:**

#### **Require a regularly scheduled inventory of technology-related equipment for Dinwiddie County Public Schools.**

Generally accepted practices indicate that an inventory of technology-related equipment is needed to accurately reflect assets on financial statements. Physical inventories for technology-related equipment provide the necessary information for risk assessments for proper insurance.

## **FISCAL IMPACT**

This recommendation can be implemented using existing resources.

## **FINDING**

DCPS does not have an adequate process to track software licenses.

Documentation provided to MGT included a recently created list of software for a few schools but did not include a comprehensive list of software loaded on computers and servers throughout the division. The lists provided did not even include date specific information so there is no way to determine if licenses had expired on these reports. Many single pages from vendors related to software were provided but were not consistent with the software listed on each of the three school's inventory lists provided. This information was not provided in any type of report but rather by individual letters, certificates, or invoice copies. There was very little consistency in the information provided by two different sources from administration for the list of software used throughout the school division.

There are no procedures in place to inventory all software used throughout the division, nor a way to identify when licenses may expire. Without a sufficient process to identify pending (or past) expiration of software license, the division can be risking legal issues

with software vendors, losing access to software support, or incurring costly upgrades, which are generally free with current licensed copies.

A more efficient practice for licensed software lists should incorporate an expiration column with an alert trigger for 120 days prior to the expiration in order for the technology staff to purchase the license renewal in a timely manner. This can be accomplished through a database file with existing licensed software.

**RECOMMENDATION:**

**Recommendation 9-8:**

**Implement a divisionwide licensed software inventory tracking process.**

The division should implement a licensed software inventory tracking process to ensure that they are in compliance with software vendor agreements. The division should further create a process to add any newly acquired software and delete removed software to this tracking tool. The implementation of this recommendation should provide accountability on licensed software for DCPS.

**FISCAL IMPACT**

This recommendation can be implemented using existing resources with current technology staff within the division.

**FINDING**

Dinwiddie County Public Schools purchased laptops for all teachers during the last school year using grant funds. The school division applied for and received over \$70,000 in grant funding under the *No Child Left Behind Act* to purchase a new laptop for every teacher within the school division. The laptops provided an additional avenue for teachers to be familiarized with technology for integration since laptops are available in the classroom and can be taken home too.

DCPS provides teachers with the following information when laptops are assigned:

- **Laptop Care** – provides nine key steps for staff to take in order to properly care for the assigned laptops;
- **Laptop Cautions** – provides 13 instructions for the proper use of the assigned laptops; and
- **Basic Laptop Troubleshooting** – provides nine frequently occurring performance issues that can affect laptop use along with steps to take for resolution.

Teachers signed a laptop agreement form that detailed the appropriate uses of the computer and that they were to be returned upon termination of employment. The agreement also states that *” teachers may load licensed personal instructional software on the laptop if you wish but should sever errors occur, the machine will be reformatted*

*to its original state (as it was when issued to you).*” This provision allows for staff to add unlicensed software to laptops that are the property of the school division, which increases the liability for DCPS in legal issues with software companies.

While the school division is commended on this practice, staff interviews indicated that two laptops were not returned when staff left the school division.

### **COMMENDATION**

**Dinwiddie County Public Schools is commended for purchasing a laptop for every school teacher within the division and providing teachers with important care and performance information.**

### **RECOMMENDATION:**

#### **Recommendation 9-9:**

**Change the agreement so that only the Technology Office can load software and withhold teacher pay until laptops have been returned when staff terminate or resign.**

DCPS should change the agreement form to ensure that staff do not install software on laptops since this will be inconsistent with recommendations made previously in this chapter. Only the Office of Technology should install software that has been evaluated with the current infrastructure, and have the proper software license agreement on file.

The school division should ensure that all laptops are returned in an acceptable manner when teachers are no longer employed by DCPS. Payroll should be alerted to stop payroll for any teacher not returning the equipment to DCPS. This should ensure that equipment is returned upon their termination.

This recommendation will allow for a consistent policy on hardware and software within the school division.

### **FISCAL IMPACT**

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

### **FINDING**

Currently, the division does not have effective work order reports to use as performance indicators for staff.

MGT team members requested aging reports by technology-related staff, report on the number of completions this fall by each staff member, and the number of work orders still open since May of 2005.

MGT did not receive these requested reports, but did receive a report stating that 142 work orders were open as of November 9, 2005. Of these 111 were listed as “new” but without a definition of “new” and 31 were listed as “working on it”. The report further

stated that 712 work orders have been completed since May 2005, with detail of how many were completed by each staff member.

Interviews with staff suggested that the work order reports were not helpful in determining staff completions by expertise level, or time it took to complete the work order.

Best practices for work order systems use aging reports as one indicator for performance measures. Another type of report would provide the level of expertise needed to complete the work order since not all requests are equal, easy, or quick.

**RECOMMENDATION:**

**Recommendation 9-10:**

**Create and analyze more meaningful work order reports that can be related to performance measures.**

In order to determine if DCPS technology staff are efficient in completing work orders, more effective reports should be created from the work order system. Reports should include the length of time needed for a work order to be completed, the steps taken to complete the work order, and an aging report for open work orders by each staff member.

The Director of Planning, Accountability, and Technology should analyze the newly created reports to establish baseline performance standards for all staff in order to determine the effectiveness of staff. A sample report form is shown below that can be modified as needed.

Dept./Building:	Room#:	
Describe the maintenance/repair being requested:		
Signature	Date	
Signature of Principal/Supervisor		
<b>IT Department Response</b>		
Received by IT Department:		
	Date	Signature of IT Supervisor
<input type="checkbox"/> Work Completed:	Date	by Name of Technician
<input type="checkbox"/> Work to be completed:	Date	by Name of Technician
A copy of this request with IT response to be returned to the Building Principal or Supervisor within 5 days of receipt.		

Source: Created by MGT of America, 2005.

## **FISCAL IMPACT**

This recommendation can be implemented using DCPS programmer staff and the current work order system.

## **FINDING**

Dinwiddie Public Schools Office of Technology converted the previous environment to the existing wireless environment and implemented a fiber backboard using internal staff, which saved the division over \$150,000. Office of Technology staff are certified to install wireless and fiber technologies and therefore handled the work internally without having to use vendors for labor.

Previously, the division was outsourcing this work and had expenses totally slightly more than \$150,000 according to documentation provided to MGT team members. By using internal staff who are certified, the division was able to reduce expenditures for these services.

## **COMMENDATION**

**The Office of Technology is commended for using staff resources to save the school division over \$150,000 for technology upgrades.**

## **FINDING**

Not every computer is set up to print although a printer is available for use with each computer.

Ghost imaging was performed recently on machines to revert back to original settings. This prevented the use of print drivers previously installed since they were no longer recognizable; therefore teachers are not able to print yet in several areas of Dinwiddie High School. When a computer is imaged to revert back to original settings, network settings are not available either. This ghost imaging practice also prevents teachers from being able to save to the network, which increases the use of discs or hard drives that are not backed up by network servers.

The ghost imaging practice was performed to assist in technology staff in routine maintenance of machines; however, it was determined within a month or two that this practice caused a variety of network challenges for users. Since the determination in the early Fall, the Office of Technology has not change the settings on these machines to not revert so staff impacted are still not able to print or save to network locations.

If this practice continues, impacted staff will continue to struggle with using discs to save files and carry to other school computers to load, save or print, which is impractical and ineffective.

The school division needs to ensure that all computers that meet minimum standards have access to the network drives for saving and printing of files.

**RECOMMENDATION:**

**Recommendation 9-11:**

**Correct the settings of computers in Dinwiddie High School that continually revert to original settings.**

In order for the school division to keep moving forward with technology integration, all computers meeting the minimum standards should have access to the network. Network access should include printers and drives that allow for proper storage of files that can be backed up with all other network files on a nightly basis.

**FISCAL IMPACT**

This recommendation can be implemented using current Office of Technology staff.

**FINDING**

Not all of the head end (network server) rooms and computer labs located in DCPS are secured and free of storage and clutter.

MGT team members inspected head end rooms during school site visits as part of the efficiency review process. During the on-site visits, several issues were uncovered regarding head end rooms. The head end room at Dinwiddie High is also used as one of the hubs for the school division. This room is accessed by technology staff and during the on-site visit, the air conditioner was struggling and the room was warm. Ceiling tiles were moved to help cool down the room and access doors had to be opened to assist with cooling.

Dinwiddie Elementary had over 20 boxes of books stored, cables stretched across tables, and what appeared to be scraps of paper all over the room. The room did have its own air conditioner and was kept cool, but was rather messy as well as dusty. The lab at Sunnyside Elementary was unlocked during an school site visit and no staff were seen in that area of the building.

While DCPS has been fortunate to not have major issues concerning head end rooms or computer labs, this is not a best practice for the school division. Best practices for school divisions require all server or head end rooms as well as computer labs to be adequately cooled and free of any type of storage or clutter.

**RECOMMENDATION:**

**Recommendation 9-12:**

**Repair the air conditioner at Dinwiddie High School and require each head end room and computer lab to be secure and free of clutter.**

DCPS should repair the air conditioner for the Dinwiddie High School head end room to ensure adequate air flow that is required for proper server performance. A policy should be incorporated that requires each head end room and computer lab to be free of

storage, clutter and trash. This policy is imperative for the proper performance of servers and computers since dust particles can cause serious damage to the machines. If damage should occur, the division would need replace each computer and server impacted.

**FISCAL IMPACT**

The cost to implement this recommendation would only be to repair the air conditioner in the head end room at Dinwiddie High School is approximately a \$10,000-one-time cost to the school division.

<b>Recommendation</b>	<b>2006-07</b>	<b>2007-08</b>	<b>2008-09</b>	<b>2009-10</b>	<b>2010-11</b>
Repair Air Conditioner at Dinwiddie High School	(\$10,000)	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0

**9.3 Staff Development**

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 serve an administrative function, as well, 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 divisions will make data-driven decisions. The data to make those decisions can only come from sufficient administrative software and hardware.

In software, one of the most important aspects of the technology revolution is the advent of e-mail. E-mail allows division personnel to communicate quickly with another individual or with the entire division. Central office administrators can use e-mail to communicate important news across the division. Principals can use e-mail to communicate with their entire school in an instant. Teachers can use e-mail to share information with other teachers across the building, across the division, or across the world.

In hardware, costs have been declining over the past decade, due to greater as mass production of computers and peripherals. While the price of hardware is generally declining, the cost of software is increasing. This increase in cost is primarily because 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 difficulty is particularly true of an educational system because the types of software used are more diverse than those found in most other organizations.

**FINDING**

Dinwiddie County Public Schools offers a variety of technology-related training for teachers. Training is geared to specific student learning objectives as found on

integrated curriculum maps. Lesson follow-up reports are created to comment on how the technology was integrated in the classroom.

An example provided included the student objective stating “..will develop map skills by locating specific places on a simple letter and number grid system.” Teachers were then trained on software to develop a letter and number grid system, and provided a review using the software on an overhead projector to show students how to use the letter and number grid system for maps. Follow-up lesson plans were not provided for this particular example but other documentation received showed the specifics of how students were progressing by using the integration methods.

DCPS also has a comprehensive list of classes for new teachers and is open for teachers who would like to refresh their skills. Training is broken down by the following categories or strands as they are referred to by DCPS:

- classroom management
- curriculum and instruction
- special education
- assessment
- teacher productivity and communications; and
- technology integration.

Exhibit 9-2 shows an example of the courses offered for the curriculum and instruction strand. These courses are currently scheduled for December 2, 2005 through February 4, 2006 during the 2005-06 school year. Schedules include date, time, location and instructor information.

**EXHIBIT 9-2  
NEW TEACHER/NEW HIRES INSTITUTES  
CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION**

TITLE
Curriculum Treasure Chest: Using Teacher Resource Guides, Blueprints, Pacing Guides (K-8)
Instructional Strategies: Instruction that Works (K-8)
Differentiating Instruction
Razzle, Dazzle Writing
Writing Across the Curriculum
Guided Reading

Source: Dinwiddie County Public School, Office of Curriculum and Instruction 2005.

The school division also provides a summer institute for staff training during summer months. During the Summer of 2005, the following courses were offered by DCPS technology staff:

- Great Teaching With Digital Cameras
- Easy Grade Pro Workshop (2)
- HyperStudio Jeopardy
- Introduction to Front Page
- Graph Master and Neighborhood Maps
- Multimedia Instruction
- Web page
- Helpful Elementary Web Sites
- Keeping Your Home Computer Happy
- Basics to Using PowerPoint; and
- Microsoft Publisher.

Over 150 staff attended the training; however, this is not necessarily 150 different staff but rather may include staff who attended most training courses offered. The school division does not have an effective tracking process in place to validate which teachers took courses versus those who did not attend any training.

The school division has surveyed staff to determine the types of coursework teachers would like to have provided; however, not all of the survey results were available for MGT. Furthermore, DCPS staff also provide a mechanism for feedback from teachers attending training by providing evaluation forms at the end of each training; however, it is not clear how the division uses this information once it is gathered.

MGT surveyed DCPS administrators, principals, and teachers regarding technology-related staff development. As shown, Exhibit 9-3, an overwhelming number of staff surveyed *agreed* or *strongly agreed* that the school division provides adequate technology-related staff development.

**EXHIBIT 9-3  
DINWIDDIE COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS  
TECHNOLOGY SURVEY RESULTS**

SURVEY ITEMS	(%A + SA) / (%D + SD) <sup>1</sup>		
	ADMINISTRATORS	PRINCIPALS	TEACHERS
The school division provides adequate technology-related staff development.	88/13	76/25	81/7

Source: Dinwiddie County Public Schools, Survey Results for MGT of America, 2005.

<sup>1</sup>Percent responding *Agree* or *Strongly Agree*/Percent responding *Disagree* or *Strongly Disagree*. The *neutral* and *don't know* responses are omitted.

**COMMENDATION**

**The Dinwiddie School Division offers teachers a variety of technology-related training throughout the school year and also conducts Summer Institutes to assist with technology integration.**

## **RECOMMENDATION**

### **Recommendation 9-13:**

#### **Implement a process to track teacher-training attendance.**

While the division is commended for offering a variety of coursework to assist with the integration of technology in the classroom, there should be an easier way to track specific courses teachers have taken. By tracking courses taken for each teacher, the division should be able to determine which teachers are still lacking the training required to integrate technology. This tracking tool will also enable principals to know which types of training to look for during observations in the classroom. The current spreadsheet does not align with best practices for this process.

This recommendation would provide accountability for technology-related training of teachers in Dinwiddie County Public Schools.

## **FISCAL IMPACT**

This recommendation can be implemented using existing resources by using technology staff specializing in database administration.

## **FINDING**

Although a great deal of training is provided for instructional personnel in the division, there is no established training schedule for the Technology Department personnel to enable them to stay abreast of the latest developments in technology so as to better serve the needs of the division. Persons working in the technology department bring technological expertise with them to the position and receive some initial training; however, once they are in the position, they need to continually update and improve their technology skills to keep pace with changes in the field.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

### **Recommendation 9-14:**

#### **Develop a regular training schedule for all technology department personnel.**

The training schedule would include activities designed to meet the needs of the specialty areas for each member of the technology department, including the administrators. Training activities could range from attending and/or presenting at the Virginia Educational Technology Leadership Conference, to a series of mini-workshops in the division on various topics. All training activities would have the purpose of enhancing the knowledge, skills, and abilities of the technology staff.

## **FISCAL IMPACT**

Costs for providing training for the Technology Department staff would vary since much of the training would involve travel by either staff members to conferences or bringing technology experts in; however, a fixed budget could be established to include known

costs for the Virginia Educational Technology Leadership Conference, and an average cost for bringing in trainers. Conference travel would be limited to half the staff each year. Conference cost for half the staff including registration, lodging, travel and meals would total approximately \$1,000 per year. Cost for training in the division would total \$3,000, based on ten days per year, at a rate of \$300 per day. The total annual cost of training for the Technology Department staff would total \$4,000.

<b>Recommendation</b>	<b>2006-07</b>	<b>2007-08</b>	<b>2008-09</b>	<b>2009-10</b>	<b>2010-11</b>
Training for Technology Department Staff	(\$4,000)	(\$4,000)	(\$4,000)	(\$4,000)	(\$4,000)

**FINDING**

The division collects a wide variety of data from its employees, but does not systematically analyze the data and use the analysis for improvement of its operations and procedures. For example, the division conducts exit interviews with employees leaving the division, but other than categorizing the reasons for leaving (e.g., resignation, retirement, termination, etc.), the division does not analyze the wealth of information to be gained from written statements that accompany the categories on these forms. Feedback is also collected in surveys of inservice participants, but like the exit interviews, this data is not used beyond basic numbering and categorizing responses.

**RECOMMENDATION**

**Recommendation 9-15:**

**Create a database to systematically evaluate teacher survey results and evaluations.**

While the division has created a way to gather surveys and feedback from staff, there should be a database in place to systematically evaluate the results. Current technology department staff specialize in database creation and could easily develop a front-end tool for staff to be surveyed as well as a method of providing evaluations on training.

Technology-related training is currently held in computer labs in the schools. A mechanism for evaluations can be created to automatically capture their feedback at the end of training. This would eliminate paper copies and populate the database automatically. The feedback could be then reported for each training class to analyzed by trainers.

Surveys should be sent out (using a form) for staff to complete. Once the user has completed the form, they should press a key to update the database. A report can be created to capture the information provided by staff for easy analysis by the trainers.

The implementation of this recommendation would provide DCPS with a best practice associated with technology-related training for teachers.

**FISCAL IMPACT**

This recommendation can be implemented using current technology staff having the responsibilities of creating and maintaining the division's other database.

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## **10.0 FOOD SERVICE**

This chapter presents the findings, commendations, and recommendations regarding operations of the Nutrition Services Department for Dinwiddie County Public Schools (DCPS). The three major sections in this chapter are:

- 10.1 Organization and Management
- 10.2 Policy, Procedures, and Compliance with Regulations
- 10.3 Financial Performance

### **CHAPTER SUMMARY**

Overall, the DCPS Nutrition Services Department provides effective and efficient food services. The department is in compliance with most VDOE policies and procedures; however, MGT found some areas that could be improved. Making recommended improvements outlined in this chapter should increase the operational efficiency and effectiveness of the Nutritional Services Department.

Notable accomplishments of the DCPS Nutritional Services are:

- The Cafeteria Manager at Southside Elementary routinely collects feedback from parents who eat at the school.
- NCPS Nutrition Services has maintained a best practice standard of keeping food costs to 36 percent or less of total revenue.

MGT found that the division needs to improve in the areas of customer satisfaction, programmatic planning and monitoring, labor costs, financial reporting. Specifically:

- DCPS staff gave the Nutrition Services Department low quality ratings on MGT survey items pertaining to food quality and operational effectiveness.
- DCPS does not currently compile or analyze data on performance indicators that could help to determine operational shortcomings and highlight operational successes.
- DCPS labor costs for Nutrition Services is well above industry benchmarks in relation to overall revenue.
- The Nutrition Services Department does not track or report profit and loss of its individual school cafeteria sites. This leads to a lack of comprehensive information on site based efficiency and effectiveness.

### **INTRODUCTION**

The Nutrition Services Department for Dinwiddie County Public Schools offers breakfast, lunch, and snacks to over 4,500 students and adults at seven campuses. These campuses are comprised of five elementary, one middle, and one high school within

Dinwiddie County. The school division participates in the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) and School Breakfast Program (SBP), which are regulated by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) and administered by the Virginia Department of Education (VDOE).

As a participant in the NSLP and the SBP, the school division receives federal and state reimbursement income for free, reduced, and paid breakfast and lunch meals served. In addition to federal meal reimbursements income, the school division also receives USDA food commodities.

As illustrated in the department's organizational structure in Exhibit 10-1, the Nutrition Services Manager is responsible for the activities of the department. Reporting directly to the Nutrition Services Manager are seven Cafeteria Managers, who oversee daily operations at the school sites and supervise the 41 cafeteria staff among the seven Dinwiddie County schools. In addition, one half-time Executive Secretary and one half-time student worker provide assistance with communication, information, repair requests, catering, substitutes, and order questions for the department.

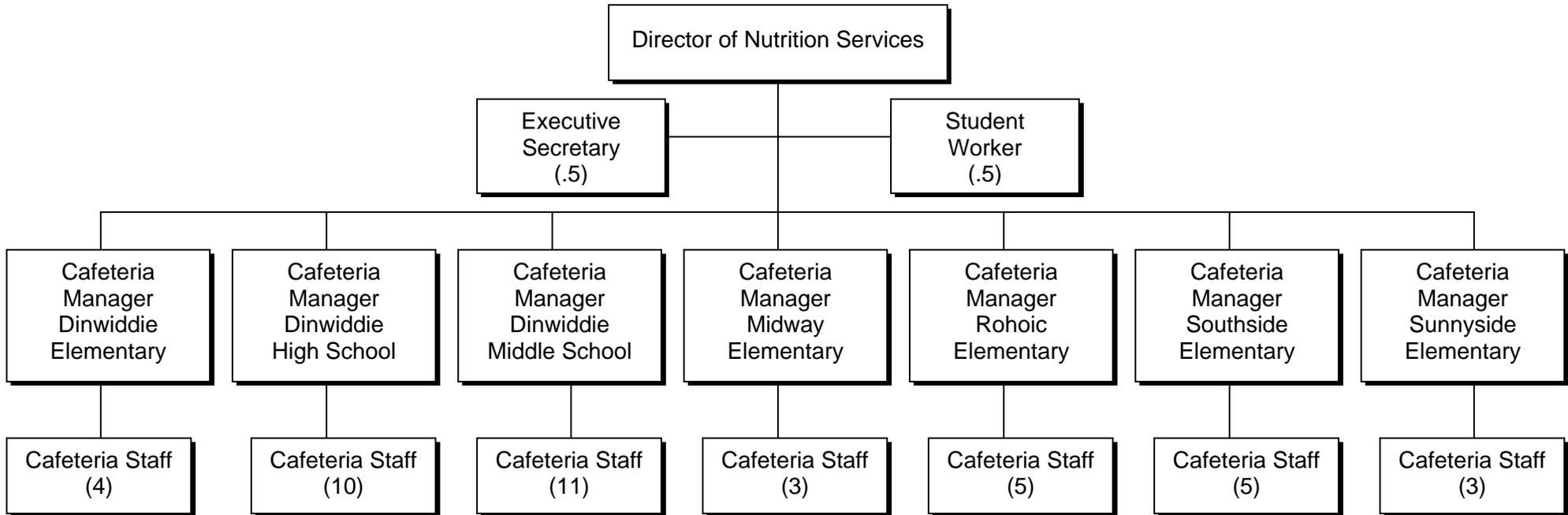
### **10.1 Organization and Management**

#### **FINDING**

MGT conducted a survey of DCPS administrators, principals, teachers as part of this efficiency review. These staff members were asked to assess the quality of the food service function within DCPS. As is shown in Exhibit 10-2, 51 percent of administrators, 72 percent of principals, and 60 percent of teachers stated that the food service function *needs some improvement* or *needs major improvement*. Conversely, only 18 percent of administrators, 35 percent of principals and 41 percent of teachers stated that DCPS food services are *adequate* or *outstanding*. As can also be seen in Exhibit 10-2, in comparison with over 100 school divisions completing the same survey during other MGT efficiency reviews, DCPS staff have a far less favorable view of food service quality overall.

Another portion of the MGT survey asked DCPS staff to respond to the statement: *the Nutrition Services department provides nutritious and appealing meals and snacks*. In response, 63 percent of DCPS division administrators *agreed* or *strongly agreed* that this statement was true, while only 13 percent *disagreed* or *strongly disagreed*. In stark contrast, however, only 22 percent of DCPS principals *agreed* or *strongly agreed* that this statement was true, while 56 percent *disagreed* or *strongly disagreed*. Similarly, only 31 percent of DCPS teachers *agreed* or *strongly agreed* that this statement was true, while 45 percent *disagreed* or *strongly disagreed* with the statement. These responses are detailed in Exhibit 10-3. A comparison of DCPS responses on this question to the average responses given by other school divisions MGT has audited is provided in 11-4. Again, the responses of DCPS principals and teachers are much less favorable than those of similar positions in other school divisions that MGT has studied.

**EXHIBIT 10-1  
DINWIDDIE COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS  
NUTRITION SERVICES ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE**



Source: Dinwiddie County Public Schools, Nutrition Services Department, 2005.

**EXHIBIT 10-2  
FOOD SERVICE COMPARISON SURVEY  
RESPONSES OF ADMINISTRATORS, PRINCIPALS AND TEACHERS**

<b>RESPONDENT GROUP</b>	<b>PERCENT INDICATING NEEDS SOME OR MAJOR IMPROVEMENT</b>	<b>OTHER SCHOOL DIVISIONS</b>	<b>PERCENT INDICATING ADEQUATE OR OUTSTANDING</b>	<b>OTHER SCHOOL DIVISIONS</b>
DCPS Administrators	51%	38%	18%	67%
DCPS Principals	72%	25%	35%	65%
DCPS Teachers	60%	29%	41%	47%

Source: MGT Survey, October, 2005.

**EXHIBIT 10-3  
FOOD SERVICE COMPARISON SURVEY  
RESPONSES OF ADMINISTRATORS, PRINCIPALS AND TEACHERS  
FOOD QUALITY QUESTION RESPONSES**

<b>SURVEY QUESTION</b>	<b>(%A + SA) / (%D + SD)*</b>		
	<b>DCPS ADMINISTRATORS</b>	<b>DCPS PRINCIPALS</b>	<b>DCPS TEACHERS</b>
The Nutrition Services department provides nutritious and appealing meals and snacks.	63/13	22/56	31/45

Source: MGT Survey, October, 2005.

\*Percent responding *Agree* or *Strongly Agree*/Percent responding *Disagree* or *Strongly Disagree*. The *neutral* and *don't know* responses are omitted.

**EXHIBIT 10-4  
FOOD SERVICE COMPARISON SURVEY  
RESPONSES OF ADMINISTRATORS, PRINCIPALS AND TEACHERS  
FOOD QUALITY QUESTION RESPONSES**

<b>RESPONDENT GROUP</b>	<b>PERCENT INDICATING AGREE OR STRONGLY AGREE</b>	<b>OTHER SCHOOL DIVISIONS</b>	<b>PERCENT INDICATING DISAGREE OR STRONGLY DISAGREE</b>	<b>OTHER SCHOOL DIVISIONS</b>
DCPS Administrators	63%	62%	13%	14%
DCPS Principals	22%	58%	56%	26%
DCPS Teachers	31%	43%	45%	34%

Source: MGT Survey, October, 2005.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **Recommendation 10-1:**

**Design a customer satisfaction survey to determine the reasons behind the high levels of DCPS dissatisfaction regarding Nutrition Services.**

The MGT survey results clearly identify a general unhappiness with the quality of Nutrition Services in Dinwiddie County Public Schools. These results are even more striking when compared to the typical responses provided by other schools systems. It is not unusual to find groups of students and parents that feel that a school division's food service function needs improvement, but it is far less common to find such disapproval among school staff. As the questions asked pertain to the need for improvement in the department and the general quality of food served in DCPS schools, the school division must take steps to identify the central issues leading to the dissatisfaction.

A well-designed customer satisfaction survey can provide the information essential to guide school division decisions focused on departmental improvement.

### **Recommendation 10-2:**

**Implement departmental changes based on needs identified in the customer satisfaction survey.**

Often, satisfaction surveys are designed, disseminated, and forgotten. It is essential that DCPS use the results of this survey to pinpoint needed changes and act on the resulting findings. DCPS should be given the opportunity to provide feedback on all relevant aspects of Nutrition Services activities.

## **FISCAL IMPACT**

There is no quantifiable cost associated with these recommendations and, similarly, no quantifiable savings for the school division. This is due to the fact that the results of a survey of customer satisfaction are unknown. However, it is likely that DCPS will realize substantial increases in student and staff participation, and the associated revenue, resulting from improvements in food quality and service.

## **FINDING**

One example of exemplary practice regarding collecting vital information on customer satisfaction was observed at Southside Elementary. When parents come into the Southside cafeteria to eat with students, the cafeteria manager gives them a notebook to comment on their meal. This is an effective practice that not only produces feedback on cafeteria food quality and service, but also sends a positive message to parents regarding the desire to improve as a Nutrition Services Program.

## **COMMENDATION**

**Southside Elementary is commended for collecting feedback on program quality from school parents.**

## **FINDING**

The combination of the current bus schedule and school bell schedule produces a lack of adequate time for Dinwiddie County Middle School students to eat breakfast. Presently, DCPS buses arrive at the middle school at various times, but students are forced to wait to be dismissed for breakfast until an appointed time. The current bus unload time for Dinwiddie Middle School is 7:30 AM. First period begins at 7:40 AM. This leaves a total of 10 minutes for students to get from their buses to the cafeteria, be served, and eat breakfast before they must report for first period. MGT has never observed a bus policy of this type in the numerous studies it has conducted. This practice is impeding the effective operation of breakfast service at Dinwiddie Middle School.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

### **Recommendation 10-3:**

**Align bus policies and school bell schedules to allow for sufficient breakfast service.**

DCPS advertises and accepts money for school breakfasts. In turn, it must allow adequate time for this service to be performed effectively. Clearly, breakfast is an important part of many DCPS students' school day and it should be effectively planned for and provided.

DCPS should implement Recommendation 9-8 which would change bus unload times from the current 7:30 AM for all students, to a practice that would allow buses to unload as they arrive at the middle school from 7:10 AM to 7:25 AM each morning. The bell schedule would change from the current 7:40 AM start time, to a new 7:35 AM start time for first period. This would allow up to 25 minutes for students to eat breakfast before reporting to first period.

## **FISCAL IMPACT**

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources and should increase revenue for the school division.

## **FINDING**

The timely service of school meals is a primary responsibility of the Nutrition Services Department. Traditionally, school breakfast and lunch schedules are tight and call for the most effective operational practices to ensure that students have sufficient time to eat school meals. In addition to the current bus schedule, MGT consultants observed other situations in DCPS schools that are contributing to a lack of adequate time for students

to eat school meals. While there is no way of knowing that these circumstances are repeated each day, they are indicative of general practice, and it is unlikely that most observations are one time occurrences.

- MGT consultants observed that breakfast food at Dinwiddie Middle School was not ready when students arrived for the breakfast meal. As already indicated, these students only have 10 minutes for breakfast, so the timely preparation of food is even more critical than normal.
- Slow service routines were observed that led to unnecessarily long lines at some schools. One example of this was a situation where pizza was being sliced as students ordered it, instead of pre-slicing and serving on demand.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

### **Recommendation 10-4:**

#### **Improve the timely preparation and service of school meals.**

Food preparation and service routines must be closely monitored and optimized to provide the best possible service to the primary Nutrition Services customer, DCPS students. School meals should be a time for students to relax and recharge in preparation for quality performance in the classroom. Nutrition Services staff should continually strive to make these times stress free and enjoyable.

## **FISCAL IMPACT**

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

## **FINDING**

Students should have adequate space to eat school meals. This is often difficult due to limited facilities and growing student populations; however, there are steps that can be taken to maximize cafeteria space to more effectively accommodate students during meal times. Such is the case at Dinwiddie High School.

MGT observed many students standing during lunch periods at Dinwiddie High School due to the lack of available table space. Consultants identified three clear circumstances that are negatively impacting cafeteria space at Dinwiddie High School.

- Dinwiddie High School cafeteria has a “senior’s only” room that restricts the access of other school students. This room was observed to be far below capacity during the lunch periods.
- Military recruiters were using tables inside of the cafeteria to solicit students.

- Student groups were observed selling various products using cafeteria tables and space.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

### **Recommendation 10-5:**

#### **Maximize cafeteria space for student dining.**

DCPS should take steps to ensure that students have adequate space and accommodations to eat. By opening the “senior’s only” room to all students, Dinwiddie High School will immediately improve student dining capacity. The same is true for eliminating military recruitment and product sales inside the cafeteria. These operations should be moved outside of the cafeteria so that the space can be used for its intended purpose.

## **FISCAL IMPACT**

There is no cost associated with this recommendation.

## **FINDING**

MGT consultants found no evidence of effective cost analysis and evaluation regarding Nutrition Services. There was no evidence found in departmental records or staff interviews to suggest that comprehensive cost analyses are conducted to evaluate program efficiency. Typically, food service operations develop contextually appropriate analyses that are used to monitor the efficiency of this fiscally sensitive function.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

### **Recommendation 10-6:**

#### **Develop a formal process for evaluating cost efficiency in departmental operations and document all activities and findings.**

Nutrition Services is responsible for a substantial portion of the DCPS budget which necessitates a high level of fiscal oversight and monitoring.

## **FISCAL IMPACT**

There is no specific fiscal impact for this recommendation; however, fiscal efficiency can only be promoted by increased precision in planning, monitoring, and evaluation activities. Therefore, it is likely that the Nutrition Services Department could realize significant cost savings over time with the implementation of this recommendation.

## **FINDING**

It is considered best practice for food service operations to compile and report at least annual performance on selected quality indicators. These indicators vary depending on the contextual differences among food service programs, but often include basic indices

such as, meals served per labor hour, program costs per meal, and percentage of labor cost to total revenue.

Currently, the Nutrition Services Department does not regularly track, compile, or publish its findings on performance indicators. Certain reporting requirements for VDOE are met, but these are insufficient to promote continual improvement in both the quality and efficiency of departmental operations. The resulting report should be disseminated to the School Board, appropriate School Division administrators, and selected stakeholders.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

### **Recommendation 10-7:**

**Implement an annual report card on the Dinwiddie County Public Schools Nutrition Services Department.**

Nutrition Services received poor quality ratings from most DCPS staff on the MGT survey. If only for this reason, the Nutrition Services Department should routinely collect and disseminate its performance on quality indicators. Such an annual review of its operations should provide assurances that the department is performing up to standards, both in comparison to its past and in comparison to its peers. The report card should be used to communicate departmental improvement and to highlight areas of critical need.

## **FISCAL IMPACT**

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources. However, it is possible that the Nutrition Services Department will achieve some cost savings as it works to achieve the goals identified by the report card.

## **10.2 Policy, Procedures, and Compliance with Regulations**

Nutrition Services 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 within the Nutrition Services Department.

Policies and procedures also provide the basis for staff to understand the necessity of compliance with federal, state, and local regulations and are a necessity for efficient Nutrition Services operations.

## **FINDING**

The Nutrition Services Department should be directed by clear school board policy that provides information on duties to be carried out within the school division, but that also provides information on the departmental mission. This information is important to drive internal operations, but is also important in the overall communication of Nutrition Services information to the public. An absence of formal school board policies creates

the potential for misinterpretations and omissions within the Nutrition Services Department.

Nutrition Services is a school division operation that is highly visible, both to students and the community. It is also one of the division-level operations that generates and spends a substantial amount of funds. For these primary reasons, a school board must ensure that rigorous standards must be in place to guide the quality of service delivery and the efficiency of fiscal operations. One method of strengthening the oversight of Nutrition Services operations is through comprehensive board policies.

Exhibit 10-5 provides an example of the Dinwiddie County School Board policy regarding Nutrition Services. This type of policy language is insufficient to ensure effective and efficient operation of the Nutrition Services function.

**EXHIBIT 10-5  
DINWIDDIE COUNTY SCHOOL BOARD  
NUTRITION SERVICES POLICY**

<u>File:</u> EFE	
<b>FOOD SERVICE RECORDS AND REPORTS</b>	
From time-to-time the superintendent shall report to the School Board on the financial status of the division's Nutrition Services operations.	
The superintendent, or his designee, will supervise the storage and distribution of all donated foods allocated by the U.S.D.A. for the school lunch program in such a manner as will ensure compliance with the terms and conditions of the agreement.	
Adopted: <b>July 14, 1998</b>	
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Legal Refs: Code of Virginia, 1950, as amended, sections 22.1-24, 22.1-70, 22.1-89.1, 22.1-115	
State Board of Education Regulations Governing Financial Records	
Retention and Disposition Schedule, VR-270-01-0025	

Source: Dinwiddie County Public Schools, School Board Policy, 2005.

**RECOMMENDATION**

**Recommendation 10-8:**

**Develop a comprehensive school board policy for Nutrition Services.**

DCPS should include comprehensive policy language on Nutrition Services in its policy manual to clearly communicate departmental services and expectations. Formal

Nutrition Services policies should define important practices and should also serve as a vehicle for addressing instances of public concern over operational issues.

Exhibit 10-6 provides an example of a comprehensive Nutrition Services policy. Each policy included in the DCPS policy manual must be carefully evaluated for appropriateness and alignment with Virginia law.

**EXHIBIT 10-6  
SAMPLE NUTRITION SERVICES POLICY**

**GENERAL NUTRITION SERVICES REQUIREMENTS**

The school Nutrition Services Program shall operate according to requirements set forth in state statutes and the rules of the Virginia Board of Education. The school Nutrition Services Program shall include the federally reimbursed lunch program, a la carte, beverage offerings, and sale of food and beverage items offered through vending machines or other methods to students at all school facilities during the school day and may include the federally reimbursed breakfast program.

- (1) The school Nutrition Services Program shall be an integral part of the Division's educational program, offering nutritional and educational opportunities to students.
- (2) Foods and beverages available in schools shall be only those which meet the nutritional needs of students and contribute to the development of desirable health habits unless permitted otherwise by state board of education rules and approved by the Superintendent.
- (3) The school Nutrition Services Program shall meet the standards for Nutrition Services and Sanitation and Safety as provided by the State Board of Health and State Department of Education.
- (4) School food and nutrition service funds shall not be considered or treated as internal funds of the local school, but shall be a part of the division school funds. School food and nutrition service funds shall be subject to all the requirements applicable to the division fund such as budgeting, accounting, reporting, and purchasing and such additional requirements as set forth in the written procedures manual authorized in this policy.
- (5) USDA commodities shall be acquired, stored, and utilized in accordance with United States Department of Agriculture and related state board of education rules.
- (6) The Superintendent or designee shall develop a written procedures manual to govern school food and nutritional services programs.

**SCHOOL NUTRITION SERVICES FUNDS**

- (7) School Nutrition Services funds shall be considered Special Revenue funds, but shall be subject to all requirements applicable to the Division School Fund such as budgeting, accounting, reporting, and purchasing unless specific requirements are established by Federal or State laws, rules or regulations.
- (8) Daily deposits of school Nutrition Services funds shall be made by authorized personnel in a bank(s) designated by the School Board.
- (9) Revenue from the sale of all items handled by the Nutrition Services Department shall be considered school Nutrition Services income. This includes income from sale of cans, bottles, jars, rice bags, swill, and similar items. Such funds shall not be expended as cash.
- (10) All payments from school Nutrition Services funds shall be made by check or wire transfer.

**EXHIBIT 10-6  
SAMPLE NUTRITION SERVICES POLICY (cont.)**

**SCHOOL NUTRITION SERVICES FUNDS**

- (11) School Nutrition Services funds shall be used only to pay Nutrition Services operating costs.
- (12) Profit and loss statements shall be developed monthly for each Nutrition Services Program, by school site.
- (13) Any loss of records, cash, or supplies through theft or otherwise shall be reported immediately to the Superintendent's office. Such losses shall be itemized and a copy of the report submitted with the regular reports.
- (14) Funds shall be collected and expended in compliance with United States Department of Agriculture and state board of education rules.
- (15) The Board shall annually adopt prices charged to students and adults who participate in the Nutrition Services Program.
- (16) The Superintendent shall develop written procedures for conducting the Division's Nutrition Services Program.

**MEAL PATTERNS**

All schools with grades Pre-K-12 shall participate in the National School Lunch and Breakfast Programs and serve student meals according to meal patterns established by the United States Department of Agriculture. Schools may participate in other Child Nutrition Programs; meals shall be served to students according to meal patterns established by the United States Department of Agriculture.

**FREE AND REDUCED PRICE MEALS**

Free or reduced price meals shall be served to all students who qualify based on eligibility criteria approved by the school board.

The income Eligibility Guidelines for free or reduced price meals shall be in accordance with the scales provided by the State Department of Education as adopted by the state board of education based upon income guidelines prescribed by the United States Secretary of Agriculture.

Eligibility criteria shall be applicable to all Division schools and shall provide that all students from a family meeting the eligibility criteria and attending any Division school are offered the same benefits.

Procedures for implementing the free and reduced price meal services shall be reviewed annually and shall be in accordance with procedures and guidelines published by the State Department of Education and the United States Department of Agriculture.

Source: Created by MGT of America, 2005.

**FISCAL IMPACT**

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

**FINDING**

Equipment failure decreases productivity and becomes a cost issue. For example, when a dishwasher fails at a large kitchen, extra employee hours are required in order to hand-wash dishes. Parts for older equipment are difficult to locate and are more expensive, due to a lack of demand. Circumstances such as this are common in food service operations and should be effectively planned for.

Presently, the Nutrition Services Department does not have a comprehensive preventive maintenance or replacement policy for kitchen equipment. This situation leaves the school division vulnerable to negative consequences stemming from aging equipment and the lack of routine comprehensive maintenance.

**RECOMMENDATION**

**Recommendation 10-9:**

**Develop a comprehensive preventative maintenance and replacement policy for kitchen equipment.**

A comprehensive preventative maintenance plan should help to reduce or eliminate down-time from breakage on older equipment. This policy should also make the Nutrition Services Department aware of equipment that will need to be scheduled for replacement. The implementation of this recommendation should allow for less reliance on the DCPS maintenance staff for emergency repairs.

**FISCAL IMPACT**

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

**FINDING**

Some DCPS cafeterias were observed to be below expected standards for cleanliness. One school, in particular, was found to be in need of substantial additional attention in this area. The observational protocol used by MGT consultants for this review consists of a basic walk through and is far from a “white glove” inspection. Consultants observed cobwebs in the cafeteria windows and sills, and walls and doors were visibly dirty and covered with food particles. In general, the middle school cafeteria is well below typical expectations for cleanliness.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

### **Recommendation 10-10:**

#### **Improve cafeteria cleanliness.**

The Director of Nutrition Services must ensure that cafeteria managers and staff are meeting expectations in these critical areas. A comprehensive process should be designed and implemented to monitor cafeteria practices and act on findings.

## **FISCAL IMPACT**

There is no cost associated with this recommendation.

## **FINDING**

While it is clear that Nutrition Services staff strive to perform their jobs adequately, there seems to be a lack of formal understanding of certain responsibilities, procedures and practices among departmental administration and staff. One reason for this situation is the fact that the Nutritional Services Department does not maintain a procedures manual that documents expectations of departmental practice for all employees. Interviews revealed that this lack of formality has been an ongoing source of confusion, especially when considering the fact that the Director is new to the operation.

A comprehensive procedures manual is essential to an effective food service operation. There are many local, state, and federal regulations that food service operations are held to. Without formal documentation of these and other requirements that are to be performed by staff at the school sites, the probability of non-compliance is high.

Additionally, the documentation of practice expectations serves as a roadmap for effective staff development training. Once again, without a comprehensive procedures manual, many opportunities for professional development are often lost.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

### **Recommendation 10-11:**

#### **Develop and disseminate a comprehensive procedures manual for Nutrition Services.**

The preparation of this manual will provide opportunities for Nutrition Services staff to refine operational expectation and goals, as well as compile operational requirements.

## **FISCAL IMPACT**

There is no cost associated with this recommendation.

### **10.3 Financial Performance**

According to annual financial reports provided to VDOE, DCPS Nutritional Services had operational expenses just over \$1.4 million in the 2004-05 school year, and revenues slightly above that figure. Revenue has increased over \$208,000 since 2002-03, while operational costs have increased by over \$223,000 during the same time period.

Exhibit 10-7 summarizes the department's revenues and expenditures over the past three school years. The exhibit shows that from 2002-03 to 2004-05, the department has increased revenues by 14.6 percent and increased expenditures by 15.6 percent.

#### **FINDING**

Exhibit 10-8 shows the food costs for Nutrition Services during the 2002-03 through 2004-05 school years. This exhibit indicates that food costs for the school division increased by \$92,679 since 2002-03, which is an 18.4 percent increase. Also, food costs for the school division increased by 10.3 percent in 2002-03 from the previous year and increased 9.1 percent from 2003-04 to 2004-05. Further, the food cost percentage to total revenue was 33.5 percent in 2001-02 and has increased 1.6 percent since that period. MGT has found that a best practice in school divisions across the country, and indicated in *School Business Insider*, is to limit food costs to 36 percent of revenue. This standard is based on efficient performance for school divisions of varying sizes and demographic makeup.

#### **COMMENDATION**

**Dinwiddie County Public Schools DCPS Nutrition Services is commended for maintaining food cost to a standard of 36 percent of revenue or less.**

#### **FINDING**

While food costs for DCPS were favorable in comparison to total revenue, labor costs show a different trend. The percentage of labor costs to total revenues for the school division is higher than best practices among school divisions throughout the country. According to *School Business Insider*, labor (including salary, overtime wages, health insurance, workers' compensation, and other benefits) should not exceed 40 percent of revenue. As shown in Exhibit 10-9, BPS labor percentages to total revenue is higher than best practice levels.

The exhibit shows the labor costs for Nutrition Services during the 2002-03 through 2004-05 school years. This exhibit shows that labor costs for the school division increased by \$111,230 since 2002-03, which is a 13.4 percent increase. Also, labor costs for the school division increased by 5.9 percent in 2002-03 from the previous year and increased 8.0 percent from 2003-04 to 2004-05. Further, the cost of labor percentage to total revenue was 58.4 percent in 2001-02, but has decreased slightly, by 0.77 percent since that period.

**EXHIBIT 10-7  
DINWIDDIE COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS  
EXPENDITURE AND REVENUE ANALYSIS  
2002-03 THROUGH 2004-05 SCHOOL YEARS**

SCHOOL YEAR	TOTAL REVENUE	TOTAL REVENUE DIFFERENCE FROM PRIOR YEAR	TOTAL REVENUE PERCENTAGE DIFFERENCE FROM PRIOR YEAR	TOTAL EXPENDITURES	TOTAL EXPENDITURES DIFFERENCE FROM PRIOR YEAR	TOTAL EXPENDITURES PERCENTAGE DIFFERENCE FROM PRIOR YEAR
2002-03	\$1,226,353	-	-	\$1,207,945	-	-
2003-04	\$1,300,574	\$74,221	5.71%	\$1,279,051	\$71,106	15.6%
2004-05	\$1,435,251	\$134,677	9.38%	\$1,431,377	\$152,326	10.64%
Difference between 2002-03 and 2004-05 school years		\$208,898	14.55%		\$223,432	15.61%

Source: Dinwiddie County Public Schools, Nutrition Services Department, 2005.

**EXHIBIT 10-8  
DINWIDDIE COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS  
FOOD COSTS  
2002-03 THROUGH 2004-05 SCHOOL YEARS**

SCHOOL YEAR	FOOD COSTS	TOTAL FOOD COSTS DIFFERENCE FROM PRIOR YEAR	TOTAL FOOD COSTS PERCENTAGE DIFFERENCE FROM PRIOR YEAR	TOTAL REVENUE	FOOD COSTS PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL REVENUE
2002-03	\$411,201	-	-	\$1,226,353	33.53%
2003-04	\$458,203	\$47,002	10.26%	\$1,300,574	35.23%
2004-05	\$503,880	\$45,677	9.07%	\$1,435,521	35.10%
Difference between 2002-03 and 2004-05 school years		\$92,679	18.39%	\$209,168	1.57%

Source: Dinwiddie County Public Schools, Nutrition Services Department, 2005.

**EXHIBIT 10-9  
DINWIDDIE COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS  
LABOR COSTS  
2002-03 THROUGH 2004-05 SCHOOL YEARS**

SCHOOL YEAR	LABOR COSTS	TOTAL LABOR COSTS DIFFERENCE FROM PRIOR YEAR	TOTAL LABOR COSTS PERCENTAGE DIFFERENCE FROM PRIOR YEAR	TOTAL REVENUE	LABOR COSTS PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL REVENUE
2002-03	\$716,582	-	-	\$1,226,353	58.43%
2003-04	\$761,234	\$44,652	5.87%	\$1,300,574	58.53%
2004-05	\$827,812	\$66,578	8.04%	\$1,435,521	57.66%
Difference between 2002-03 and 2004-05 school years		\$111,230	13.44%	\$209,168	0.77%

Source: Dinwiddie County Public Schools, Nutrition Services Department, 2005.

**RECOMMENDATION**

**Recommendation 10-12:**

**Reduce staff at schools where staff hours are above best practice levels.**

DCPS did not provide labor costs per school program, so determining which school will need to experience a reduction in staff hours is impossible at this time. However, DCPS should investigate each of the seven school Nutrition Services Programs to identify which are above the 40 percent standard. By reducing staff hours across school cafeterias, the school division would be in line with industry standards as indicated in the *Cost Control for School Food Services, Third Edition, 2000*. Implementation of this recommendation would provide DCPS with a more efficient organization.

**FISCAL IMPACT**

The 2004-05 percentage of labor costs to total revenue was 57.7 percent, 17.7 percent above industry best-practice standards. The total cost of labor, including purchased services, was \$827,812. By reducing the labor cost 17.7 percent across the board, DCPS should expect to recoup \$145,523 per year (more than 10 percent of the total

2004-05 revenue), based on the most recent figures. This would result in an estimated five-year savings of approximately \$727,615.

<b>Recommendation</b>	<b>2006-07</b>	<b>2007-08</b>	<b>2008-09</b>	<b>2009-10</b>	<b>2010-11</b>
Reduce Labor Hours to Industry Benchmark Levels	\$145,523	\$145,523	\$145,523	\$145,523	\$145,523

**FINDING**

Effective cash handling and financial reporting are important to any Nutrition Services operation to allow operations to stay financially sound. The Nutrition Services Department diligently works to keep accurate track of the financial status of cafeteria operations throughout the school division.

MGT found several inconsistencies in regard to the handling of revenue at the individual school sites. Daily deposit slips are currently not attached to cafeteria end of day reconciliation documents and deposits are not initialed by the person preparing them. These deposits typically contain large amounts of cash, representing each day’s sales. Also found was that deposits often do not match reconciliation figures generated at the cafeteria sites.

While the school division may not have experienced any fraudulent activity 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.

**RECOMMENDATION**

**Recommendation 10-13:**

**Create and enforce a cash counting policy to require two signatures on each cash deposit.**

The recommendation requires that DCPS creates and enforces a policy to ensure that two persons per cafeteria count the cash tendered following each meal served. The new policy should direct staff that two Nutrition Services employees sign a document that is placed in the sealed bag after counting has been done by both staff members. Central administration staff should verify that this process is followed by reviewing documents for two signatures. Cafeteria Managers and the Director of Nutrition Services should monitor this process to ensure compliance.

**FISCAL IMPACT**

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

## **FINDING**

The Nutrition Services Department in Dinwiddie County Public Schools is not currently reporting profit and loss by school cafeteria program. Currently, division level profit and loss reports are being produced for the Nutrition Services Department but not by campus level. As a result, the division can analyze whether the Nutrition Services Department as a whole is profitable but not whether an individual cafeteria is profitable.

Industry best practice identifies the need to track individual food service programs by site to promote financial efficiency and overall operational effectiveness. Without this information, the sources of exemplary food sales performance or financial inefficiencies cannot be determined.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

### **Recommendation 10-14:**

**Create and analyze monthly profit and loss reports and monthly cost per meal reports by campus.**

Without such information, management does not have the necessary information to evaluate and improve departmental operating performance on a timely basis by campus levels. The implementation of an effective profit and loss reporting system could further enhance cafeteria-level cost controls and increase the department's profitability.

Monthly profit and loss statements by cost center should be generated to compare actual results with budgeted standards and prior year results. Key operating statistics (i.e., food and payroll expenses as a percentage of revenue, cost per meal, meals served per labor hour) should be tracked by cost center and integrated with profit and loss statements. The Nutrition Services Director should identify unfavorable budget variances or trends, and work with Cafeteria Managers and staff to reverse these situations in a timely manner.

## **FISCAL IMPACT**

There is no cost associated with implementing this recommendation. In addition, it is likely that the Nutrition Services Department will identify negative practices that can be rectified, resulting in cost savings.

## **11.0 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 Dinwiddie County Public Schools (DCPS), the MGT team developed 36 commendations and 110 recommendations in this report. Eighteen (18) recommendations have fiscal implications.

As shown below in Exhibit 11-1, full implementation of the recommendations in this report would generate a gross savings of over \$8 million over five years, with a net cost of approximately \$292,000. 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 11-1 shows the total costs and savings for all recommendations.

### **EXHIBIT 11-1 SUMMARY OF ANNUAL SAVINGS AND COSTS**

CATEGORY	YEARS					TOTAL FIVE-YEAR SAVINGS (COSTS)
	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	
<b>TOTAL SAVINGS</b>	<b>\$1,115,076</b>	<b>\$1,757,739</b>	<b>\$1,757,739</b>	<b>\$1,787,739</b>	<b>\$1,787,739</b>	<b>\$8,206,032</b>
<b>TOTAL (COSTS)</b>	<b>(\$66,500)</b>	<b>(\$18,500)</b>	<b>(\$32,500)</b>	<b>(\$32,500)</b>	<b>(\$32,500)</b>	<b>(\$182,500)</b>
<b>TOTAL NET SAVINGS (COSTS)</b>	<b>\$1,048,576</b>	<b>\$1,739,239</b>	<b>\$1,725,239</b>	<b>\$1,755,239</b>	<b>\$1,755,239</b>	<b>\$8,023,532</b>
<b>ONE-TIME SAVINGS (COSTS)</b>						<b>(\$109,500)</b>
<b>TOTAL FIVE-YEAR NET SAVINGS (COSTS) INCLUDING ONE-TIME SAVINGS (COSTS)</b>						<b>\$7,914,032</b>

Exhibit 11-2 provides a chapter by chapter summary for all costs and savings. Exhibit 11-3 and Exhibit 11-4 provide costs and savings by operating and capital funds.

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 Dinwiddie County Public Schools are contained in Chapters 2 through 10.

MGT recommends that DCPS give each of these recommendations serious consideration, develop a plan to proceed with implementation, and a system to monitor subsequent progress.

**EXHIBIT 11-2  
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		
<b>CHAPTER 2: DIVISION ADMINISTRATION</b>								
2-10	Reorganize Dinwiddie County Public Schools central office administration. (p. 2-30)	\$1,819	\$1,819	\$1,819	\$1,819	\$1,819	\$9,095	
<b>CHAPTER 2 SUBTOTAL SAVINGS (COSTS)</b>		<b>\$1,819</b>	<b>\$1,819</b>	<b>\$1,819</b>	<b>\$1,819</b>	<b>\$1,819</b>	<b>\$9,095</b>	<b>\$0</b>
<b>CHAPTER 3: PERSONNEL AND HUMAN RESOURCES</b>								
3-2	Store all personnel records in secured, fire-rated cabinets. (p. 3-6)	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	(\$4,500)
3-5	Continue sending division representatives to the Great Virginia Teach-In. (p. 3-13)	(\$1,000)	(\$1,000)	(\$1,000)	(\$1,000)	(\$1,000)	(\$5,000)	
3-10	Pay the license renewal fees for its teachers, as an additional employee benefit. (p. 3-20)	(\$1,500)	(\$1,500)	(\$1,500)	(\$1,500)	(\$1,500)	(\$7,500)	
<b>CHAPTER 3 SUBTOTAL SAVINGS (COSTS)</b>		<b>(\$2,500)</b>	<b>(\$2,500)</b>	<b>(\$2,500)</b>	<b>(\$2,500)</b>	<b>(\$2,500)</b>	<b>(\$12,500)</b>	<b>(\$4,500)</b>
<b>CHAPTER 4: FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT</b>								
4-2	Implement a financial system that is better suited for school division operations. (p. 4-7)	(\$60,000)	(\$12,000)	(\$12,000)	(\$12,000)	(\$12,000)	(\$108,000)	
4-9	Allocate the cost of the annual audit of School Activity Funds to each school based on the year-end fund balances. (p. 4-23)	\$4,700	\$4,700	\$4,700	\$4,700	\$4,700	\$23,500	
<b>CHAPTER 4 SUBTOTAL SAVINGS (COSTS)</b>		<b>(\$55,300)</b>	<b>(\$7,300)</b>	<b>(\$7,300)</b>	<b>(\$7,300)</b>	<b>(\$7,300)</b>	<b>(\$84,500)</b>	<b>\$0</b>

**EXHIBIT 11-2 (Continued)**  
**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		
<b>CHAPTER 6: EDUCATIONAL SERVICE DELIVERY AND MANAGEMENT</b>								
6-7	Quantify potential revenues that could be collected by billing for Medicaid services for eligible students and determine whether the costs of filing would make the revenues worthwhile. (p. 6-17)	\$0	\$35,163	\$35,163	\$35,163	\$35,163	\$140,652	
6-9	Conduct an evaluation of time that counselors actually spend on testing responsibilities and consider offering a stipend to other personnel for assuming testing responsibilities at each school. (p. 6-19)	\$0	\$0	(\$14,000)	(\$14,000)	(\$14,000)	(\$42,000)	
<b>CHAPTER 6 SUBTOTAL SAVINGS (COSTS)</b>		<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$35,163</b>	<b>\$21,163</b>	<b>\$21,163</b>	<b>\$21,163</b>	<b>\$98,652</b>	<b>\$0</b>
<b>CHAPTER 7: SPECIAL PROGRAMS</b>								
7-3	Engage a professional value engineering team to review proposed school designs. (p. 7-11)	\$0	\$382,500	\$382,500	\$412,500	\$412,500	\$1,590,000	
7-7	Institute an aggressive energy management program throughout all schools and facilities. (p. 7-17)	\$0	\$225,000	\$225,000	\$225,000	\$225,000	\$900,000	(\$65,000)
<b>CHAPTER 7 SUBTOTAL SAVINGS (COSTS)</b>		<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$607,500</b>	<b>\$607,500</b>	<b>\$637,500</b>	<b>\$637,500</b>	<b>\$2,490,000</b>	<b>(\$65,000)</b>
<b>CHAPTER 8: FACILITIES USE AND MANAGEMENT</b>								
8-7	Purchase and use computer-based route scheduling software for all routes. (p. 8-18)	\$293,115	\$293,115	\$293,115	\$293,115	\$293,115	\$1,465,575	(\$30,000)
8-8	Modify procedures to allow the transportation schedule to determine the opening and closing times for Dinwiddie County Public Schools. (p. 8-20)	\$586,229	\$586,229	\$586,229	\$586,229	\$586,229	\$2,931,145	
8-9	Eliminate overtime pay for bus drivers. (p. 8-21)	\$83,690	\$83,690	\$83,690	\$83,690	\$83,690	\$418,450	
<b>CHAPTER 8 SUBTOTAL SAVINGS (COSTS)</b>		<b>\$963,034</b>	<b>\$963,034</b>	<b>\$963,034</b>	<b>\$963,034</b>	<b>\$963,034</b>	<b>\$4,815,170</b>	<b>(\$30,000)</b>

**EXHIBIT 11-2 (Continued)  
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		
<b>CHAPTER 9: TRANSPORTATION</b>								
9-12	Repair the air conditioner at Dinwiddie High School and require each head end room and computer lab to be secure and free of clutter. (p. 9-17)	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	(\$10,000)
9-14	Develop a regular training schedule for all technology department personnel. (p. 9-14)	(\$4,000)	(\$4,000)	(\$4,000)	(\$4,000)	(\$4,000)	(\$20,000)	
<b>CHAPTER 9 SUBTOTAL SAVINGS (COSTS)</b>		<b>(\$4,000)</b>	<b>(\$4,000)</b>	<b>(\$4,000)</b>	<b>(\$4,000)</b>	<b>(\$4,000)</b>	<b>(\$20,000)</b>	<b>(\$10,000)</b>
<b>CHAPTER 10: TECHNOLOGY MANAGEMENT</b>								
10-12	Reduce staff at schools where staff hours are above best practice levels. (p. 10-19)	\$145,523	\$145,523	\$145,523	\$145,523	\$145,523	\$727,615	
<b>CHAPTER 10 SUBTOTAL SAVINGS (COSTS)</b>		<b>\$145,523</b>	<b>\$145,523</b>	<b>\$145,523</b>	<b>\$145,523</b>	<b>\$145,523</b>	<b>\$727,615</b>	<b>\$0</b>
<b>TOTAL SAVINGS</b>		<b>\$1,115,076</b>	<b>\$1,757,739</b>	<b>\$1,757,739</b>	<b>\$1,787,739</b>	<b>\$1,787,739</b>	<b>\$8,206,032</b>	<b>\$0</b>
<b>TOTAL (COSTS)</b>		<b>(\$66,500)</b>	<b>(\$18,500)</b>	<b>(\$32,500)</b>	<b>(\$32,500)</b>	<b>(\$32,500)</b>	<b>(\$182,500)</b>	<b>(\$109,500)</b>
<b>TOTAL NET SAVINGS (COSTS)</b>		<b>\$1,048,576</b>	<b>\$1,739,239</b>	<b>\$1,725,239</b>	<b>\$1,755,239</b>	<b>\$1,755,239</b>	<b>\$8,023,532</b>	<b>(\$109,500)</b>
<b>TOTAL FIVE-YEAR NET SAVINGS (COSTS) INCLUDING ONE-TIME SAVINGS (COSTS)</b>							<b>\$7,914,032</b>	

**EXHIBIT 11-3  
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		
<b>CHAPTER 2: DIVISION ADMINISTRATION</b>								
2-10	Reorganize Dinwiddie County Public Schools central office administration. (p. 2-30)	\$1,819	\$1,819	\$1,819	\$1,819	\$1,819	\$9,095	
<b>CHAPTER 2 SUBTOTAL SAVINGS (COSTS)</b>		<b>\$1,819</b>	<b>\$1,819</b>	<b>\$1,819</b>	<b>\$1,819</b>	<b>\$1,819</b>	<b>\$9,095</b>	<b>\$0</b>
<b>CHAPTER 3: PERSONNEL AND HUMAN RESOURCES</b>								
3-5	Continue sending division representatives to the Great Virginia Teach-In. (p. 3-13)	(\$1,000)	(\$1,000)	(\$1,000)	(\$1,000)	(\$1,000)	(\$5,000)	
3-10	Pay the license renewal fees for its teachers, as an additional employee benefit. (p. 3-20)	(\$1,500)	(\$1,500)	(\$1,500)	(\$1,500)	(\$1,500)	(\$7,500)	
<b>CHAPTER 3 SUBTOTAL SAVINGS (COSTS)</b>		<b>(\$2,500)</b>	<b>(\$2,500)</b>	<b>(\$2,500)</b>	<b>(\$2,500)</b>	<b>(\$2,500)</b>	<b>(\$12,500)</b>	<b>\$0</b>
<b>CHAPTER 4: FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT</b>								
4-9	Allocate the cost of the annual audit of School Activity Funds to each school based on the year-end fund balances. (p. 4-23)	\$4,700	\$4,700	\$4,700	\$4,700	\$4,700	\$23,500	
<b>CHAPTER 4 SUBTOTAL SAVINGS (COSTS)</b>		<b>\$4,700</b>	<b>\$4,700</b>	<b>\$4,700</b>	<b>\$4,700</b>	<b>\$4,700</b>	<b>\$23,500</b>	<b>\$0</b>

**EXHIBIT 11-3  
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		
<b>CHAPTER 6: EDUCATIONAL SERVICE DELIVERY AND MANAGEMENT</b>								
6-7	Quantify potential revenues that could be collected by billing for Medicaid services for eligible students and determine whether the costs of filing would make the revenues worthwhile. (p. 6-17)	\$0	\$35,163	\$35,163	\$35,163	\$35,163	\$140,652	
6-9	Conduct an evaluation of time that counselors actually spend on testing responsibilities and consider offering a stipend to other personnel for assuming testing responsibilities at each school. (p. 6-19)	\$0	\$0	(\$14,000)	(\$14,000)	(\$14,000)	(\$42,000)	
<b>CHAPTER 6 SUBTOTAL SAVINGS (COSTS)</b>		<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$35,163</b>	<b>\$21,163</b>	<b>\$21,163</b>	<b>\$21,163</b>	<b>\$98,652</b>	<b>\$0</b>
<b>CHAPTER 7: SPECIAL PROGRAMS</b>								
7-7	Institute an aggressive energy management program throughout all schools and facilities. (p. 7-17)	\$0	\$225,000	\$225,000	\$225,000	\$225,000	\$900,000	
<b>CHAPTER 7 SUBTOTAL SAVINGS (COSTS)</b>		<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$225,000</b>	<b>\$225,000</b>	<b>\$225,000</b>	<b>\$225,000</b>	<b>\$900,000</b>	<b>\$0</b>

**EXHIBIT 11-3 (Continued)  
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		
<b>CHAPTER 8: FACILITIES USE AND MANAGEMENT</b>								
8-7	Purchase and use computer-based route scheduling software for all routes. (p. 8-18)	\$293,115	\$293,115	\$293,115	\$293,115	\$293,115	\$1,465,575	(\$30,000)
8-8	Modify procedures to allow the transportation schedule to determine the opening and closing times for Dinwiddie County Public Schools. (p. 8-20)	\$586,229	\$586,229	\$586,229	\$586,229	\$586,229	\$2,931,145	
8-9	Eliminate overtime pay for bus drivers. (p. 8-21)	\$83,690	\$83,690	\$83,690	\$83,690	\$83,690	\$418,450	
<b>CHAPTER 8 SUBTOTAL SAVINGS (COSTS)</b>		<b>\$963,034</b>	<b>\$963,034</b>	<b>\$963,034</b>	<b>\$963,034</b>	<b>\$963,034</b>	<b>\$4,815,170</b>	<b>(\$30,000)</b>
<b>CHAPTER 9: TRANSPORTATION</b>								
9-12	Repair the air conditioner at Dinwiddie High School and require each head end room and computer lab to be secure and free of clutter. (p. 9-17)	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	(\$10,000)
9-14	Develop a regular training schedule for all technology department personnel. (p. 9-14)	(\$4,000)	(\$4,000)	(\$4,000)	(\$4,000)	(\$4,000)	(\$20,000)	
<b>CHAPTER 9 SUBTOTAL SAVINGS (COSTS)</b>		<b>(\$4,000)</b>	<b>(\$4,000)</b>	<b>(\$4,000)</b>	<b>(\$4,000)</b>	<b>(\$4,000)</b>	<b>(\$20,000)</b>	<b>(\$10,000)</b>
<b>CHAPTER 10: TECHNOLOGY MANAGEMENT</b>								
10-12	Reduce staff at schools where staff hours are above best practice levels. (p. 10-19)	\$145,523	\$145,523	\$145,523	\$145,523	\$145,523	\$727,615	
<b>CHAPTER 10 SUBTOTAL SAVINGS (COSTS)</b>		<b>\$145,523</b>	<b>\$145,523</b>	<b>\$145,523</b>	<b>\$145,523</b>	<b>\$145,523</b>	<b>\$727,615</b>	<b>\$0</b>

EXHIBIT 11-3 (Continued)  
 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		
<b>TOTAL SAVINGS</b>	\$1,115,076	\$1,375,239	\$1,375,239	\$1,375,239	\$1,375,239	\$6,616,032	
<b>TOTAL (COSTS)</b>	(\$6,500)	(\$6,500)	(\$20,500)	(\$20,500)	(\$20,500)	(\$74,500)	(\$40,000)
<b>TOTAL NET SAVINGS (COSTS)</b>	\$1,108,576	\$1,368,739	\$1,354,739	\$1,354,739	\$1,354,739	\$6,541,532	(\$40,000)
<b>TOTAL FIVE-YEAR NET SAVINGS (COSTS) INCLUDING ONE-TIME SAVINGS (COSTS)</b>						\$6,501,532	

**EXHIBIT 11-4  
SUMMARY OF POTENTIAL CAPITAL 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		
<b>CHAPTER 3: PERSONNEL AND HUMAN RESOURCES</b>								
3-2	Store all personnel records in secured, fire-rated cabinets. (p. 3-6)	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	(\$4,500)
<b>CHAPTER 3 SUBTOTAL SAVINGS (COSTS)</b>		<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>(\$4,500)</b>
<b>CHAPTER 4: FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT</b>								
4-2	Implement a financial system that is better suited for school division operations. (p. 4-7)	(\$60,000)	(\$12,000)	(\$12,000)	(\$12,000)	(\$12,000)	(\$108,000)	
<b>CHAPTER 4 SUBTOTAL SAVINGS (COSTS)</b>		<b>(\$60,000)</b>	<b>(\$12,000)</b>	<b>(\$12,000)</b>	<b>(\$12,000)</b>	<b>(\$12,000)</b>	<b>(\$108,000)</b>	<b>\$0</b>
<b>CHAPTER 7: SPECIAL PROGRAMS</b>								
7-3	Engage a professional value engineering team to review proposed school designs. (p. 7-11)	\$0	\$382,500	\$382,500	\$412,500	\$412,500	\$1,590,000	
7-7	Institute an aggressive energy management program throughout all schools and facilities. (p. 7-17)	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	(\$65,000)
<b>CHAPTER 7 SUBTOTAL SAVINGS (COSTS)</b>		<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$382,500</b>	<b>\$382,500</b>	<b>\$412,500</b>	<b>\$412,500</b>	<b>\$1,590,000</b>	<b>(\$65,000)</b>
<b>TOTAL SAVINGS</b>		<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$382,500</b>	<b>\$382,500</b>	<b>\$412,500</b>	<b>\$412,500</b>	<b>\$1,590,000</b>	<b>\$0</b>
<b>TOTAL (COSTS)</b>		<b>(\$60,000)</b>	<b>(\$12,000)</b>	<b>(\$12,000)</b>	<b>(\$12,000)</b>	<b>(\$12,000)</b>	<b>(\$108,000)</b>	<b>(\$69,500)</b>
<b>TOTAL NET SAVINGS (COSTS)</b>		<b>(\$60,000)</b>	<b>\$370,500</b>	<b>\$370,500</b>	<b>\$400,500</b>	<b>\$400,500</b>	<b>\$1,482,000</b>	<b>(\$69,500)</b>
<b>TOTAL FIVE-YEAR NET SAVINGS (COSTS) INCLUDING ONE-TIME SAVINGS (COSTS)</b>							<b>\$1,412,500</b>	

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## APPENDIX A

### EXHIBIT A-1 COMPARISON SURVEY RESPONSES WITHIN DINWIDDIE COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

PART A OF SURVEY	ADMINISTRATOR RESPONSES (%)	PRINCIPAL RESPONSES (%)	TEACHER RESPONSES (%)
1. Overall quality of public education in the Dinwiddie County Public Schools is:			
Good or Excellent	100	100	88
Fair or Poor	0	0	11
2. Overall quality of education in the Dinwiddie County Public Schools is:			
Improving	100	88	75
Staying the Same	0	13	17
Getting Worse	0	0	5
Don't Know	0	0	3
3. Grade given to the Dinwiddie County Public Schools teachers:			
Above Average (A or B)	88	88	84
Below Average (D or F)	0	0	0
4. Grade given to the Dinwiddie County Public Schools school level administrators:			
Above Average (A or B)	88	88	66
Below Average (D or F)	0	0	7
5. Grade given to the Dinwiddie County Public Schools central office administrators:			
Above Average (A or B)	100	51	59
Below Average (D or F)	0	13	9

**EXHIBIT A-2  
COMPARISON SURVEY RESPONSES  
WITHIN DINWIDDIE COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS**

PART B	(%A + SA) / (%D + SD) <sup>1</sup>		
	ADMINISTRATORS	PRINCIPALS	TEACHERS
1. The emphasis on learning in this school division has increased in recent years.	100/0	100/0	87/4
2. Our schools are safe and secure from crime.	76/13	88/0	73/13
3. Our schools effectively handle misbehavior problems.	51/13	63/13	48/33
4. Our schools have sufficient space and facilities to support the instructional programs.	0/100	13/88	19/76
5. Our schools have the materials and supplies necessary for instruction in basic skills programs such as writing and mathematics.	100/0	88/13	79/10
6. Our schools can be described as "good places to learn."	88/0	100/0	86/4
7. There is administrative support for controlling student behavior in our schools.	88/13	88/0	62/22
8. Most students in our schools are motivated to learn.	100/0	75/0	69/14
9. Lessons are organized to meet students' needs.	76/0	100/0	88/3
10. The curriculum is broad and challenging for most students.	100/0	100/0	84/5
11. There is little a teacher can do to overcome education problems due to a student's home life.	13/75	0/88	32/43
12. Teachers in our schools know the material they teach.	88/0	100/0	91/1
13. Teachers in our schools care about students' needs.	100/0	100/0	92/1
14. Teachers expect students to do their very best.	100/0	76/0	94/1
15. The school division provides adequate technology-related staff development.	88/13	76/25	81/7
16. Principals and assistant principals in our schools care about students' needs.	100/0	100/0	85/6
17. In general, parents take responsibility for their children's behavior in our schools.	88/13	76/25	35/43
18. Parents in this school division are satisfied with the education their children are receiving.	75/0	88/0	62/7
19. Most parents seem to know what goes on in our schools.	63/25	75/25	45/32
20. Parents play an active role in decision-making in our schools.	25/38	38/51	37/29
21. This community really cares about its children's education.	50/13	76/13	57/12
22. The food services department encourages student participation through customer satisfaction surveys.	13/38	0/63	8/51
23. The school division requests input on the long range technology plan.	25/25	43/28	37/22
24. Funds are managed wisely to support education in this school division.	88/0	38/38	40/20
25. Sufficient student services are provided in this school division (e.g., counseling, speech therapy, health).	26/25	76/25	50/30
26. School-based personnel play an important role in making decisions that affect schools in this school division.	63/25	56/22	46/24
27. The school division provides adequate technical support.	100/0	44/22	62/21
28. Students are often late arriving to and/or departing from school because the buses do not arrive to school on time.	13/88	22/66	30/50
29. The food services department provides nutritious and appealing meals and snacks.	63/13	22/56	31/45

<sup>1</sup>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 DINWIDDIE COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS**

PART C	(%G + E) / (%F + P) <sup>1</sup>		
	ADMINISTRATORS	PRINCIPALS	TEACHERS
1. Board of Education members' knowledge of the educational needs of students in Dinwiddie County Public Schools.	63/38	26/75	42/40
2. Board of Education members' knowledge of operations in Dinwiddie County Public Schools.	75/25	26/63	47/33
3. Board of Education members' work at setting or revising policies for Dinwiddie County Public Schools.	63/38	26/63	45/35
4. The School District Superintendent's work as the educational leader of Dinwiddie County Public Schools.	100/0	57/43	73/22
5. The School District Superintendent's work as the chief administrator (manager) of Dinwiddie County Public Schools.	88/13	38/63	74/22
6. Principals' work as the instructional leaders of their schools.	100/0	100/0	71/29
7. Principals' work as the managers of the staff and teachers.	100/0	100/0	73/27
8. Teachers' work in meeting students' individual learning needs.	100/0	88/13	88/11
9. Teachers' work in communicating with parents.	88/13	88/13	81/17
10. Teachers' attitudes about their jobs.	63/38	88/13	63/36
11. Students' ability to learn.	100/0	76/25	75/24
12. The amount of time students spend on task learning in the classroom.	50/38	88/13	79/18
13. Parents' efforts in helping their children to do better in school.	25/51	63/38	32/66
14. Parents' participation in school activities and organizations.	50/38	38/63	30/68
15. How well students' test results are explained to parents.	51/38	50/50	49/39
16. The cleanliness and maintenance of facilities in Dinwiddie County Public Schools.	63/38	75/25	66/34
17. How well relations are maintained with various groups in the community.	63/26	63/38	51/35
18. Staff development opportunities provided by Dinwiddie County Public Schools for teachers.	100/0	100/0	76/23
19. Staff development opportunities provided by Dinwiddie County Public Schools for school administrators.	88/13	75/25	42/14
20. The school district's job of providing adequate instructional technology.	88/13	88/13	75/21
21. The school district's use of technology for administrative purposes.	88/13	88/13	64/18

<sup>1</sup>Percent responding *Good* or *Excellent* / Percent responding *Fair* or *Poor*. The *don't know* responses are omitted.

**EXHIBIT A-4  
COMPARISON SURVEY RESPONSES  
WITHIN DINWIDDIE COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS**

PART D: WORK ENVIRONMENT	(% A + SA) / (% D + SD) <sup>1</sup>		
	ADMINISTRATORS	PRINCIPALS	TEACHERS
1. I find Dinwiddie County Public Schools to be an exciting, challenging place to work.	100/0	88/0	76/9
2. The work standards and expectations in Dinwiddie County Public Schools are equal to or above those of most other school districts.	88/0	100/0	76/10
3. Dinwiddie County Public Schools officials enforce high work standards.	75/0	88/0	82/9
4. Most Dinwiddie County Public Schools teachers enforce high student learning standards.	100/0	88/0	88/6
5. Dinwiddie County Public Schools teachers and administrators have excellent working relationships.	75/0	100/0	64/15
6. Teachers who do not meet expected work standards are disciplined.	63/13	88/0	30/28
7. Staff who do not meet expected work standards are disciplined.	63/13	76/0	25/24
8. I feel that I have the authority to adequately perform my job responsibilities.	76/0	88/13	87/9
9. I have adequate facilities in which to conduct my work.	88/13	51/38	73/19
10. I have adequate equipment and computer support to conduct my work.	88/0	86/14	73/19
11. The workloads are equitably distributed among teachers and among staff members.	50/25	63/0	45/36
12. No one knows or cares about the amount or quality of work that I perform.	13/88	0/88	25/54
13. Workload is evenly distributed.	13/38	50/25	43/33
14. If there were an emergency in the schools, I would know how to respond appropriately.	88/0	100/0	91/3
15. I often observe other teachers and/or staff socializing rather than working while on the job.	13/63	0/63	18/63

<sup>1</sup>Percent responding *Agree* or *Strongly Agree*/Percent responding *Disagree* or *Strongly Disagree*. The *neutral* and *don't know* responses are omitted.

**EXHIBIT A-5  
COMPARISON SURVEY RESPONSES  
WITHIN DINWIDDIE COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS**

PART E: JOB SATISFACTION	(%A + SA) / (% D + SD) <sup>1</sup>		
	ADMINISTRATORS	PRINCIPALS	TEACHERS
1. I am very satisfied with my job in Dinwiddie County Public Schools.	100/0	88/0	81/10
2. I plan to continue my career in Dinwiddie County Public Schools.	100/0	88/13	79/6
3. I am actively looking for a job outside of Dinwiddie County Public Schools.	0/100	13/63	12/67
4. Salary levels in Dinwiddie County Public Schools are competitive.	63/25	76/13	50/34
5. I feel that my work is appreciated by my supervisor(s).	100/0	100/0	61/25
6. I feel that I am an integral part of Dinwiddie County Public Schools team.	100/0	88/13	77/11
7. I feel that there is no future for me in Dinwiddie County Public Schools.	0/100	13/76	12/73
8. My salary level is adequate for my level of work and experience.	75/26	75/25	30/53

<sup>1</sup>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 DINWIDDIE COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS**

PART F: ADMINISTRATIVE STRUCTURE/PRACTICES	(% A + SA) / (% D + SD) <sup>1</sup>		
	ADMINISTRATORS	PRINCIPALS	TEACHERS
1. Most administrative practices in Dinwiddie County Public Schools are highly effective and efficient.	63/0	76/13	53/23
2. Administrative decisions are made promptly and decisively.	38/38	38/38	50/23
3. Dinwiddie County Public Schools administrators are easily accessible and open to input.	88/0	71/14	62/19
4. Authority for administrative decisions is delegated to the lowest possible level.	38/25	38/51	19/22
5. Teachers and staff are empowered with sufficient authority to effectively perform their responsibilities.	88/0	88/0	69/17
6. Major bottlenecks exist in many administrative processes which cause unnecessary time delays.	13/50	38/38	28/21
7. The extensive committee structure in Dinwiddie County Public Schools ensures adequate input from teachers and staff on most important decisions.	50/25	26/13	40/27
8. Dinwiddie County Public Schools has too many committees.	13/50	25/38	22/26
9. Dinwiddie County Public Schools has too many layers of administrators.	0/100	13/38	22/33
10. Most of Dinwiddie County Public Schools administrative processes (e.g., purchasing, travel requests, leave applications, personnel, etc.) are highly efficient and responsive.	75/0	76/0	64/9
11. Central office administrators are responsive to school needs.	100/0	51/25	60/14
12. Central office administrators provide quality service to schools.	100/0	63/25	61/12

<sup>1</sup>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 DINWIDDIE COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS**

PART G: SCHOOL DISTRICT/PROGRAM FUNCTION	% NEEDS SOME IMPROVEMENT + NEEDS MAJOR IMPROVEMENT		/	% ADEQUATE <sup>1</sup> + OUTSTANDING	
	ADMINISTRATORS	PRINCIPALS		TEACHERS	
a. Budgeting	38/63	50/50		55/30	
b. Strategic planning	38/63	50/50		40/36	
c. Curriculum planning	13/76	50/50		29/63	
d. Financial management and accounting	25/76	38/63		34/39	
e. Community relations	51/38	50/50		40/47	
f. Program evaluation, research, and assessment	51/38	88/13		26/54	
g. Instructional technology	13/75	50/50		27/68	
h. Pupil accounting	13/75	13/76		17/52	
i. Instructional coordination/supervision	25/63	25/76		25/67	
j. Instructional support	25/63	25/76		29/67	
k. Federal Programs (e.g., Title I, Special Education) coordination	26/63	63/38		47/43	
l. Personnel recruitment	29/71	63/38		31/42	
m. Personnel selection	29/71	63/38		36/42	
n. Personnel evaluation	43/57	38/63		35/54	
o. Staff development	13/75	25/76		28/70	
p. Data processing	13/76	38/38		15/46	
q. Purchasing	13/76	13/75		13/54	
r. Plant maintenance	25/63	63/38		25/45	
s. Facilities planning	25/63	63/38		43/33	
t. Transportation	50/50	50/50		45/39	
u. Food service	51/38	75/25		60/29	
v. Custodial services	38/51	63/38		33/61	
w. Risk management	57/43	25/50		21/44	
x. Administrative technology	25/76	13/75		18/51	
y. Grants administration	25/76	50/25		18/36	

<sup>1</sup>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 DINWIDDIE COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS**

<b>PART H: OPERATIONS</b>	<b>ADMINISTRATORS (%)</b>	<b>PRINCIPALS (%)</b>	<b>TEACHERS (%)</b>
1. The overall operation of Dinwiddie County Public Schools is:			
Highly efficient	0	0	6
Above average in efficiency	63*	29	39
Average in efficiency	38*	57	49
Less efficient than most other school districts	0	14	4
Don't know	0	0	2
2. The operational efficiency of Dinwiddie County Public Schools could be improved by:			
Outsourcing some support services	25	44	16
Offering more programs	50	11	34
Offering fewer programs	0	0	3
Increasing the number of administrators	25	0	17
Reducing the number of administrators	0	0	11
Increasing the number of teachers	63	56	64
Reducing the number of teachers	0	0	0
Increasing the number of support staff	88	67	56
Reducing the number of support staff	0	0	1
Increasing the number of facilities	75	56	59
Reducing the number of facilities	0	0	0
Rezoning schools	25	33	14
Other	0	0	9

\*Percentages may add up to over 100 percent due to rounding.

**EXHIBIT A-9  
COMPARISON SURVEY RESPONSES  
DINWIDDIE COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS ADMINISTRATORS AND  
ADMINISTRATORS IN OTHER SCHOOL DISTRICTS**

PART A OF SURVEY	DINWIDDIE COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS ADMINISTRATORS (%)	OTHER SCHOOL DISTRICT ADMINISTRATORS (%)
1. Overall quality of public education in the school district is:  Good or Excellent Fair or Poor	100 0	85 14
2. Overall quality of education in the school district is:  Improving Staying the Same Getting Worse Don't Know	100 0 0 0	69 20 2 3
3. Grade given to teachers:  Above Average (A or B) Below Average (D or F)	88 0	78 1
4. Grade given to school administrators:  Above Average (A or B) Below Average (D or F)	88 0	77 3
5. Grade given to school district administrators:  Above Average (A or B) Below Average (D or F)	100 0	77 5

**EXHIBIT A-10  
COMPARISON SURVEY RESPONSES  
DINWIDDIE COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS ADMINISTRATORS AND  
ADMINISTRATORS IN OTHER SCHOOL DISTRICTS**

PART B	(% A + SA) / (% D + SD) <sup>1</sup>	
	DINWIDDIE COUNTY 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.	76/13	65/16
3. Our schools effectively handle misbehavior problems.	51/13	54/24
4. Our schools have sufficient space and facilities to support the instructional programs.	0/100	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."	88/0	84/5
7. There is administrative support for controlling student behavior in our schools.	88/13	68/12
8. Most students in our schools are motivated to learn.	100/0	65/12
9. Lessons are organized to meet students' needs.	76/0	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.	13/75	20/58
12. Teachers in our schools know the material they teach.	88/0	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.	88/13	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.	88/13	42/34
18. Parents in this school division are satisfied with the education their children are receiving.	75/0	57/16
19. Most parents seem to know what goes on in our schools.	63/25	36/39
20. Parents play an active role in decision-making in our schools.	25/38	35/24
21. This community really cares about its children's education.	50/13	63/15
22. The food services department encourages student participation through customer satisfaction surveys.	13/38	n/a
23. The school division requests input on the long range technology plan.	25/25	n/a
24. Funds are managed wisely to support education in this school division.	88/0	67/18
25. Sufficient student services are provided in this school division (e.g., counseling, speech therapy, health).	26/25	57/26
26. School-based personnel play an important role in making decisions that affect schools in this school division.	63/25	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.	13/88	8/56
29. The food services department provides nutritious and appealing meals and snacks.	63/13	62/14

<sup>1</sup> 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  
DINWIDDIE COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS ADMINISTRATORS AND  
ADMINISTRATORS IN OTHER SCHOOL DISTRICTS**

PART C	(% G+ E) / (% F + P) <sup>1</sup>	
	DINWIDDIE COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS ADMINISTRATORS	OTHER SCHOOL DISTRICT ADMINISTRATORS
1. Board of Education members' knowledge of the educational needs of students in the school district.	63/38	40/51
2. Board of Education members' knowledge of operations in Dinwiddie County Public Schools.	75/25	36/58
3. Board of Education members' work at setting or revising policies for the school district.	63/38	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.	88/13	77/20
6. Principals' work as the instructional leaders of their schools.	100/0	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.	100/0	62/32
9. Teachers' work in communicating with parents.	88/13	49/41
10. Teachers' attitudes about their jobs.	63/38	44/47
11. Students' ability to learn.	100/0	74/20
12. The amount of time students spend on task learning in the classroom.	50/38	49/34
13. Parents' efforts in helping their children to do better in school.	25/51	29/56
14. Parents' participation in school activities and organizations.	50/38	27/59
15. How well students' test results are explained to parents.	51/38	36/44
16. The cleanliness and maintenance of facilities in the school district.	63/38	70/30
17. How well relations are maintained with various groups in the community.	63/26	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.	88/13	53/43
20. The school district's job of providing adequate instructional technology.	88/13	54/43
21. The school district's use of technology for administrative purposes.	88/13	53/46

<sup>1</sup>Percent responding *Good* or *Excellent* / Percent responding *Fair* or *Poor*. The *don't know* responses are omitted.

**EXHIBIT A-12  
COMPARISON SURVEY RESPONSES  
DINWIDDIE COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS ADMINISTRATORS AND  
ADMINISTRATORS IN OTHER SCHOOL DISTRICTS**

PART D: WORK ENVIRONMENT	(% A + SA) / (% D + SD) <sup>1</sup>	
	DINWIDDIE COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS ADMINISTRATORS	OTHER SCHOOL DISTRICT ADMINISTRATORS
1. I find the school district to be an exciting, challenging place to work.	100/0	81/8
2. The work standards and expectations in the school district are equal to or above those of most other school districts.	88/0	75/7
3. School district officials enforce high work standards.	75/0	73/12
4. Most school district teachers enforce high student learning standards.	100/0	62/8
5. School district teachers and administrators have excellent working relationships.	75/0	54/14
6. Teachers who do not meet expected work standards are disciplined.	63/13	26/33
7. Staff who do not meet expected work standards are disciplined.	63/13	37/34
8. I feel that I have the authority to adequately perform my job responsibilities.	76/0	79/15
9. I have adequate facilities in which to do my work.	88/13	71/21
10. I have adequate equipment and computer support to do my work.	88/0	70/22
11. The workloads are equitably distributed among teachers and among staff members.	50/25	29/28
12. No one knows or cares about the amount or quality of work that I perform.	13/88	16/70
13. Workload is evenly distributed.	13/38	32/46
14. The failure of school district officials to enforce high work standards results in poor quality work.	88/0	78/7
15. I often observe other teachers and/or staff socializing rather than working while on the job.	13/63	16/58

<sup>1</sup> 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  
DINWIDDIE COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS ADMINISTRATORS AND  
ADMINISTRATORS IN OTHER SCHOOL DISTRICTS**

PART E: JOB SATISFACTION	(% A + SA) / (% D + SD) <sup>1</sup>	
	DINWIDDIE COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS ADMINISTRATORS	OTHER SCHOOL DISTRICT ADMINISTRATORS
1. I am very satisfied with my job in the school district.	100/0	77/12
2. I plan to continue my career in the school district.	100/0	83/6
3. I am actively looking for a job outside of the school district.	0/100	8/78
4. Salary levels in the school district are competitive (with other school districts).	63/25	45/40
5. I feel that my work is appreciated by my supervisor(s).	100/0	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.	0/100	10/77
8. My salary level is adequate for my level of work and experience.	75/26	42/45

<sup>1</sup> 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  
DINWIDDIE COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS ADMINISTRATORS AND  
ADMINISTRATORS IN OTHER SCHOOL DISTRICTS**

PART F: ADMINISTRATIVE STRUCTURE/PRACTICES	(% A + SA) / (% D + SD) <sup>1</sup>	
	DINWIDDIE COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS ADMINISTRATORS	OTHER SCHOOL DISTRICT ADMINISTRATORS
1. Most administrative practices in the school district are highly effective and efficient.	63/0	54/23
2. Administrative decisions are made promptly and decisively.	38/38	44/33
3. School district administrators are easily accessible and open to input.	88/0	65/18
4. Authority for administrative decisions is delegated to the lowest possible level.	38/25	28/44
5. Teachers and staff are empowered with sufficient authority to effectively perform their responsibilities.	88/0	52/18
6. Major bottlenecks exist in many administrative processes which cause unnecessary time delays.	13/50	40/37
7. The extensive committee structure in the school district ensures adequate input from teachers and staff on most important decisions.	50/25	50/20
8. The school district has too many committees.	13/50	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.	75/0	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

<sup>1</sup> 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  
DINWIDDIE COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS ADMINISTRATORS AND  
ADMINISTRATORS IN OTHER SCHOOL DISTRICTS**

PART G:  SCHOOL DISTRICT/PROGRAM FUNCTION	% NEEDS SOME IMPROVEMENT + NEEDS MAJOR IMPROVEMENT	/	% ADEQUATE + OUTSTANDING <sup>1</sup>
	DINWIDDIE COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS ADMINISTRATORS		OTHER SCHOOL DISTRICTS ADMINISTRATORS
a. Budgeting	38/63		47/45
b. Strategic planning	38/63		44/42
c. Curriculum planning	13/76		30/50
d. Financial management and accounting	25/76		36/53
e. Community relations	51/38		39/53
f. Program evaluation, research, and assessment	51/38		34/50
g. Instructional technology	13/75		48/41
h. Pupil accounting	13/75		25/48
i. Instructional coordination/supervision	25/63		30/50
j. Instructional support	25/63		32/51
k. Federal Programs (e.g., Title I, Special Education) coordination	26/63		24/52
l. Personnel recruitment	29/71		47/42
m. Personnel selection	29/71		46/48
n. Personnel evaluation	43/57		47/49
o. Staff development	13/75		48/49
p. Data processing	13/76		38/45
q. Purchasing	13/76		34/53
r. Plant maintenance	25/63		43/48
s. Facilities planning	25/63		38/48
t. Transportation	50/50		21/65
u. Food service	51/38		18/67
v. Custodial services	38/51		37/54
w. Risk management	57/43		20/54
x. Administrative technology	25/76		42/49
y. Grants administration	25/76		24/49

<sup>1</sup> Percent responding *Needs Some Improvement* or *Needs Major Improvement* / Percent responding *Adequate* or *Outstanding*.

**EXHIBIT A-16  
COMPARISON SURVEY RESPONSES  
DINWIDDIE COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS PRINCIPALS AND  
PRINCIPALS IN OTHER SCHOOL DISTRICTS**

<b>PART A OF SURVEY</b>	<b>DINWIDDIE COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS (%)</b>	<b>OTHER SCHOOL DISTRICTS (%)</b>
1. Overall quality of public education in the school district is:  Good or Excellent Fair or Poor	100 0	89 11
2. Overall quality of education in the school district is:  Improving Staying the Same Getting Worse Don't Know	88 13 0 0	78 15 7 1
3. Grade given to teachers:  Above Average (A or B) Below Average (D or F)	88 0	85 1
4. Grade given to school administrators:  Above Average (A or B) Below Average (D or F)	88 0	91 1
5. Grade given to school district administrators:  Above Average (A or B) Below Average (D or F)	51 13	73 7

**EXHIBIT A-17  
COMPARISON SURVEY RESPONSES  
DINWIDDIE COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS PRINCIPALS AND  
PRINCIPALS IN OTHER SCHOOL DISTRICTS**

PART B	(% A + SA) / (% D + SD) <sup>1</sup>	
	DINWIDDIE COUNTY 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.	88/0	81/9
3. Our schools effectively handle misbehavior problems.	63/13	74/14
4. Our schools have sufficient space and facilities to support the instructional programs.	13/88	30/59
5. Our schools have the materials and supplies necessary for instruction in basic skills programs such as writing and mathematics.	88/13	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.	88/0	89/6
8. Most students in our schools are motivated to learn.	75/0	77/12
9. Lessons are organized to meet students' needs.	100/0	86/6
10. The curriculum is broad and challenging for most students.	100/0	86/7
11. There is little a teacher can do to overcome education problems due to a student's home life.	0/88	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.	76/0	89/4
15. The school division provides adequate technology-related staff development.	76/25	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.	76/25	51/31
18. Parents in this school division are satisfied with the education their children are receiving.	88/0	73/9
19. Most parents seem to know what goes on in our schools.	75/25	43/36
20. Parents play an active role in decision-making in our schools.	38/51	60/20
21. This community really cares about its children's education.	76/13	72/14
22. The food services department encourages student participation through customer satisfaction surveys.	0/63	n/a
23. The school division requests input on the long range technology plan.	43/28	n/a
24. Funds are managed wisely to support education in this school division.	38/38	67/19
25. Sufficient student services are provided in this school division (e.g., counseling, speech therapy, health).	76/25	56/36
26. School-based personnel play an important role in making decisions that affect schools in this school division.	56/22	61/24
27. The school division provides adequate technical support.	44/22	n/a
28. Students are often late arriving to and/or departing from school because the buses do not arrive to school on time.	22/66	18/68
29. The food services department provides nutritious and appealing meals and snacks.	22/56	58/26

<sup>1</sup> 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  
DINWIDDIE COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS PRINCIPALS AND  
PRINCIPALS IN OTHER SCHOOL DISTRICTS**

PART C	(%G+ E) / (%F + P) <sup>1</sup>	
	DINWIDDIE COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS	OTHER SCHOOL DISTRICTS
1. Board of Education members' knowledge of the educational needs of students in the school district.	26/75	39/57
2. Board of Education members' knowledge of operations in the school district.	26/63	41/56
3. Board of Education members' work at setting or revising policies for the school district.	26/63	50/47
4. The school district Superintendent's work as the educational leader of the school district.	57/43	81/17
5. The school district Superintendent's work as the chief administrator (manager) of the school district.	38/63	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.	88/13	80/20
9. Teachers' work in communicating with parents.	88/13	68/32
10. Teachers' attitudes about their jobs.	88/13	64/36
11. Students' ability to learn.	76/25	84/16
12. The amount of time students spend on task learning in the classroom.	88/13	72/27
13. Parents' efforts in helping their children to do better in school.	63/38	35/64
14. Parents' participation in school activities and organizations.	38/63	33/66
15. How well students' test results are explained to parents.	50/50	51/47
16. The cleanliness and maintenance of facilities in the school district.	75/25	65/34
17. How well relations are maintained with various groups in the community.	63/38	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.	75/25	63/37
20. The school district's job of providing adequate instructional technology.	88/13	46/52
21. The school district's use of technology for administrative purposes.	88/13	54/45

<sup>1</sup> Percent responding *Good* or *Excellent* / Percent responding *Fair* or *Poor*. The *don't know* responses are omitted.

**EXHIBIT A-19  
COMPARISON SURVEY RESPONSES  
DINWIDDIE COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS PRINCIPALS AND  
PRINCIPALS IN OTHER SCHOOL DISTRICTS**

PART D: WORK ENVIRONMENT	(% A + SA) / (% D + SD) <sup>1</sup>	
	DINWIDDIE COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS	OTHER SCHOOL DISTRICTS
1. I find the school district to be an exciting, challenging place to work.	88/0	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.	88/0	81/9
4. Most school district teachers enforce high student learning standards.	88/0	81/7
5. School district teachers and administrators have excellent working relationships.	100/0	76/7
6. Teachers who do not meet expected work standards are disciplined.	88/0	48/31
7. Staff who do not meet expected work standards are disciplined.	76/0	54/25
8. I feel that I have the authority to adequately perform my job responsibilities.	88/13	80/13
9. I have adequate facilities in which to do my work.	51/38	74/19
10. I have adequate equipment and computer support to do my work.	86/14	65/27
11. The workloads are equitably distributed among teachers and among staff members.	63/0	68/21
12. No one knows or cares about the amount or quality of work that I perform.	0/88	19/68
13. Workload is evenly distributed.	50/25	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.	0/63	12/77

<sup>1</sup> 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  
DINWIDDIE COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS PRINCIPALS AND  
PRINCIPALS IN OTHER SCHOOL DISTRICTS**

PART E: JOB SATISFACTION	(% A + SA) / (% D + SD) <sup>1</sup>	
	DINWIDDIE COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS	OTHER SCHOOL DISTRICTS
1. I am very satisfied with my job in the school district.	88/0	83/8
2. I plan to continue my career in the school district.	88/13	88/4
3. I am actively looking for a job outside of the school district.	13/63	8/78
4. Salary levels in the school district are competitive (with other school districts).	76/13	40/48
5. I feel that my work is appreciated by my supervisor(s).	100/0	74/15
6. I feel that I am an integral part of the school district.	88/13	74/12
7. I feel that there is no future for me in the school district.	13/76	8/81
8. My salary level is adequate for my level of work and experience.	75/25	32/58

<sup>1</sup> 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  
DINWIDDIE COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS PRINCIPALS AND  
PRINCIPALS IN OTHER SCHOOL DISTRICTS**

PART F: ADMINISTRATIVE STRUCTURE/PRACTICES	(% A + SA) / (% D + SD) <sup>1</sup>	
	DINWIDDIE COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS	OTHER SCHOOL DISTRICTS
1. Most administrative practices in the school district are highly effective and efficient.	76/13	69/18
2. Administrative decisions are made promptly and decisively.	38/38	62/21
3. School district administrators are easily accessible and open to input.	71/14	71/15
4. Authority for administrative decisions is delegated to the lowest possible level.	38/51	36/38
5. Teachers and staff are empowered with sufficient authority to effectively perform their responsibilities.	88/0	77/12
6. Major bottlenecks exist in many administrative processes which cause unnecessary time delays.	38/38	40/39
7. The extensive committee structure in the school district ensures adequate input from teachers and staff on most important decisions.	26/13	60/21
8. The school district has too many committees.	25/38	35/34
9. The school district has too many layers of administrators.	13/38	27/57
10. Most administrative processes (e.g., purchasing, travel requests, leave applications, personnel, etc.) are highly efficient and responsive.	76/0	57/26
11. Central office administrators are responsive to school needs.	51/25	65/20
12. Central office administrators provide quality service to schools.	63/25	63/18

<sup>1</sup> 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  
DINWIDDIE COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS PRINCIPALS AND  
PRINCIPALS IN OTHER SCHOOL DISTRICTS**

PART G: SCHOOL DISTRICT/PROGRAM FUNCTION	% NEEDS SOME IMPROVEMENT + NEEDS MAJOR IMPROVEMENT	% ADEQUATE <sup>1</sup> + OUTSTANDING
	DINWIDDIE COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS	OTHER SCHOOL DISTRICTS
a. Budgeting	50/50	49/48
b. Strategic planning	50/50	38/53
c. Curriculum planning	50/50	40/59
d. Financial management and accounting	38/63	35/60
e. Community relations	50/50	37/61
f. Program evaluation, research, and assessment	88/13	32/65
g. Instructional technology	50/50	60/39
h. Pupil accounting	13/76	27/66
i. Instructional coordination/supervision	25/76	40/58
j. Instructional support	25/76	44/55
k. Federal Programs (e.g., Title I, Special Education) coordination	63/38	32/57
l. Personnel recruitment	63/38	47/48
m. Personnel selection	63/38	41/57
n. Personnel evaluation	38/63	40/58
o. Staff development	25/76	43/57
p. Data processing	38/38	39/51
q. Purchasing	13/75	37/58
r. Plant maintenance	63/38	55/43
s. Facilities planning	63/38	51/43
t. Transportation	50/50	43/54
u. Food service	75/25	35/65
v. Custodial services	63/38	47/52
w. Risk management	25/50	23/63
x. Administrative technology	13/75	48/49
y. Grants administration	50/25	34/49

<sup>1</sup> 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  
DINWIDDIE COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS TEACHERS AND  
TEACHERS IN OTHER SCHOOL DISTRICTS**

<b>PART A OF SURVEY</b>	<b>DINWIDDIE COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS (%)</b>	<b>OTHER SCHOOL DISTRICTS (%)</b>
1. Overall quality of public education in the school district is:  Good or Excellent Fair or Poor	  88 11	  74 25
2. Overall quality of education in the school district is:  Improving Staying the Same Getting Worse Don't Know	  75 17 5 3	  53 27 16 4
3. Grade given to teachers:  Above Average (A or B) Below Average (D or F)	  84 0	  83 1
4. Grade given to school administrators:  Above Average (A or B) Below Average (D or F)	  66 7	  59 11
5. Grade given to school district administrators:  Above Average (A or B) Below Average (D or F)	  59 9	  38 21

**EXHIBIT A-24  
COMPARISON SURVEY RESPONSES  
DINWIDDIE COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS TEACHERS AND  
TEACHERS IN OTHER SCHOOL DISTRICTS**

PART B	(% A + SA) / (% D + SD) <sup>1</sup>	
	DINWIDDIE COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS	OTHER SCHOOL DISTRICTS
1. The emphasis on learning in this school division has increased in recent years.	87/4	71/13
2. Our schools are safe and secure from crime.	73/13	53/28
3. Our schools effectively handle misbehavior problems.	48/33	37/48
4. Our schools have sufficient space and facilities to support the instructional programs.	19/76	28/62
5. Our schools have the materials and supplies necessary for instruction in basic skills programs such as writing and mathematics.	79/10	54/31
6. Our schools can be described as "good places to learn."	86/4	74/11
7. There is administrative support for controlling student behavior in our schools.	62/22	55/29
8. Most students in our schools are motivated to learn.	69/14	55/29
9. Lessons are organized to meet students' needs.	88/3	79/9
10. The curriculum is broad and challenging for most students.	84/5	77/11
11. There is little a teacher can do to overcome education problems due to a student's home life.	32/43	35/46
12. Teachers in our schools know the material they teach.	91/1	88/4
13. Teachers in our schools care about students' needs.	92/1	91/3
14. Teachers expect students to do their very best.	94/1	88/4
15. The school division provides adequate technology-related staff development.	81/7	n/a
16. Principals and assistant principals in our schools care about students' needs.	85/6	83/7
17. In general, parents take responsibility for their children's behavior in our schools.	35/43	27/53
18. Parents in this school division are satisfied with the education their children are receiving.	62/7	53/14
19. Most parents seem to know what goes on in our schools.	45/32	29/50
20. Parents play an active role in decision-making in our schools.	37/29	36/38
21. This community really cares about its children's education.	57/12	49/27
22. The food services department encourages student participation through customer satisfaction surveys.	8/51	n/a
23. The school division requests input on the long range technology plan.	37/22	n/a
24. Funds are managed wisely to support education in this school division.	40/20	28/46
25. Sufficient student services are provided in this school division (e.g., counseling, speech therapy, health).	50/30	53/34
26. School-based personnel play an important role in making decisions that affect schools in this school division.	46/24	35/33
27. The school division provides adequate technical support.	62/21	n/a
28. Students are often late arriving to and/or departing from school because the buses do not arrive to school on time.	30/50	17/60
29. The food services department provides nutritious and appealing meals and snacks.	31/45	43/34

<sup>1</sup> 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  
DINWIDDIE COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS TEACHERS AND  
TEACHERS IN OTHER SCHOOL DISTRICTS**

PART C	(%G+ E) / (%F + P) <sup>1</sup>	
	DINWIDDIE COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS	OTHER SCHOOL DISTRICTS
1. Board of Education members' knowledge of the educational needs of students in the school district.	42/40	24/64
2. Board of Education members' knowledge of operations in the school district.	47/33	29/55
3. Board of Education members' work at setting or revising policies for the school district.	45/35	27/58
4. The school district Superintendent's work as the educational leader of the school district.	73/22	49/40
5. The school district Superintendent's work as the chief administrator (manager) of the school district.	74/22	50/38
6. Principals' work as the instructional leaders of their schools.	71/29	63/36
7. Principals' work as the managers of the staff and teachers.	73/27	67/32
8. Teachers' work in meeting students' individual learning needs.	88/11	79/20
9. Teachers' work in communicating with parents.	81/17	75/24
10. Teachers' attitudes about their jobs.	63/36	50/49
11. Students' ability to learn.	75/24	64/35
12. The amount of time students spend on task learning in the classroom.	79/18	60/37
13. Parents' efforts in helping their children to do better in school.	32/66	21/76
14. Parents' participation in school activities and organizations.	30/68	23/75
15. How well students' test results are explained to parents.	49/39	38/52
16. The cleanliness and maintenance of facilities in the school district.	66/34	52/47
17. How well relations are maintained with various groups in the community.	51/35	43/44
18. Staff development opportunities provided by the school district for teachers.	76/23	61/38
19. Staff development opportunities provided by the school district for school administrators.	42/14	32/22
20. The school district's job of providing adequate instructional technology.	75/21	47/51
21. The school district's use of technology for administrative purposes.	64/18	45/31

<sup>1</sup> Percent responding *Good* or *Excellent* / Percent responding *Fair* or *Poor*. The *don't know* responses are omitted.

**EXHIBIT A-26  
COMPARISON SURVEY RESPONSES  
DINWIDDIE COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS TEACHERS AND  
TEACHERS IN OTHER SCHOOL DISTRICTS**

PART D: WORK ENVIRONMENT	(% A + SA) / (% D + SD) <sup>1</sup>	
	DINWIDDIE COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS	OTHER SCHOOL DISTRICTS
1. I find the school district to be an exciting, challenging place to work.	76/9	69/12
2. The work standards and expectations in the school district are equal to or above those of most other school districts.	76/10	63/14
3. School district officials enforce high work standards.	82/9	63/15
4. Most school district teachers enforce high student learning standards.	88/6	78/8
5. School district teachers and administrators have excellent working relationships.	64/15	45/26
6. Teachers who do not meet expected work standards are disciplined.	30/28	25/39
7. Staff who do not meet expected work standards are disciplined.	25/24	23/36
8. I feel that I have the authority to adequately perform my job responsibilities.	87/9	81/12
9. I have adequate facilities in which to do my work.	73/19	69/23
10. I have adequate equipment and computer support to do my work.	73/19	54/36
11. The workloads are equitably distributed among teachers and among staff members.	45/36	40/43
12. No one knows or cares about the amount or quality of work that I perform.	25/54	24/58
13. Workload is evenly distributed.	43/33	36/43
14. The failure of school district officials to enforce high work standards results in poor quality work.	91/3	87/7
15. I often observe other teachers and/or staff socializing rather than working while on the job.	18/63	18/66

<sup>1</sup> 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  
DINWIDDIE COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS TEACHERS  
AND TEACHERS IN OTHER SCHOOL DISTRICTS**

<b>PART E: JOB SATISFACTION</b>	(% A + SA) / (% D + SD) <sup>1</sup>	
	<b>DINWIDDIE COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS</b>	<b>OTHER SCHOOL DISTRICTS</b>
1. I am very satisfied with my job in the school district.	81/10	70/15
2. I plan to continue my career in the school district.	79/6	76/8
3. I am actively looking for a job outside of the school district.	12/67	11/74
4. Salary levels in the school district are competitive (with other school districts).	50/34	33/53
5. I feel that my work is appreciated by my supervisor(s).	61/25	65/21
6. I feel that I am an integral part of the school district.	77/11	59/20
7. I feel that there is no future for me in the school district.	12/73	12/73
8. My salary level is adequate for my level of work and experience.	30/53	20/69

<sup>1</sup> 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  
DINWIDDIE COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS TEACHERS AND  
TEACHERS IN OTHER SCHOOL DISTRICTS**

PART F: ADMINISTRATIVE STRUCTURE/PRACTICES	(% A + SA) / (% D + SD) <sup>1</sup>	
	DINWIDDIE COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS	OTHER SCHOOL DISTRICTS
1. Most administrative practices in the school district are highly effective and efficient.	53/23	34/36
2. Administrative decisions are made promptly and decisively.	50/23	36/36
3. School district administrators are easily accessible and open to input.	62/19	39/35
4. Authority for administrative decisions is delegated to the lowest possible level.	19/22	15/29
5. Teachers and staff are empowered with sufficient authority to effectively perform their responsibilities.	69/17	55/27
6. Major bottlenecks exist in many administrative processes which cause unnecessary time delays.	28/21	45/19
7. The extensive committee structure in the school district ensures adequate input from teachers and staff on most important decisions.	40/27	29/39
8. The school district has too many committees.	22/26	43/13
9. The school district has too many layers of administrators.	22/33	53/15
10. Most administrative processes (e.g., purchasing, travel requests, leave applications, personnel, etc.) are highly efficient and responsive.	64/9	35/28
11. Central office administrators are responsive to school needs.	60/14	27/34
12. Central office administrators provide quality service to schools.	61/12	27/31

<sup>1</sup> 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  
DINWIDDIE COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS TEACHERS AND  
TEACHERS IN OTHER SCHOOL DISTRICTS**

PART G: SCHOOL DISTRICT/PROGRAM FUNCTION	% NEEDS SOME IMPROVEMENT + NEEDS MAJOR IMPROVEMENT	% ADEQUATE <sup>1</sup> + OUTSTANDING
	DINWIDDIE COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS	OTHER SCHOOL DISTRICTS
a. Budgeting	55/30	65/16
b. Strategic planning	40/36	47/24
c. Curriculum planning	29/63	52/41
d. Financial management and accounting	34/39	49/23
e. Community relations	40/47	53/38
f. Program evaluation, research, and assessment	26/54	42/38
g. Instructional technology	27/68	53/40
h. Pupil accounting	17/52	29/39
i. Instructional coordination/supervision	25/67	38/48
j. Instructional support	29/67	48/45
k. Federal Programs (e.g., Title I, Special Education) coordination	47/43	36/40
l. Personnel recruitment	31/42	40/35
m. Personnel selection	36/42	42/37
n. Personnel evaluation	35/54	41/48
o. Staff development	28/70	42/52
p. Data processing	15/46	21/34
q. Purchasing	13/54	33/30
r. Plant maintenance	25/45	41/37
s. Facilities planning	43/33	41/28
t. Transportation	45/39	32/46
u. Food service	60/29	41/47
v. Custodial services	33/61	44/49
w. Risk management	21/44	22/32
x. Administrative technology	18/51	24/34
y. Grants administration	18/36	21/32

<sup>1</sup> Percent responding *Needs Some Improvement* or *Needs Major Improvement* / Percent responding *Adequate* or *Outstanding*. The *neutral* and *don't know* responses are omitted.