

*School Efficiency Review in  
Alleghany County Public Schools, Virginia*

*FINAL REPORT*



Evergreen Solutions, LLC

*February 28, 2007*

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Submitted by:



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February 28, 2007

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## ***EXECUTIVE SUMMARY***



## ***EXECUTIVE SUMMARY***

On August 30, 2006, the Department of Planning and Budget of the Commonwealth of Virginia contracted with Evergreen Solutions, LLC to conduct school efficiency reviews of Alleghany County Public Schools and Covington City Public Schools. These reviews focused on the financial, organizational, and operational effectiveness of each division, as well as shared services between the two divisions and between each division and its respective local government.

Alleghany County Public Schools consists of approximately 3,000 students and Covington City Public Schools consists of approximately 850 students. Like many Virginia cities, the City of Covington is politically independent from the surrounding county and has its own services, schools, and elected officials. Interstate 64 passes through the central portion of Alleghany County, which shares a border with West Virginia.

This Executive Summary is for the efficiency review of Alleghany County Public Schools.

### **METHODOLOGY**

Evergreen's methodology for conducting these two reviews included the following components:

- reviewing existing reports and data sources;
- conducting a diagnostic assessment, including interviews with school board members, central office administrators, principals, association leaders, and community/business leaders;
- conducting employee surveys;
- establishing a Web site for study input;
- making analyses with comparison school divisions;
- visiting all schools in each division;
- conducting a public hearing;
- conducting the formal on-site view with a team of nine Evergreen consultants; and
- preparing the draft and final reports.



### ***Review of Existing Records and Data Sources***

Initially, Evergreen Consultants collected existing reports and data sources that provided us with recent information related to the various administrative functions and operations we would review in each school division.

More than 100 documents were requested from each division. 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 Allegheny County Public Schools and Covington City Public Schools was conducted during the week of October 3, 2006. Two Evergreen consultants interviewed central office administrators, Board members, County Commissioners, City Council members, and community leaders, concerning the management and operations of Allegheny County Public Schools and Covington City Public Schools.

### ***Employee Surveys***

To secure the involvement of administrators and teachers in the school efficiency reviews, two online surveys were prepared and disseminated in September 2006—one for administrators and one for teachers. Through the use of anonymous surveys, administrators and teachers were given the opportunity to express their views about the management and operations of each division. These surveys were similar in format and content to provide a database for determining how the opinions and perceptions of administrators and teachers vary. The ACPS and CCPS survey results were compared to administrators and teachers in Evergreen’s survey database.

### ***Public Input***

A Web site was established for public input. Over 50 respondents provided comments on the Web site. In addition, a public forum was held on November 8, 2006 at the Jackson River Technical Center (JRTC). Thirty-five (35) individuals participated in the forum.

### ***On-Site Efficiency Review***

A team of nine consultants conducted the formal on-site reviews of Allegheny County Public Schools and Covington City Public Schools during the week of November 5, 2006. As part of our on-site review, we examined the following systems and operations in each division:

- Division Administration
- Human Resource Management
- Financial Management
- Educational Service Delivery and Management



- Facilities Use and Management
- Transportation
- Technology
- Food Services
- Shared Services

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

### **COMPARISON SCHOOL DIVISIONS**

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. Alleghany County Public Schools is identified in Cluster 4 and the Virginia public school divisions chosen as part of this review for comparison to Alleghany County Public Schools are:

- Dickenson County Public Schools
- Nottoway County Public Schools
- Patrick County Public Schools
- Prince Edward County Public Schools
- Southampton County Public Schools

### **MAJOR COMMENDATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

In this section we include the major recommendations and commendations for each operational area.

#### ***Division Administration***

Overall, Alleghany County Public Schools is effectively managed by a Superintendent and Leadership Team that are committed to data-driven decision making. The Superintendent and his Leadership Team have focused the division on student achievement and have led staff to significant improvements over the past few years. In addition, the Superintendent has established a culture of accountability throughout the organization, which will lead to continued improvement throughout the organization.

ACPS is commended for several activities. Surveys are routinely conducted for parents, staff, and community members. A six-year plan was developed with community input and is reviewed frequently by the School Board. A culture of accountability is clear throughout the entire division. A leadership academy has been developed to address impending administrative shortages.



Effective organizations are continuously finding ways to improve, recognizing that an organization that remains static eventually begins to decline. Primary recommendations for improvement include:

- Revise the Board agenda so that it includes a consent agenda, information items, and action items. Post the Board agendas and minutes on the division's Web site.
- Expand the online agendas to include handouts and related documents that are provided to the School Board.
- Place the division's policy manual on its Web site to ensure that there is easy access to all current policies by division employees, students, and parents.
- Reassign job functions within the current organizational plan.
- Establish an office for planning, accountability, and technology within the Office of Instruction.
- Review and revise the format of the bi-monthly meetings with administrators.
- Develop a comprehensive administrative manual that contains administrative procedures.
- Consider eliminating one assistant principal position at the middle school and one assistant principal position at the high school.
- Establish more site-based management for decision making.
- Modify the planning process during the next planning cycle to incorporate more strategic planning.
- Consider a yearly self-evaluation by the School Board.

### ***Human Resources Management***

Human resources functions are performed by the Director of Human Resources and the Executive Secretary to the Director of Human Resources and Student Services.

The division is commended for:

- incorporating reasonable and measurable goals into its comprehensive plan related to personnel and human resources;
- addressing teacher recruitment and retention issues by obtaining grants from the Alleghany Foundation and applying these funds to teacher recruitment collateral and the Alleghany Induction and Mentoring Program (AIM);



- proactively addressing minority recruitment and retention in the division through the Minority Advisory Committee; and
- developing and administering a comprehensive annual bus driver training.

Evergreen's recommendations are intended to refine existing human resources processes and practices, and to provide guidance for the establishment of others. Primary human resources recommendations include:

- fully implement the personnel component of the RDA system;
- revise current Board policy on overtime to provide guidance to supervisors on scheduling employees for overtime work;
- develop and adhere to a records retention and destruction policy related to personnel records;
- abolish annual contracts for classified employees;
- develop a comprehensive Employee Handbook, provide the Handbook to all new employees, and publish the Handbook electronically for all employees;
- collect and track data related to recruitment and advertising vacant positions; and
- employ an external consultant to conduct a comprehensive compensation and classification study to ensure internal equity and market competitiveness.

### ***Financial Management***

The financial management functions for Allegheny County Public Schools are performed primarily by the Finance Director who is supported by two professional assistants, the Executive Secretary for Payroll and Executive Secretary for Disbursements. The Superintendent, with Finance Director support, has primary responsibility for preparation of the division budget. The Director of Administrative Services performs functions relative to fixed asset and risk management, and the Director of Human Resources is responsible for employee health insurances and benefits. The Allegheny County finance staff process the disbursements for payroll and accounts payable. The Treasurer for Allegheny County collects revenues for the division and has signatory authority for all disbursements. The Allegheny County Board of Supervisors approves the school division budget and the allotments for school division operations. Allegheny County employs an independent auditor to perform the annual audit of the Allegheny County Public Schools and Allegheny County Government.

The division is commended for its budget priority survey to help establish division annual priorities and for wisely managing funds to support education in the school division. Finance recommendations are intended to refine certain existing division processes and practices, and to provide guidance for the establishment of others. Primary recommendations include:



- establish a budgetary process that creates a budget correlated to the adopted goals and objectives of Alleghany County Public Schools;
- obtain a financial accounting system capable of communication between schools and department;
- develop and implement a comprehensive fixed asset management system;
- develop and implement a coordinated School Board/County procedure for cash flow and the calculation of interest earnings;
- develop and implement a comprehensive school activity funds manual and monitor audit findings;
- strengthen certain internal controls, and develop and implement a comprehensive business and finance operating procedures manual; and
- explore cooperative bidding for health benefits.

### ***Educational Service Delivery and Management***

The ACPS Instructional Department is staffed by personnel who are well-suited to their particular responsibilities and are enthusiastically committed to continual improvement of services to the students and staff of the school division. Division leadership has a vision of critical priorities it must address and the impact these priorities will make on student performance and employee knowledge and skills. They have established sound practices that serve as a foundation for using data to inform instruction and strengthen curriculum and specific content programs.

The division's inclusive approach to ongoing curricular revision has contributed to a strong middle school math program based on differentiated instruction for all students. The division's concern for reaching the *No Child Left Behind* goal of all students graduating is evidenced in a comprehensive, divisionwide initiative to address factors at all levels that lead to potential dropouts. ACPS is also commended for integrating student literacy into parental engagement activities.

Recommendations relate to refining and expanding current procedures, structures, and functions in order to contribute to more effective coordination and planning of tasks that should provide a more cohesive support system for the curricular and instructional functions of the division's operations. Some key recommendations that should assist the division in achieving an even stronger instructional program for every student include:

- identify required training for teachers that will equip them to routinely use available data for instructional decisions;



- expand the division's current examination of curriculum and data to cross-grade discussions and curriculum map development;
- formalize current instructional monitoring procedures into a comprehensive, unified, divisionwide approach,
- identify special and regular education teachers who are willing to co-teach to model and extend its benefits for students to other teachers;
- adapt strategies proven effective in other Virginia divisions to address student needs in regular classes before referral to special education;
- extend partnerships with the community college and community organizations to provide reading instruction for parents at sites within the community;
- reduce the number of teacher aide positions;
- expand the ACPS Gifted Program to include elements to nurture student talents and include principals in plan development; and
- devise ways to incorporate English Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) students and their families into division and community activities.

### ***Facilities Use And Management***

Facilities use and management for Allegheny County Public Schools is the primary responsibility of the Director of Administrative Services and the Maintenance Manager. The Director reports to the Superintendent, and the Maintenance Manager reports to the Director. All school buildings and ancillary facilities are well-maintained and clean. No neglect or deferred maintenance are in evidence on any of the facilities.

The only school facility requiring immediate attention is Allegheny High School. Built in 1962, the facility is in need of updating and renovation to serve as a contemporary high school. Because the building is located in a flood plain and has been subject to several devastating water intrusions, a decision must be made whether to install flood mitigation devices on the site, or to build a new school in a less flood-prone location either as an ACPS-only facility or in cooperation with the Covington City Public Schools. Major energy efficiencies have been implemented beginning in 2002, having saved ACPS nearly \$500,000 since that time.

Most prominent among the facilities recommendations are:

- Re-establish the Ad Hoc Committee and charge it with generating a definitive and firm resolution of the Allegheny High School and related facilities needs on or before October 1, 2007.
- Employ life-cycle cost analysis as an official procedure in the selection of equipment and materials for new schools, additions, and renovations.
- Hire additional maintenance mechanics and helpers as may be required.



- Reallocate custodians throughout all Allegheny County school buildings.
- Hire a Custodial Manager.
- Use the LEED Green Building Rating System in all future new construction, major renovations, and existing building operations.
- Install special lighting control devices in all new or renovated school facilities to save on electric utility costs.

### ***Transportation***

The division encompasses approximately 452 square miles which creates elongated routing challenges. Roads are mixed within the area ranging from normal hard surface city style streets to interstate highways, with a large portion of the non-city thoroughfares being county maintained asphalt/oil based county roads. Some roads must be pre-approved for use based upon the ability to have buses turn around. Routes serve from all points within the division boundary and are routed to accommodate for centralized high and middle schools as well as a centralized vocational school. Individual elementary schools are scattered throughout Allegheny County.

The ACPS Transportation System provides the transportation services needed within the division (i.e. regular education, special education, vocational, athletics/field trips, etc.). This is a mid-size operation (43 home-to-school bus routes) which does not use any routing or maintenance software to assist in its operational management. Maintenance is achieved by utilization of the County Shop facility within the nearby City of Covington. Driver supply is adequate for this operating year. Management of the system is split between principals having first point of contact with the Director of Administrative Services and his Secretary providing additional support.

No apparent service issues were found. The fleet is in good operating condition and ACPS is to be commended for passing a recent surprise inspection. The division enjoys an enviable safety record which can be somewhat attributed to a low driver turnover rate.

Transportation recommendations are meant to offer alternative methods of performance, as well as methods to measure performance. Some will provide cost efficiencies while others are targeted towards service improvements. A summary of these recommendations are:

- Begin to reorganize the transportation management structure with a more centralized supervisory function.
- Implement an improved communications process to ensure each driver receives emergency information on medically-related student issues.
- Implement a change in the work hours at the bus maintenance facility to improve support coverage.
- Conduct and maintain an accurate parts and supply inventory.



- Refine the routing process by researching and purchasing computerized routing software.
- Actively review current bell schedules at all schools and adjust times to create increased operating efficiencies.
- Ensure all route sheets contain a list of the students assigned to the bus.
- Implement a system for measuring overall performance within the department.
- Establish routine driver safety meetings.

### ***Technology Management***

ACPS is operating technology at a commendable level in a number of areas. The division has developed a highly detailed technology plan that provides strategic direction for both instructional and administrative technology in the division from 2003 through 2009. Through the shared Educational Technology Center, the division is supporting a best practices organizational structure to obtain high-quality technical support. ACPS maintains an outstanding Web site.

Evergreen's recommendations for improvement are:

- review and update the Technology Plan on at least an annual basis;
- increase technical staffing levels;
- adopt paperless flows for some processes;
- adopt a computer replacement policy;
- develop procedures to assess technology usage, satisfaction, and instructional integration;
- seek an agreement to co-host the Covington City Public Schools Technology Expo; and
- develop rigorous technology expectations for teachers and staff.

### ***Food Service***

The ACPS Food Service Program is operating at a commendable level in a number of areas. ACPS has adopted an excellent Wellness Policy and is actively seeking to support student health and wellness. The division is serving a varied menu at breakfast and lunch, and is daily offering students healthful choices. The division has implemented point-of-sale technology in all cafeterias, improving fiscal controls and minimizing student wait times. ACPS cafeterias have generally achieved student lunch participation rates in excess of industry standards, indicative of the popularity of its menu items, expert preparation, and attractive presentation. The program is also meeting industry standards for meals per labor hour efficiency, indicative of effective staffing patterns and skilled management of labor resources. Perhaps most importantly, the ACPS Food Service Program was self-supporting in 2005-06, a key indicator of the effective management of program resources.



Evergreen's recommendations for improvement are:

- adopt shared purchasing with Covington City School Division in order to reduce overall food costs;
- develop central storage for paper products related to the Food Service Program;
- charge the ACPS Food Service Fund for applicable utilities expenses;
- provide the Food Service Manager with the POS functionality to review individual cafeteria performance centrally;
- implement an online pay option for ACPS students and parents;
- evaluate Food Service Program performance relative to selected indicators each year;
- establish goals and programs to improve student breakfast participation, particularly among free and reduced-price student populations; and
- establish goals for ACPS Food Service Program financial performance.

### ***Shared Services***

Allegheny County Public Schools shares a number of services with Covington City Public Schools and Allegheny County. Consolidating divisions would result in combining almost all services being performed by the divisions. Short of a consolidation, sharing services are limited to those where a sharing arrangement is approved by both ACPS and CCPS. Likewise sharing services between ACPS and Allegheny County must have each entity's approval. Allegheny taxpayers have benefited from ACPS's cooperative relationship with CCPS and Allegheny County that has resulted in cost saving sharing of services.

The division is commended for sharing services with Allegheny County for security needs, and with Covington City Public Schools for a technology center, a school nurse program, substitute teachers, and an attendance officer. Recommendations in this chapter are intended to focus attention on areas where services that are currently being shared can be improved and on other services that should be considered for sharing.

Primary shared services recommendations include:

- develop a shared purchasing agreement for commonly acquired office, custodial and building supplies, as well as fuel and vehicle maintenance supplies;
- pursue sharing services arrangement for health insurance for both County and ACPS employees;
- establish a joint education foundation for Allegheny County Public Schools and Covington City Public Schools that is operated as a shared services arrangement;



- review the class times for Allegheny High School and Covington High School, and better align the bell times to reduce the impact on Covington High School students, and enable the Jackson River Technical Center to offer a fourth period;
- develop an arrangement to share the services of the ACPS Energy Manager with Covington City Public Schools;
- align the calendars for Allegheny County Public Schools and Covington City Public Schools to improve current shared services and to enhance future shared services possibilities;
- develop a formal shared services agreement with Covington City Public Schools to encourage and manage additional shared service arrangements; and
- establish indirect cost rates for shared service arrangements for Allegheny County Public Schools and Covington City Public Schools that are calculated using the same methodology.

**FISCAL IMPACT**

Based on the analyses of data obtained from interviews, surveys, community input, state and division documents, and firsthand observations in Allegheny County Public Schools, the Evergreen team developed over 100 recommendations in this report.

As shown in **Exhibit 1**, full implementation of the recommendations in this report would generate a net savings of over \$1.5 million over five years for improvements in ACPS operations. Costs and savings presented in this report are in 2006-07 dollars and do not reflect increases due to salary or inflation adjustments.

**Exhibit 1  
Summary of Annual Costs and Savings  
(Without Shared Services)  
Chapters 2-9**

Costs/Savings	Years					Total 5-Year (Costs) or Savings	One-Time (Costs)
	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11		
<b>Total Costs</b>	<b>(\$294,517)</b>	<b>(\$370,117)</b>	<b>(\$447,637)</b>	<b>(\$447,637)</b>	<b>(\$447,637)</b>	<b>(\$2,007,545)</b>	
<b>Total Savings</b>	<b>\$532,203</b>	<b>\$713,704</b>	<b>\$753,704</b>	<b>\$774,915</b>	<b>\$774,915</b>	<b>\$3,549,441</b>	<b>(\$37,836)</b>
<b>Total Net Savings</b>	<b>\$237,686</b>	<b>\$343,587</b>	<b>\$306,067</b>	<b>\$327,278</b>	<b>\$327,278</b>	<b>\$1,541,896</b>	
<b>Total Five-Year Net Savings Minus One-Time (Costs)</b>						<b>\$1,504,060</b>	



**Exhibit 2** shows the summary of costs and savings for shared services recommendations in Chapter 10. As can be seen, a total net savings of over \$2.8 million can be generated if the shared services recommendations are implemented.

**Exhibit 2**  
**Summary of Annual Costs and Savings**  
**for Shared Services Recommendations (Chapter 10)**

Costs/Savings	Years					Total 5-Year (Costs) or Savings	One-Time (Costs)
	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11		
<b>Total Costs</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$0</b>	
<b>Total Savings</b>	<b>\$559,630</b>	<b>\$564,630</b>	<b>\$564,630</b>	<b>\$564,630</b>	<b>\$564,630</b>	<b>\$2,818,150</b>	
<b>Total Net Savings</b>	<b>\$559,630</b>	<b>\$564,630</b>	<b>\$564,630</b>	<b>\$564,630</b>	<b>\$564,630</b>	<b>\$2,818,150</b>	<b>(\$2,750)</b>
<b>Total Five-Year Net Savings Minus One-Time (Costs)</b>						<b>\$2,815,400*</b>	

\* Approximately \$750,000 are for shared service savings with Allegheny County Government; the remainder use for shared services with Covington City Public Schools.

**Exhibits 11-3 and 11-4** in Chapter 11 show the total costs and savings for individual recommendations.



**CHAPTER 1:  
INTRODUCTION**



## ***INTRODUCTION***

On August 30, 2006, the Department of Planning and Budget of the Commonwealth of Virginia contracted with Evergreen Solutions, LLC to conduct school efficiency reviews of Alleghany County Public Schools and Covington City Public Schools. These reviews focused on the financial, organizational, and operational effectiveness of each division, as well as shared services between the two divisions and between each division and its respective local government.

Alleghany County Public Schools consists of approximately 3,000 students and Covington City Public Schools consists of approximately 850 students. Like many Virginia cities, the City of Covington is politically independent from the surrounding county and has its own services, schools, and elected officials. Interstate 64 passes through the central portion of Alleghany County, which shares a border with West Virginia.

**Exhibit 1-1** shows an overview of Evergreen’s work plan for the two efficiency reviews.

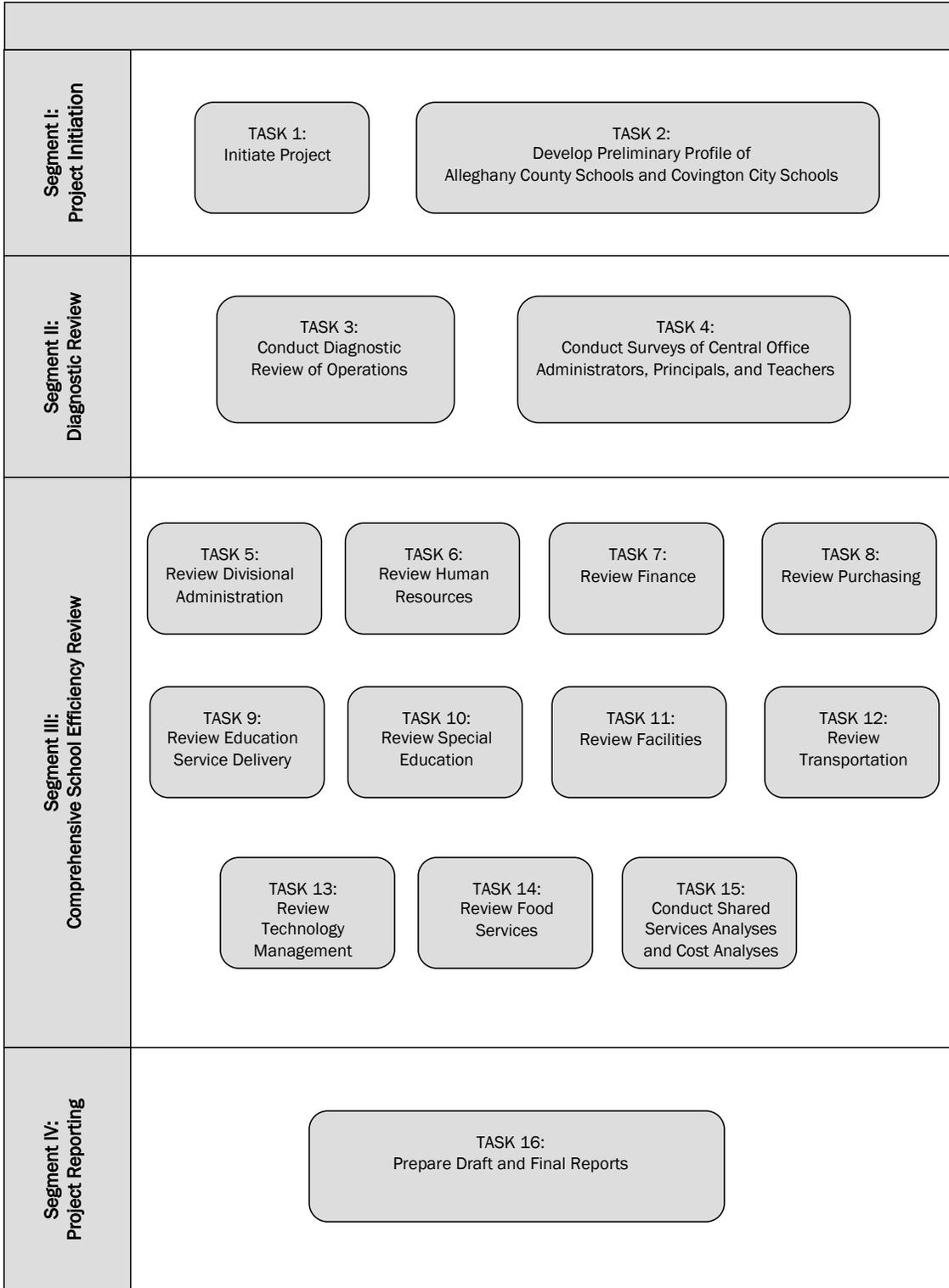
### ***1.1 METHODOLOGY***

Evergreen’s methodology for conducting these two reviews included the following components:

- reviewing existing reports and data sources;
- conducting a diagnostic assessment, including interviews with school board members, central office administrators, principals, association leaders, and community/business leaders;
- conducting employee surveys;
- establishing a Web site for study input;
- making analyses with comparison school divisions;
- visiting all schools in each division;
- conducting a public hearing;
- conducting the formal on-site view with a team of nine Evergreen consultants; and
- preparing the draft and final reports.



**Exhibit 1-1  
Overview of Work Plan for the Efficiency Reviews of  
Allegheny County Public Schools and Covington City Public Schools**



### **REVIEW OF EXISTING RECORDS AND DATA SOURCES**

Initially, Evergreen Consultants collected existing reports and data sources that provided us with recent information related to the various administrative functions and operations we would review in each school division.

More than 100 documents were requested from each division. Examples of materials Evergreen requested include, but are 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;
- curriculum and instruction plans;
- annual budget and expenditure reports;
- job descriptions;
- salary schedules; and
- employee 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 Allegheny County Public Schools and Covington City Public Schools was conducted during the week of October 3, 2006. Two Evergreen consultants interviewed central office administrators, Board members, County Commissioners, City Council members, and community leaders, concerning the management and operations of Allegheny County Public Schools and Covington City Public Schools.

### **EMPLOYEE SURVEYS**

To secure the involvement of administrators and teachers in the school efficiency reviews, two online surveys were prepared and disseminated in September 2006—one for administrators and one for teachers. Through the use of anonymous surveys, administrators and teachers were given the opportunity to express their views about the management and operations of each division. These surveys were similar in format and content to provide a database for determining how the opinions and perceptions of administrators and teachers vary. The ACPS and CCPS survey results were compared to administrators and teachers in Evergreen's survey database.

The response rates for the two surveys in each division are shown in **Exhibit 1-2**.



**Exhibit 1-2**  
**Evergreen Survey Response Rates for**  
**Allegheny County Public Schools and Covington City Public Schools**

<b>Group</b>	<b>Allegheny Number</b>	<b>Allegheny Responses</b>	<b>Allegheny Response Rate</b>	<b>Covington Number</b>	<b>Covington Responses</b>	<b>Covington Response Rate</b>
Administrators	21	21	100%	9	8	89%
Teachers	251	184	73%	85	38	45%

The survey results are provided in the **Appendix**. Specific survey items pertinent to findings in the functional areas Evergreen reviewed are presented within each chapter.

**PUBLIC INPUT**

A Web site was established for public input. Over 50 respondents provided comments on the Web site. In addition, a public forum was held on November 8, 2006 at the Jackson River Technical Center (JRTC). Thirty-five (35) individuals participated in the forum.

**ON-SITE EFFICIENCY REVIEW**

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## **1.2 COMPARISON SCHOOL DIVISIONS**

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. Allegheny County Public Schools is identified in Cluster 4, while Covington City Public Schools is included in Cluster 7. The Virginia public school divisions chosen for comparison to Allegheny County Public Schools are:

- Dickenson County Public Schools
- Nottoway County Public Schools
- Patrick County Public Schools
- Prince Edward County Public Schools
- Southampton County Public Schools

The Virginia public school divisions cluster for comparison to Covington City Public Schools are:

- Buena Vista City Public Schools
- Franklin City Public Schools
- Galax City Public Schools
- Norton City Public Schools
- West Point Public Schools

## **1.3 OVERVIEW OF THE REPORT**

The final report for this study consists of the following 11 chapters:

- Chapter 1.0: Introduction
- Chapter 2.0: Division Administration
- Chapter 3.0: Human Resources Management
- Chapter 4.0: Financial Management
- Chapter 5.0: Educational Service Delivery and Management
- Chapter 6.0: Facilities Use and Management
- Chapter 7.0: Transportation
- Chapter 8.0: Technology Management
- Chapter 9.0: Food Service
- Chapter 10.0: Shared Services
- Chapter 11.0: Fiscal Impact and Recommendations

Chapters 2 through 9 contain findings, commendations, and recommendations of the operational area, and provide the following sequence:

- a description of the operation in each division;
- a summary of our study findings;



- a commendation or recommendation for each finding; and
- estimated costs or cost savings over a five-year period which are stated in 2006-07 dollars.

Chapter 10 includes recommendations on shared services.

We conclude this report with a summary of the fiscal impact of the study recommendations in Chapter 11.

This report includes the findings, commendations, and recommendations for Alleghany County Public Schools. A similar report was developed for Covington City Public Schools and is available under separate cover.



***CHAPTER 2:  
DIVISION ADMINISTRATION***



## *Chapter 2*

# ***DIVISION ADMINISTRATION***

This chapter reviews the staffing, organization, and management of Alleghany County Public Schools (ACPS) and includes six major sections:

- 2.1 Governance and Board Issues
- 2.2 Policies and Procedures
- 2.3 Division Organization and Management
- 2.4 School Management
- 2.5 Planning and Accountability
- 2.6 Legal Services

Overall, Alleghany County Public Schools is effectively managed by a Superintendent and Leadership Team that is committed to data-driven decision making. The Superintendent and his Leadership Team have focused the division on student achievement and have led staff to significant improvements over the past few years. In addition, the Superintendent has established a culture of accountability throughout the organization, which will lead to continued improvement.

Every organization, no matter how strong, has room for improvement. Effective organizations are continuously finding ways to improve, recognizing that an organization that remains static eventually begins to decline.

### **CHAPTER SUMMARY**

Overall, Alleghany County Public Schools is effectively managed by a Superintendent and Leadership Team that are committed to data-driven decision making. The Superintendent and his Leadership Team have focused the division on student achievement and have led staff to significant improvements over the past few years. In addition, the Superintendent has established a culture of accountability throughout the organization, which will lead to continued improvement throughout the organization.

ACPS is commended for several activities. Surveys are routinely conducted for parents, staff, and community members. A six-year plan was developed with community input and is reviewed frequently by the School Board. A culture of accountability is clear throughout the entire division. A leadership academy has been developed to address impending administrative shortages.

Effective organizations are continuously finding ways to improve, recognizing that an organization that remains static eventually begins to decline. ACPS leadership was welcoming this efficiency review to identify areas for improvement. Primary recommendations include the following:



- Revise the Board agenda so that it includes a consent agenda, information items, and action items. Post the Board agendas and minutes on the division's Web site.
- Expand the online agendas to include handouts and related documents that are provided to the School Board.
- Place the division's policy manual on its Web site to ensure that there is easy access to all current policies by division employees, students, and parents.
- Reassign job functions within the current organizational plan.
- Establish an office for planning, accountability, and technology within the Office of Instruction.
- Review and revise the format of the bi-monthly meetings with administrators.
- Develop a comprehensive administrative manual that contains administrative procedures.
- Eliminate one assistant principal position at the middle school and one assistant principal position at the high school.
- Establish more site-based management for decision making.
- Modify the planning process during the next planning cycle to incorporate more strategic planning.
- Consider a yearly self-evaluation by the School Board.

## **2.1 GOVERNANCE AND BOARD ISSUES**

Local school boards have traditionally governed public education in the United States with authority vested in them by the State. From the mid 1800s through the early 1900s, the number of school boards increased dramatically. The last major reform of school boards involved a shift to smaller elected school boards comprised of community members with a professional superintendent as the CEO. There are approximately 95,000 school board members on 15,000 local boards across the nation. Most boards have five to seven members. Eighty (80) percent of school districts across the country have fewer than 3,000 students.

In a widely cited 2000 report (entitled "Recommendations for 21<sup>st</sup> Century School Board/Superintendent Leadership, Governance and Teamwork for High School Achievement"), Goodman and Zimmerman found that school districts with quality governance had, among other things:

- a focus on student achievement and policy making;
- effective management without micromanagement;



- a trusting and collaborative relationship with the Superintendent;
- a yearly evaluation of the Superintendent, according to mutually agreed upon goals and procedures;
- governance retreats for evaluation and goal setting;
- long-term service of Board members and the Superintendent; and
- a budget that provides needed resources.

Section 22.1-25 of the Code of Virginia provides that the Board of Education “divide the Commonwealth into school divisions” and that school divisions in existence as of July 1, 1978, remain school divisions in the Commonwealth until further action of the Board of Education. Alleghany County, as a school division in operation at that time, has maintained its own independent school division, which is governed by a seven-member School Board. The powers and duties of the School Board are further delineated in Section 22.1 of the Code. The ability to adopt policies, approve personnel actions, adopt budgets, and enter into contractual agreements are among the many broad powers given to local school boards in this section of the Code.

**FINDING**

The Alleghany County School Board is comprised of seven members appointed by the County Board of Supervisors. All seven members have held positions in the County, keeping them involved with various segments of the Alleghany County community. The average tenure of a Board member is 5.7 years. As may be seen in **Exhibit 2-1**, 50 percent of the Board members have served on Board members for six to eight years. The remaining three members have served from three to five years.

**Exhibit 2-1**  
**Alleghany County Public Schools**  
**School Board Members**  
**2006-07 School Year**

Name	Title	Term Expires	Years Served	Profession
Michael Whitehead	Chair	June 30, 2009	8	Mead/Westvaco
Randall S. Tucker	Vice-Chair	June 20, 2010	5	Mead/Westvaco
R. Joe Anderson	Member	June 30, 2008	8	Anderson Monument Company
R. Wayne Botkins	Member	June 30, 2010	4	Pharmacist/Alleghany Regional Hospital
H. Hunter Fridley	Member	June 30, 2007	6	Electrician-Mead/Westvaco
Robert. A. Fridley	Member	June 30, 2007	6	Virginia State Trooper
David W. Halsey	Member	June 30, 2010	3	Self-employed

Source: Alleghany County Public Schools, Superintendent’s Office, 2006.

Regular meetings are held once a month at 6:00 p.m. on the third Monday of the month. Additional meetings may be called occasionally for special topics, and these meetings primarily focus on student discipline or personnel. The regular meetings last approximately three to 3.5



hours. The public is welcome to attend, although there is no regularly scheduled time on the agenda for citizen input.

Section 2.2-3711 of the Code of Virginia also allows the local board to have closed meetings for such purposes as student matters, personnel matters, selected consultations with legal counsel, and under specified conditions, discussion of acquisition of real estate. The Alleghany County School Board meets regularly in closed sessions at the end of its regular meetings for one or more of these reasons.

The Superintendent, in consultation with the Board Chair, develops an agenda and background information for each meeting. This information is provided to the Board members at least one week prior to the meeting.

ACPS Board members are well-informed and highly regarded by the school staff and community. Survey results indicate that Board members in ACPS receive high marks compared to comparison groups.

- Over 71 percent of teachers *agree* with the statement that “school board members know and understand the educational needs of students in the school division,” compared to fewer than 40 percent in the comparison group of teachers (i.e., teachers in Evergreen’s survey database).
- Over 76 percent of teachers *agree* with the statement that “school board members know and understand the operations of the school division”, compared to fewer than 47 percent of the comparison group of teachers.
- Over 95 percent of administrators *agree* with the statement that “school board members know and understand the educational needs of students in the school division”, compared to fewer than 69 percent in the comparison group of administrators.
- Over 95 percent of administrators *agree* with the statement that “school board members know and understand the operations of the school division”, compared to fewer than 79 percent of the comparison group of administrators.

These results were reinforced in several interviews. Comments such as “they are trustworthy and honest” were repeated several times by ACPS employees. Other comments included the following:

- They understand the role of policymakers.
- They do not micromanage.
- They have begun a monthly employee recognition program that has created a lot of good will.
- They are a model school board for others to follow.



## COMMENDATION

**The ACPS School Board is commended for receiving high ratings from administrators and teachers regarding its important governance and leadership roles.**

## FINDING

The Allegheny County School Board adopted the Code of Ethics recommended by the Virginia School Boards Association (VSBA). The content of the code is stated below:

*As a member of my local school board, I will strive to be an advocate for students and to improve public education, and to that end:*

- 1. I will have integrity in all matters and support the full development of all children and the welfare of the community, Commonwealth, and Nation.*
- 2. I will attend scheduled Board meetings.*
- 3. I will come to Board meetings informed concerning the issues under consideration.*
- 4. I will make policy decisions based on the available facts and appropriate public input.*
- 5. I will delegate authority for the administration of the schools to the Superintendent, and establish a process for accountability of administrators.*
- 6. I will encourage individual Board member expression of opinion and establish an open, two-way communication process with all segments of the community.*
- 7. I will communicate, in accordance with Board policies, public reaction, and opinion regarding Board policies and school programs to the full Board and Superintendent.*
- 8. I will bring about desired changes through legal and ethical procedures, upholding and enforcing all laws, state regulations, and court orders pertaining to schools.*
- 9. I will refrain from using the Board position for personal or partisan gain, and avoid any conflict of interest or the appearance of impropriety.*
- 10. I will respect the confidentiality of privileged information and make no individual decisions or commitments that might compromise the board or administration.*
- 11. I will be informed about current educational issues through individual study and participation in appropriate programs, such as those sponsored by my state and national school board associations.*
- 12. I will always remember that the foremost concern of the Board is to improve and enhance the teaching and learning experience for all students in the public schools of Virginia.*



## COMMENDATION

The Alleghany County School Board practices a Code of Ethics which is widely recognized throughout the school community.

## FINDING

The Board agenda consists of several topics. Major groupings for the agenda include Community Participation, Budget and Finance, Superintendent's Reports and Recommendations, and Personnel. The Personnel report is generally approved at the end of the meeting, after the Board goes into and comes out of Executive Session. A sample agenda is shown in **Exhibit 2-2**.

### Exhibit 2-2 Alleghany County Public Schools Sample Board Agenda

- |       |  |
|-------|--|
| I.    | Call to Order/Moment of Silence/Pledge of Allegiance   |
| II.   | Roll Call/Approval of Minutes  |
| III.  | Community Participation  |
|       | A. SB member questions and reports   |
| IV.   | Budget and Finance   |
|       | A. Amendment to 1006-2007 operating budget   |
|       | B. Cafeteria report (information)  |
| V.    | Superintendent's Reports and Recommendations   |
|       | A. Calendar reminder   |
|       | B. Nomination resolutions for VSBA media honor roll (action)   |
|       | C. Status of preliminary report on 2005-2006 SOL test performance (information)                                    |
|       | D. Annual report on student attendance and truancy enforcement (information)                                       |
|       | E. Annual report on homebound education (information)  |
|       | F. Award of contract for health insurance services (action)  |
|       | G. Renewal of access authorization and premium rates for selected dental insurance provider for 2006-2007 (action) |
|       | H. Annual energy management report (information)   |
|       | I. Capital Improvement Update (information)  |
| VI.   | Closed session: Code of Va., Section 2.2-3711 (1) Personnel  |
| VII.  | Personnel  |
|       | A. Appointments/Approvals  |
| VIII. | Adjournment  |

*Source: Alleghany County Public Schools, Board Agenda, July 10, 2006.*

While it is clear from the agenda that is published which items are presented for School Board action versus which items are presented for information only, the agenda does not appear to be as well-organized as it could be. A different format for the agenda would streamline the meeting and perhaps allow more time for thoughtful discussions about the goals of the division.

It would be clearer to school employees and the community at large if the Board adopted an alternative format for its agenda. A Consent Agenda at the beginning of the meeting would reduce the amount of time spent on routine matters. If the School Board were willing to have its



executive session at the beginning of the meeting, Personnel issues could be put under the Consent Agenda. The remaining agenda items could be placed under either Information or Action items, thereby making the public more readily aware of what items are under consideration for adoption at the Board meeting. Consideration should also be given to developing a standard reporting format for Information and Action items.

## RECOMMENDATION

### Recommendation 2-1:

**Revise the Board agenda so that it includes a Consent Agenda, Information Items, and Action Items.**

A proposed agenda is shown in **Exhibit 2-3**. As can be seen, grouping the agenda items differently provides the public with a snapshot view of the action to be taken at the Board meeting. This type of grouping also provides the Board with more time to discuss matters that are of significant importance to the division, such as student performance, policies, and capital improvement. Needless to say, Board members may choose to remove any items from the Consent Agenda if further discussion is warranted.

### Exhibit 2-3 Proposed Board Agenda for Alleghany County Public Schools

<p>6:00 Executive Session, Code of Va., Section 2.2-3711 (1) to discuss Personnel 6:30 Regular Meeting: indicate location</p> <p>I. Call to Order II. Closed Session Motions III. Pledge of Allegiance IV. Community Participation and Recognitions IV. Superintendent's Report/Announcements     a. Calendar Information V. Consent Agenda (may also include donations, resolutions, contract agreements, etc.)     a. Approval of minutes     b. Approval of Personnel     c. Amendment to operating budget     d. Nomination resolution for VSBA honor roll     e. Award of contract for health insurance     f. Renewal of access authorization and premium rates for dental insurance provider     g. Field trip requests VI. Information Items     a. Status of preliminary report on 2005-2006 SOL test performance     b. Annual report on student attendance and truancy enforcement     c. Annual report on homebound education     d. Annual energy management report     e. Cafeteria report     f. Capital improvement update VII. Action Items     a. Policy IC/ID, "School Year/School Day" VIII. Adjournment</p>
--

Source: Created by Evergreen Solutions, 2006.



## FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

## FINDING

The ACPS Board meets once a month on a regular basis, with additional meetings called as needed. The meetings are properly publicized with agendas distributed in advance to Board members. The members of the School Board generally receive their agendas, with supporting back-up material, one week prior to the meeting.

The Board agenda, without back-up materials, is distributed to the newspapers, libraries and radio stations. The Superintendent's Office publishes Board Bits monthly. This document contains a detailed summary of Board meetings from the prior month. The minutes of Board meetings are posted on the division's Web site, as are the agendas. None of the related documents that are used to guide the Board's discussions and actions are included on the division's Web site.

## RECOMMENDATION

### Recommendation 2-2:

**Expand the online agendas to include handouts and related documents that are provided to the School Board.**

The availability of the Board agenda complete with back-up materials on the ACPS Web site will provide ready access to all Board materials. These efforts will ensure that staff and parents have access to information prior to Board meetings, so that public input can be maximized. Making agendas and related documents accessible also creates good will in the community.

## FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

## 2.2 POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

The Code of Virginia (Section 22.1-253.13:7) specifies that each local school board maintain and follow up-to-date policies that should be reviewed at least every five years. In addition, this section of the Code states that each Board will address the following:

- *a system of two-way communication between employees and the local board and administrative staff;*
- *the selection and evaluation of all instructional materials;*



- *the standards of student conduct and attendance;*
- *school-community communications and community involvement;*
- *guidelines for parents to provide instructional assistance to their children in the home;*
- *information about procedures for addressing concerns;*
- *a cooperatively-developed procedure for personnel evaluation; and*
- *grievance and dismissal procedures of teachers.*

The Code further states that copies of the policies must be kept at each school and in every public library, and made available to employees and the general public.

Policies and procedures are an important vehicle for communicating expectations to students and employees. In addition, policies and procedures provide a way to:

- establish a distinction between Board policymaking and procedures development by the administration;
- provide guidelines for personnel and students to use;
- provide some assurance of consistency and continuity in decision making by staff;
- help orient board members and employees to the school division; and
- assist the general public in understanding how decisions are made.

Board policies are an important tool for a school board and should be stated clearly enough to provide appropriate direction to the staff.

## **FINDING**

The coordination of policy development in Allegheny County Public Schools is managed through the Superintendent's Office. The Board Policy Manual addresses all the major provisions specified in Code. A review of the policy manual by Evergreen consultants found that Allegheny County Public Schools uses the policy service provided by the Virginia School Board Association (VSBA) to update its manual. The manual is updated continually, using VSBA as a source.

The ACPS Policy Manual includes the 11 sections shown in **Exhibit 2-4**.

A review of ACPS Board minutes indicates that policies are routinely updated and adopted at meetings. For example, three policies were revised and adopted at the five Board meetings analyzed by Evergreen consultants.



**Exhibit 2-4  
Policy Classifications of the  
Allegheny County Public Schools Policy Manual**

Classification	Section Title
A	Foundations and Basic Commitments
B	School Board Governance and Operations
C	General School Administration
D	Fiscal Management
E	Support Services
F	Facilities Development
G	Personnel
H	Negotiations
I	Instruction
J	Students
K	School-Community Relations
L	Education Agency Relations

*Source: Allegheny County Public Schools, Board Policy Manual, 2006.*

**COMMENDATION**

**Allegheny County Public Schools is commended for its up-to-date policy manual.**

**FINDING**

There are about 40 copies of the policy manual which have been distributed throughout the school community. Each school has two copies—one in the office and one in the school library. The manual is also placed in public libraries. When new policies are adopted, the Clerk sends the changes out to the holders of the manual. The recipients must sign and return a statement stating they have made the changes to the manual.

This process can be rather cumbersome and can result in policy manuals that are not up to date. Moreover, there is no copy of the policy manual on the ACPS Web site.

**RECOMMENDATION**

**Recommendation 2-3:**

**Place the ACPS Board Policy Manual on the division’s Web site to ensure that there is easy access to all policies by division employees, parents, and the community.**

The availability of the policy manual on the ACPS Web site will provide ready access to employees and to the community at large. Many school divisions across the Commonwealth have already posted policy manuals on their Web site. These efforts ensure that staff and parents have access to up-to-date and accurate information.

**FISCAL IMPACT**

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.



## FINDING

The ACPS Board Policy Manual has many policies that require consistent standards and/or guidelines for administrators to use during the implementation of the policy. There are many procedural (or regulatory) documents incorporated into the ACPS Board Policy Manual. However, the user must read through a fairly comprehensive index to find procedures, which can be a time-consuming task.

While effective procedures are generally in use, and while some departments have developed their own procedures, there is no central listing of these procedures. For example, there is a comprehensive special education manual that includes procedures, but these are separate from other guidelines for managing student records, make-up work during suspensions and expulsions, and end-of-year progress reports. A central listing of these documents would be helpful.

## RECOMMENDATION

### Recommendation 2-4:

**Develop a comprehensive Administrative Procedures Manual that contains administrative procedures, and which can be used by school and central office administrators to ensure consistency among staff.**

This manual should include information that reflects various Board policies and appropriate departmental procedures to implement them. The manual would be an important reference tool that would be readily accessible to administrators. Sample sections should include:

- General Information
- Instruction
- Records Management
- Student Services
- Special Education
- Health Services
- Financial Procedures
- Technology
- Human Resources
- Transportation
- Maintenance
- Food Services

## FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.



### 2.3 **DIVISION ORGANIZATION AND MANAGEMENT**

How well an organization performs is in large measure a reflection of how well it is organized and managed. To determine how well the organization and management are performing, usually a set of standards are used to measure performance.

While there has been much written about effective organizations, David Hardesty, the president of West Virginia University, has recently summarized this research with the following ten characteristics:

- The mission is clearly articulated and communicates the essence of the organization to the public.
- There is a powerful vision that is well-articulated and easily understood that guides the organization into the future.
- There is an adherence to shared values throughout the organization.
- There is a balanced and cohesive group of leaders who reflect different talents and styles.
- There are clear and measurable objectives that guide the work of those within the organization.
- There are mechanisms for receiving customer feedback and input, through such strategies as focus groups, surveys, and open hot lines.
- Continuing education is a top priority in the organization.
- There is a determined pursuit of excellence.
- There is a well thought out decision-making process that involves people in a meaningful way.
- There are periodic celebrations of successes.

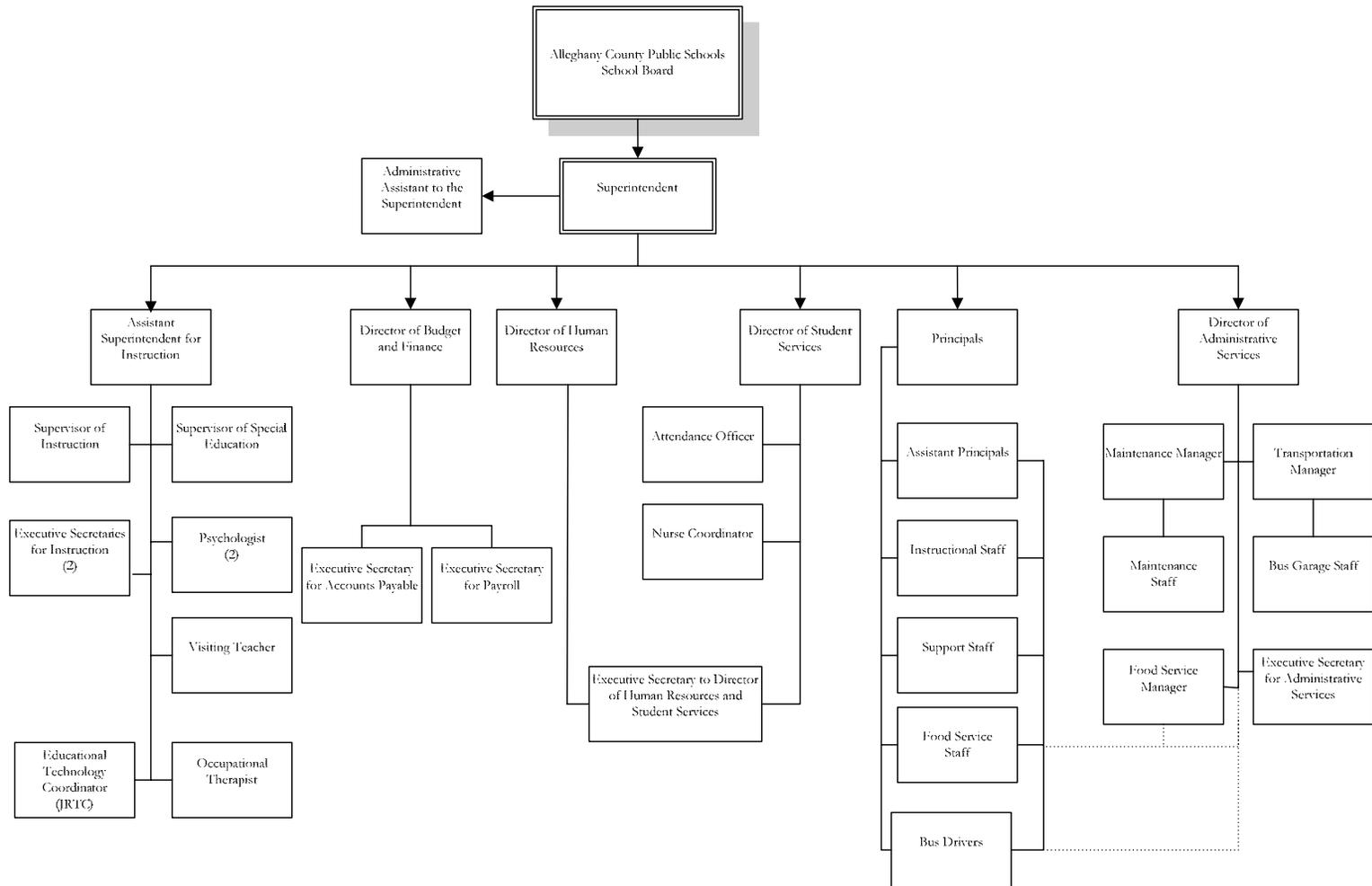
#### **FINDING**

**Exhibit 2-5** shows the current organizational chart of Alleghany County Public Schools. As shown, there are:

- an assistant superintendent, seven principals and four directors who report directly to the Superintendent;
- three managers who report directly to the Director of Administrative Services;
- two supervisors and a coordinator who report directly to the Assistant Superintendent of Instruction; and
- no administrative positions reporting directly to the Directors of Budget and Finance, Human Resources, or Student Services.



**Exhibit 2-5  
Allegheny County Public Schools  
Current Organizational Chart  
2006-07 School Year**



Source: Allegheny County Public Schools, 2006.

Job functions assigned within the current organization require that the Assistant Superintendent of Instruction directly supervise special education, testing, technology, and related services for special education. The span of control of the Assistant Superintendent is large and attention to testing and accountability is not as focused because of the large number of responsibilities typically housed within Student Services.

On the other hand, the Director of Student Services is responsible for all reporting requirements related to students, attendance, and nursing. There are no responsibilities for special education and related services that are critical elements of most student services offices.

Allegheny County Public Schools has operated with an efficient central administrative structure. Evergreen has conducted extensive surveys of division and school-level personnel on a variety to topics related to central office management. When teachers were asked to respond to the statement that the school division has too many layers of administrators, 47.3 percent of teachers *disagree* or *strongly disagree* with this statement, and only 27.1 percent *agree* or *strongly agree*. Eighty-six (86) percent of administrators *disagree* with this same statement. The general perception of teachers and administrators in Allegheny County Public Schools is that there are not excessive layers of administration.

**Exhibit 2-6** compares ACPS to peer divisions in disbursements for administration. As **Exhibit 2-6** indicates, the peer division average expenditure is \$282 per pupil, while ACPS expenditures are \$299 per pupil, or \$17 more per pupil. When ranked, however, ACPS is spending less per pupil on administration than three of its five peer divisions.

**Exhibit 2-6  
Administration Disbursements in Peer School Divisions  
Fiscal Year 2005**

School Division	Administration	Per Pupil Cost
Dickenson County	\$1,030,430	\$413
Prince Edward County	\$925,559	\$338
Southampton County	\$868,974	\$305
<b>Allegheny County</b>	<b>\$847,241</b>	<b>\$299</b>
Nottoway County	\$539,717	\$226
Patrick County	\$330,078	\$128
<b>Peer Division Average</b>	<b>\$738,952</b>	<b>\$282</b>

*Source: Virginia Department of Education, Web site, 2006.*

**RECOMMENDATION**

**Recommendation 2-5:**

**Reassign job functions within the ACPS organizational structure.**

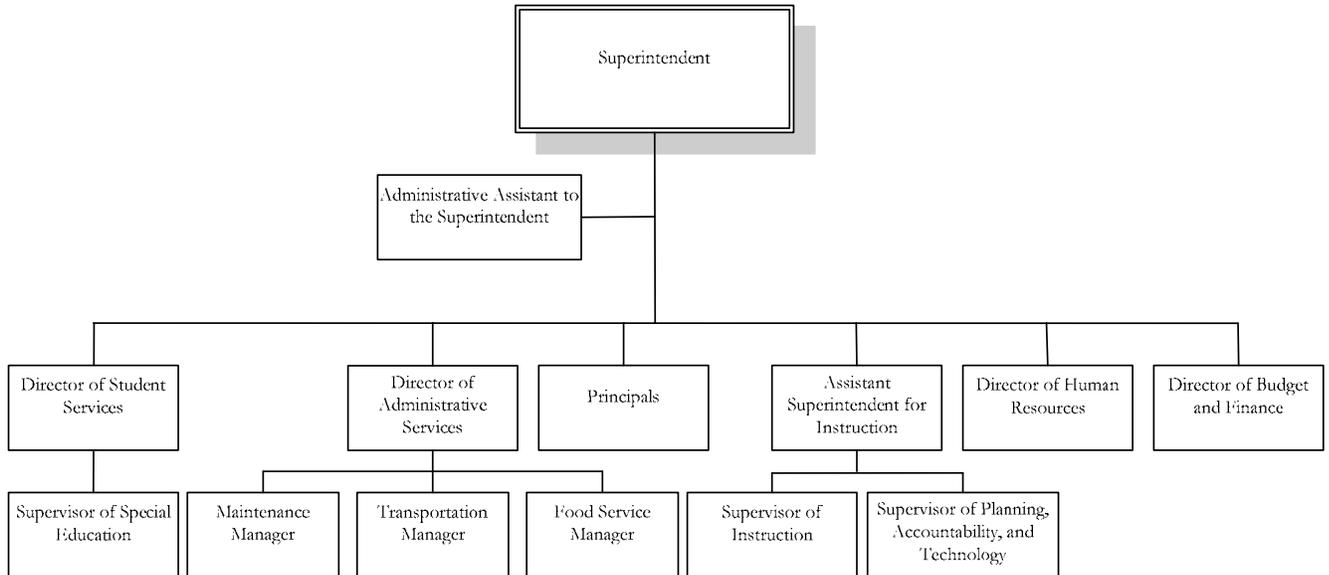
**Exhibit 2-7** presents a proposed organizational chart with the realignment of some job functions. The following actions are recommended:

- have the Supervisor of Special Education report directly to the Director of Student Services;



- have the Supervisor of Special Education report directly to the Director of Student Services; and
- have the psychologist, visiting teacher and occupational therapist report to the Supervisor of Special Education, thereby consolidating all related services into one office.

**Exhibit 2-7  
Allegheny County Public Schools  
Proposed Administrative Organizational Chart**



Source: Created by Evergreen Solutions, 2006.

Realigning these functions keeps the Instructional Office focused primarily on instructional issues. The Student Services Office would assume those responsibilities typically associated with student services in other school divisions.

**FISCAL IMPACT**

There may be a fiscal impact to this reorganization, should the Superintendent and School Board determine that salaries would need to be adjusted based on increased evaluation responsibilities of some personnel. That impact should be studied through a comprehensive salary review.

**FINDING**

Student enrollment in ACPS has been stable during the past five years, as can be seen in **Exhibit 2-8**. This enrollment has increased slightly at the elementary level, while decreasing slightly at the middle and high school levels. Yet the increased demands for accountability in school divisions across the state have grown, resulting in more responsibilities placed on existing school



division employees. Many school divisions have had to add additional personnel to meet the demands of increased testing and accountability.

Currently, much of the responsibility for testing administration and reporting falls under the Assistant Superintendent of Instruction. Many of those interviewed stated that the Assistant Superintendent must spend an inordinate amount of time out of the office attending state-level meetings to keep informed about the testing and accountability system. Without any person dedicated to this function, the assistant Superintendent must attend these meetings.

Closely related is the need to monitor the six-year plan. The six-year plan (see Section 2.5) emphasizes an increased focus on student achievement. This increased focus has created a major need for a position that can determine the extent to which goals in the plan are met as well as the extent to which various groups and subgroups of students meet specified objectives.

Finally, the growing demands for technology have led to increased demands on school personnel. Technology has an integral role in ensuring that staff can access testing and accountability results fairly easily. Currently, this function is overseen by the Assistant Superintendent. Having a staff member in this Office will facilitate the advancement of technology across the division.

**Exhibit 2-8**  
**Allegheny County Public Schools**  
**September 30th Student Enrollment By Year**  
**2001-02 through 2005-06 School Years**

Level	School Year				
	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06
Elementary	1,416	1,424	1,398	1,467	1,457
Middle	675	663	661	627	647
High	854	842	822	839	824
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,945</b>	<b>2,929</b>	<b>2,881</b>	<b>2,933</b>	<b>2,928</b>

*Source: Virginia Department of Education, Web site 2006.*

**RECOMMENDATION**

**Recommendation 2-6:**

**Establish an Office for Testing, Accountability and Technology within the Office of Instruction.**

With the increased accountability from national and local initiatives, it behooves school divisions to focus a staff position on these functions. In addition to assuming responsibility for the overall testing and accountability program, this Office should also assume responsibility for coordinating and monitoring the Six-Year Plan, coordinating grants writing, and overseeing technology.



**FISCAL IMPACT**

The cost of a position is based on a salary of \$65,623 with a fringe benefits rate of 36 percent for an annual total of \$89,247.

Recommendation	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12
Hire Planning and Accountability Supervisor	(\$89,247)	(\$89,247)	(\$89,247)	(\$89,247)	(\$89,247)

**FINDING**

Having an open communication style and a decision-making process that are inclusive is critical for success. Research from effective schools and studies of successful businesses have demonstrated that this inclusive process is an important component of organizational improvement.

ACPS is led by Superintendent Robert Grimesey. The Superintendent carries out his responsibilities through Assistant Superintendent, four directors, and seven building principals. These individuals meet twice a month to discuss a variety of topics that are pertinent to the administration and instruction within the division.

One meeting is planned by the Superintendent; the other meeting is planned by the Assistant Superintendent. The Superintendent’s meeting begin at 8:30 a.m. and can last from 2.5 to 4 hours. The Assistant Superintendent’s meeting begins at 8:30 a.m. and ends at about 11:00 a.m. An examination of the minutes from these meetings indicate that members of the administrative team take turns presenting various topics and issues to the entire group.

From the minutes, it appears that there is very little discussion around any of the topics. The number of topics that were covered, in the five meetings analyzed by Evergreen consultants, ranged from 14 topics to 36 topics, with an average of 25 topics per meeting. Minutes from the meetings suggest that much of the content of these meetings could be shared by other means, thereby being more intentional about the length of time school administrators are out of their buildings.

When staff members were surveyed regarding administrative practices and procedures, the following was revealed:

- Fewer than 27 percent of teachers *agree* that authority for administrative decisions is delegated to the lowest possible level; one of the lowest response rates in the category of division organization/management.
- Fewer than 62 percent of administrators *agree* with this same statement, again one of the lowest response rates on the survey.



## RECOMMENDATION

### Recommendation 2-7:

**Review and revise the format of the bi-monthly meetings for administrators to ensure there is adequate time for collegial discussion and decision making, and strive to decrease the time devoted to these meetings.**

If the Superintendent and his staff review the topics they are to present, they may find that many of the topics could be distributed in a memo, brief report, or email, thereby shortening the number of items on any one agenda. By shortening the agenda, there may be an opportunity to obtain input into important issues and topics facing the school division.

## FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

## FINDING

Across the nation and in the Commonwealth of Virginia, there is a concern about an impending shortage of administrators. A significant portion of the nation's principals are nearing retirement. A recent study conducted by the National Association of Secondary School Principals and the National Association of Elementary School Principals found that approximately 50 percent of surveyed districts reported a shortage of qualified candidates for administrative positions.

A Rand Research Report has indicated that a significant portion of school administrators are nearing retirement age. This report also indicates that the age at which people enter school administration has risen gradually. In 1988, 38 percent of new principals were 40 years of age or younger. In 2000, that percentage had decreased to 12 percent.

To underscore this point, the Virginia General Assembly requires the State Superintendent to identify issues related to supply and demand in both teacher and administrative areas. Several factors appear to distract teachers from entering administration, including the increased testing and accountability, the amount of stress, and the amount of time that is required. Another factor is related to the lack of preparation for administration. Reports continually stress the need to identify and prepare employees with leadership potential.

ACPS offers a variety of professional development opportunities to its staff, and has also begun to offer a leadership academy.

## COMMENDATION

**Allegheny County Public Schools is commended for offering a Leadership Academy for administrators and aspiring administrators.**



The administration should also consider ways to expand the leadership academy topics, including the division's special education plan, the strategic plan, cultural competency, management of student records, *No Child Left Behind* requirements, data analysis, and data reporting requirements. Topics could also include leadership styles and decision-making processes. ACPS may want to expand the academy to include neighboring school divisions.

## FINDING

Best practices indicate that periodic assessment of employees and client groups is essential to ensure that an organization operates in a continuous improvement mode. Information gleaned from these assessments can help the agency make necessary adjustments in order to ensure there is continuous improvement.

Allegheny County Public Schools conducted a telephone survey of parent and community members during the 2005-06 school year. Virginia Tech Center for Survey Research conducted the survey by making 1,900 phone calls in the community. Of these 1,900 calls, there were 738 interviews. The survey results were discussed at the February 2006 Board meeting and placed on the ACPS Web site. Administrators are now using the survey results to determine what areas they need to address.

## COMMENDATION

**Allegheny County Public Schools is commended for initiating a survey of parents and community members.**

## FINDING

Best practices indicate that the periodic assessment of employee groups is also essential to ensure that an organization operates in a continuous improvement mode. How employees feel about their jobs, their peers, and management can affect their individual productivity and the ability of the agency to achieve its objectives.

An important part of an organization's growth is its ability to monitor the organizational climate to ensure that it maintains focus on continuous improvement. Many businesses and organizations routinely survey their employees to obtain important input and feedback that helps shape future goals and strategies. Indeed, this is a critical characteristic of a highly effective organization.

Allegheny County Public Schools administers an organizational climate survey every three years to its employees. This employee information help management to ascertain the extent of issues or concerns related to organizational within the school community.

## COMMENDATION

**Allegheny County Public Schools is commended for administering an organizational climate survey to all ACPS employees on a regular basis.**



## 2.4 SCHOOL MANAGEMENT

The primary focus in any school division is on the education of its students. The delivery of educational services occurs at the school level through prescribed curricula and programs. School-level management is critical to the success of a school division. The parameters for school-level management decisions typically include scheduling, safety and security, student discipline, employee retention, and school climate. In order to support schools as they strive to achieve their goals, divisions typically adopt standards to determine how positions should be budgeted and assigned. Having appropriate staffing in place is critical to ensure schools are managed effectively and efficiently.

In addition, one of the emerging management and organizational models in both the public and private sectors is one called site-based management. In this model, teams of individuals who actually provide the services are given decision-making authority and are held accountable for the results. The school as the focal point for change is emphasized throughout *No Child Left Behind*.

The rationale for this model includes the following:

- The school is the primary unit of change; those who work directly with students have the most informed opinions about what will be most beneficial.
- Significant and lasting improvements take considerable time; local school personnel are in the best position to sustain improvements over time.
- Site-based management supports the professionalization of the teaching profession, which leads to more desirable outcomes.
- The school principal is a key figure in school improvement.

Site-based management is expected to result in higher student performance, more efficient use of resources, increased satisfaction and skills of school-based personnel, and greater involvement and support of the school division.

### FINDING

The materials given to Evergreen consultants indicate that ACPS use staffing standards provided by the Virginia Standards of Quality as guidelines. The Virginia Standards of Quality (SOQ) recommend the following principal/assistant principal allocations as minimum standards:

- Elementary Schools: One half-time principal to 299 students, one full-time principal at 300 students, one half-time assistant principal at 600 students, and one full-time assistant principal at 900 students.
- Middle Schools: One full-time principal employed on a 12-month basis and one full-time assistant principal for each 600 students.
- High Schools: One full-time principal employed on a 12-month basis and one full-time assistant principal for each 600 students.



In ACPS, each school is assigned a full-time principal. In addition, the high school is assigned three full-time assistant principals. As can be seen, **Exhibit 2-9** shows the placement of assistant principals. As can be seen, Allegheny County Public Schools staffs building administrative positions at the secondary level well beyond those recommended by the SOQ.

**Exhibit 2-9**  
**ACPS Assistant Principal Positions**  
**2006-07 School Year**

School	Level	Student Population	Assistant Principals	VA SOQ Standard
Boiling Spring	K-5	156	0	.5 @ 600 students 1.0 @ 900 students
Callaghan	K-5	224	0	.5 @ 600 students 1.0 @ 900 students
Falling Spring	K-5	188	0	.5 @ 600 students 1.0 @ 900 students
Mountain View	K-5	621	1	.5 @ 600 students 1.0 @ 900 students
Sharon	K-5	216	0	.5 @ 600 students 1.0 @ 900 students
Clifton Middle	6-8	680	2	1.0 for each 600 students
Allegheny High	9-12	838	3*	1.0 AP for each 600 students

Source: Virginia Department of Education, Web site, and Allegheny County Public Schools

\*One assistant principal functions as the athletic director.

As an additional comparison, the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS) is the regional accrediting agency for the Southeastern United States. In its *Accreditation Standards 2005: For Public Schools Serving Students in Kindergarten Through Grade 12*, SACS outlines the assistant principal staffing standards schools should maintain, based on current research and national best practices. Schools and districts that wish to earn or maintain SACS accreditation must meet these standards.

**Exhibit 2-10** provides the SACS standards. As the exhibit shows, elementary schools should have one assistant principal once enrollment reaches 750. Middle and secondary schools should have one assistant principal once enrollment reaches 500 and two once enrollment reaches 1,000 students.

**Exhibit 2-10**  
**Southern Association of Colleges and Schools**  
**Recommended School Administrative Staffing Guidelines**

Staff Category	School Enrollment					
	1 - 249	250 – 499	500 – 749	750 – 999	1000 – 1249	1250 - 1499
Principal	1	1	1	1	1	1
Assistant Principal	0	0.5 0 (elementary)	1 0.5 (elementary)	1.5 1 (elementary)	2 1.5 (elementary)	2.5 2 (elementary)

Source: Southern Association of Colleges and Schools, *Accreditation Standards 2005: For Public Schools Serving Students in Kindergarten Through Grade 12*, 2005.



As can be seen in **Exhibit 2-11**, the ACPS staffing ratio for principals and assistant principals is well above the peer division average and state average for staffing principal and assistant principal positions. The division ratio of building administrators to students is 1:225 students.

**Exhibit 2-11**  
**ACPS Principals and Assistant Principals**  
**Per 1,000 Students**  
**Fiscal Year 2005**

School Division	Total Principals and Assistant Principals per 1,000 Students
Allegheny County	4.48
Dickenson County	3.57
Nottoway County	3.76
Patrick County	4.08
Prince Edward County	3.33
Southampton County	3.57
<b>Peer Division Average</b>	<b>3.66</b>
<b>State Average</b>	<b>3.90</b>

*Source: Virginia Department of Education, Web site, 2006.*

**RECOMMENDATION**

**Recommendation 2-8:**

**Consider the elimination of one assistant principal at Clifton Middle School and one assistant principal at Allegheny High School.**

**Exhibits 2-10 and 2-11** show excess staffing in assistant principal positions. By eliminating two assistant principal positions, ACPS can save substantial dollars and redirect them towards other pressing educational needs.

**FISCAL IMPACT**

The cost of a position at the high school is based on a salary of \$66,300 with a fringe benefits rate of \$23,868, for an annual total of \$90,168. The cost of a position at the middle school is based on a salary of \$64,708 with a fringe benefits rate of \$23,295, for an annual total of \$88,003. Together, the total savings is \$178,171 per year.

Recommendation	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12
Consider Elimination of Two Assistant Principal Positions	\$178,171	\$178,171	\$178,171	\$178,171	\$178,171



**FINDING**

Site-based management in Allegheny County Public Schools can be strengthened. A review of the meetings held with key administrative staff indicates that decisions are not made at meetings, nor is there much evidence that school administrators are involved in many decisions. In addition, the teacher survey results suggested that decisions are made at the central office level with minimum input from schools.

Conversations with key administrators support this. Some administrative staff members indicated that programs were added, with little opportunity for input. As one administrator commented, it would be helpful to know these changes ahead of time so that adjustments could be made. The art program, for example, was added after school ended. Field trip approvals must go through several layers prior to approval. Curricular changes are forwarded through administrative channels, with few curriculum committees in place to approve or disprove changes.

**Exhibit 2-12** shows the comparison data of administrators and teachers on Evergreen’s survey. As can be seen:

- While close to 62 percent of administrators *agree* with the statement that “authority for administrative decisions is delegated to the lowest possible level”, only 26.7 percent of teachers agree, one of the lowest rated responses on the survey.
- While slightly over 95 percent of administrators *agree* that “school-based personnel play an important role in making decisions that affect schools in the division”, only 56.5 percent of teachers *agree*, again a lower response than other items on the survey.
- While 71.4 percent of administrators *agree* that “site-based budgeting is used effectively to extend the involvement of principals and teachers”, only 29.9 percent of teachers *agree*. This item is rated lower than other items on the survey.

**Exhibit 2-12  
Administrators and Teacher Survey Results in the  
Allegheny County Public Schools and Districts in Evergreen’s Survey Database**

Survey Statement	ACPS Administrators	Administrators in Evergreen’s Survey Database	ACPS Teachers	Teachers in Evergreen’s Survey Database
Authority for administrative decisions delegated to lowest possible level.	61.9%	48.5%	26.7%	26.0%
School based personnel plan important role in making decisions.	95.2%	86.4%	56.5%	51.7%
Site-based budgeting is used effectively.	71.4%	46.2%	29.9%	39.8%

Source: *Evergreen Solutions Survey Results, 2006.*



## RECOMMENDATION

### Recommendation 2-9:

#### **Augment site-based management for decision making in Allegheny County Public Schools.**

Site-based management is a way to structure internal relationships so that more authority and accountability is placed in the school. It is viewed as a major component of school reform efforts and a way to help improve student achievement. In this decentralized model, decision-making authority is given to the team of individuals who actually provide the service. It is an emerging management and organizational model in both the public and private sector. Site-based management also results in increased skills and satisfaction in school administrators and teachers.

### FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

## 2.5 PLANNING AND ACCOUNTABILITY

Strategic planning is an important management tool that is used for several reasons:

- it helps an organization focus its energy;
- it ensures that all members of the organization are working towards the same goals; and
- it allows the organization to adjust its direction in response to a changing environment.

Effective strategic planning:

- leads to action;
- builds a shared vision that is based upon shared values;
- is an inclusive, participatory process in which Board and staff have shared ownership;
- promotes accountability to the community;
- is based on quality data;
- requires an openness to questioning the status quo; and
- is a key part of effective management.

Strategic planning is different from long-range planning in its emphasis. Long-range planning generally includes the development of a plan for accomplishing a set of goals over a period of several years. Long-range planning assumes that the current knowledge about the future is sufficiently reliable. Long-range planning is typically done by a few people in positions of leadership.

Strategic planning assumes that an organization must be responsive to a constantly changing, dynamic environment. Strategic planning emphasizes the importance of making decisions that will ensure the organization can response to these changes. As such, a strategic plan is a



document that changes as circumstances change. Strategic planning is essential for school divisions to improve in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century.

A strong strategic plan includes the following components:

- a mission statement that answers the question: “why do we exist?”;
- a vision statement that answers the question “What will success look like?” (This vision statement is often what inspires a group to achieve its mission);
- a set of overarching goals with specific strategies designed to help reach the goals;
- an action plan that specifies timelines and responsibilities; and
- an evaluation plan that includes specific measurable outcomes to determine the attainment of goals.

## FINDING

Allegheny County Public Schools has developed a six-year plan for 2006-2012, which was adopted by the School Board in December 2005. The plan has five major goals covering:

- instruction;
- character;
- human resources;
- parent and community involvement; and
- capital improvement.

Each goal has a list of objectives as well as an identified way to measure each objective. Before adopting the plan, the Board also assessed the attainment of goals and objectives from the prior plan.

Input and feedback was widely solicited prior to adoption of the plan. Input was received from the community, staff and Board members prior to adoption. Community representatives included members of the Teacher Advisory Committee, the Minority Advisory Committee, and the Parent Advisory Committee. Staff input was solicited from all classifications of employees. In addition, copies of the proposed plan were placed in each school. A copy of the plan was also placed in the *Virginian Review*. Prior to adoption, the Board advertised and held a public hearing. The strategic planning process took six months.

Survey results found that 63.6 percent of the division’s teachers *agree* with the statement that “the division’s strategic plan guides daily decision making”, compared to 60.6 percent in the comparison group of teachers. Similarly, 77.2 percent of teachers *agree* with the statement that “I know how my work activities and objectives ties to the division’s strategic plan, compared to 66.8 percent of teachers in comparison districts. Conversations with employees and Board members supported this belief.



ACPS employees and Board members were very aware of the six-year plan and the goals it contained.

A review of minutes from Board meetings indicates that progress towards the goals in the plan is periodically reviewed by the School Board.

### **COMMENDATION**

**Allegheny County Public Schools is commended for having a Six-Year Plan that was developed with broad-based community input and that is reviewed frequently by the School Board.**

### **FINDING**

While the six-year plan is well developed and executed, it can be improved. There are strategic planning components missing from the ACPS Plan. A comprehensive strategic planning process brings students, staff, and community together to develop a shared vision and mission as well as articulate overarching goals and strategies to guide the entire division for the future. In addition, the plan specifies how to evaluate the accomplishment of the goals and includes an action plan with specific timelines and persons responsible.

### **RECOMMENDATION**

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

**Modify the strategic planning process during the next planning cycle to incorporate more strategic planning.**

The modified process should involve a broad cross-section of the community, and include a mission, vision, goals, strategies, as well as an action plan with a timeline, persons responsible, and evaluation measures by which goals and objectives can be evaluated.

A comprehensive strategic planning process brings students, staff, and community together to develop a shared vision and mission as well as articulate overarching goals and strategies to guide the entire district for the future. A good strategic plan reflects the importance of each department in the school division. In addition, the plan specifies how to evaluate the accomplishment of the goals. The strategic planning process brings these groups together to revise and modify these written goals and strategies on a frequent basis.

### **FISCAL IMPACT**

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

### **FINDING**

In recent years, there has been renewed interest in the role of personnel evaluation and its relationship to school improvement. Personnel evaluation allows educators to determine the quality of how well they perform as well as gain direction for improving their performance.



Evaluation can be a powerful tool for communicating the expectations of the division and for ensuring employees continue to grow.

The evaluation of employees is one of the most important responsibilities that an administrator has. Recognizing this responsibility, the administration in Allegheny County Public Schools has recently engaged in a systematic effort to improve the division's teacher evaluation system. Staff members have recently engaged in ongoing staff development on teacher evaluation and the most up-to-date models. As a result, the teacher evaluation system has recently been revised.

Teachers in Allegheny County Public Schools generally report that they are evaluated and held accountable for students learning. Slightly over 88 percent of teachers *agree* to the statement that "teachers are held accountable for ensuring students learn" (compared to 73.9 percent of teachers in the comparison group). Additionally, 87 percent of teachers *agree* with the statement that "division employees receive annual personnel evaluations" (compared to 94 percent of teachers in the comparison group). These two statements revealed some of the highest ratings on the survey. This response rate may also be correlated to the high rating that teachers give personnel evaluation overall, with 70.6 percent of teachers state that it was *adequate or outstanding*. The results of teacher evaluations are reported to the central office administrators for review.

In addition, administrators are also evaluated with a model evaluation system available through the Virginia Department of Education. Interviews and review of pertinent records indicate that specific performance targets are set each year. Administrators are then evaluated on the attainment of these targets. It is clear from other interviews with administrators that there is a "culture of accountability" throughout Allegheny County Public Schools.

Goals for the Superintendent are also set on an annual basis. In addition, the Superintendent is evaluated in writing by the School Board on a yearly basis.

## COMMENDATION

**Allegheny County Public Schools is commended for establishing a culture of accountability throughout the entire division by ensuring that all employees are evaluated annually.**

## FINDING

The National School Boards Association has identified several key works of the School Board. One of these focuses on the need to establish a strong accountability process and indicates that school boards should:

*...measure the performance of all school staff members, administrators and the school board itself against student achievement objectives.*

A School Board self-evaluation can be very useful. The intent of a self-evaluation is to improve the performance of others within the division by improving the performance of the Board. There are several reasons why self-evaluation is important, but perhaps the most critical is that it



promotes the concept of accountability throughout the division with the Board setting the example.

A sample Board self-evaluation is shown in **Exhibit 2-13**.

**Exhibit 2-13**  
**Sample Board Self-Assessment Instrument**

	<b>Considerations</b>	<b>Adequate</b>	<b>Needs Improvement</b>
1.	The Board has a common understanding of its roles and responsibilities		
2.	Board members understand the mission and programs of the division.		
3.	The relationship of the members to staff is clear.		
4.	The Board attends to policy decisions which guide the staff's activities.		
5.	The board receives regular reports on finances, programs, and other important matters.		
6.	The Board has approved comprehensive personnel policies.		
7.	The Board regularly evaluates and develops the Superintendent.		
8.	The Board regularly monitors and evaluates progress towards its strategic goals.		
9.	The Board's discussions are confined to published agenda items.		
10.	Board members follow parliamentary procedures during meetings.		
11.	All members of the Board are prepared for discussion by reading materials ahead of time.		
12.	Our meetings are business-like and cordial.		

Source: Created by Evergreen Solutions, 2006.

**RECOMMENDATION**

**Recommendation 2-11:**

**Consider a yearly self-evaluation by the School Board.**

An evaluation process that includes all levels of an organization is critical to establishing accountability throughout the organization. While the Board receives high marks from its constituents, it is important for the governing body to engage in a process of continual self-evaluation to ensure that it continues to serve its constituents in an effective manner.

**FISCAL IMPACT**

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

**2.6 LEGAL SERVICES**

School divisions obtain legal services in one of two ways: through in-house counsel or with outside firms or attorneys. Larger school systems can generally obtain services of one large diversified firm that can handle the variety of needs; smaller divisions usually depend on more than one firm. Because of the unique nature of school divisions and local governments, it is not



unusual in Virginia for school divisions to secure their services from the city or county in which they reside. Fees for services can vary widely, depending upon the location and specialization required.

Section 22.1-82 of the Code of Virginia allows school divisions 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....All costs and expenses of such advice and all costs, expenses and liabilities of such proceedings shall be paid out of funds appropriated to the school board.*

**FINDING**

Legal services are provided to the Allegheny County Public Schools by Reed Smith of Richmond in matters related to personnel and student affairs, and Guynn, Dillon and Miller of Roanoke in matters regarding contracts, property acquisitions, and other business issues.

**Exhibit 2-14** shows the division’s legal expenses for the past three years.

**Exhibit 2-14  
Allegheny County Public Schools  
Legal Expenses  
2003-04 through 2005-06 School Years**

Legal Fees	School Years		
	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06
	\$10,838	\$12,705	\$6,328

Source: Allegheny County Public Schools, Finance Office, November 2006.

When comparing the legal expenses in ACPS with those of other school divisions in the peer group, average costs are less that of the comparison group average in two of the three years shown. In the most recent year (2005-06), the cost of legal services is less than any other division in the comparison group.

**Exhibit 2-15** shows each peer division’s per student legal expenses for the past three years.

**Exhibit 2-15  
Comparison Legal Expenses Per Student  
Allegheny County Public Schools and Peer School Divisions  
2003-04 through 2005-06 School Years**

School Division	Legal Expenses Per Student		
	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06
Allegheny	\$3.76	\$4.33	\$2.16
Nottoway	\$4.56	\$9.22	\$10.95
Patrick	\$2.22	\$5.39	\$4.04
Prince Edward	n/a	\$1.80	\$2.96
<b>Average</b>	<b>\$3.51</b>	<b>\$5.19</b>	<b>\$5.03</b>

Source: Allegheny County Public Schools, Finance Office, and Peer Divisions, November 2006.



ACPS reports that they have contained legal expenditures through the following proactive strategies:

- no attorney is on retainer;
- consultation with attorneys before problems arise; and
- staff development for administrators regarding legal services.

Based on ACPS legal fees during the past three years, these efforts appear to have been effective.

### **COMMENDATION**

**Allegheny County Public Schools is commended for minimizing expenditures for legal services.**



**CHAPTER 3:  
HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGEMENT**



*Chapter 3*

***HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGEMENT***

This chapter reviews personnel and human resources management of Allegheny County Public Schools (ACPS) in the following six sections:

- 3.1 Organization and Management
- 3.2 Personnel Policies and Procedures
- 3.3 Job Descriptions and Personnel Records
- 3.4 Employment of Staff
- 3.5 Employee Compensation
- 3.6 Professional Development

**CHAPTER SUMMARY**

ACPS is a mid-size school division with approximately 500 employees, including 248 teachers and seven schools serving slightly more than 2,900 students. Human resources functions are performed by the Director of Human Resources and the Executive Secretary to the Director of Human Resources and Student Services.

The division is commended for:

- incorporating reasonable and measurable goals into its comprehensive plan related to personnel and human resources;
- addressing teacher recruitment and retention issues by obtaining grants from the Allegheny Foundation and applying these funds to teacher recruitment collateral and the Allegheny Induction and Mentoring Program (AIM);
- proactively addressing minority recruitment and retention in the division through the Minority Advisory Committee; and
- developing and administering a comprehensive annual bus driver training.

Recommendations in this chapter are intended to refine existing division processes and practices, and to provide guidance for the establishment of others. Primary recommendations in this chapter include:

- fully implement the personnel component of the RDA system;
- revise current Board policy on overtime to provide guidance to supervisors on scheduling employees for overtime work;
- develop and adhere to a records retention and destruction policy related to personnel records;



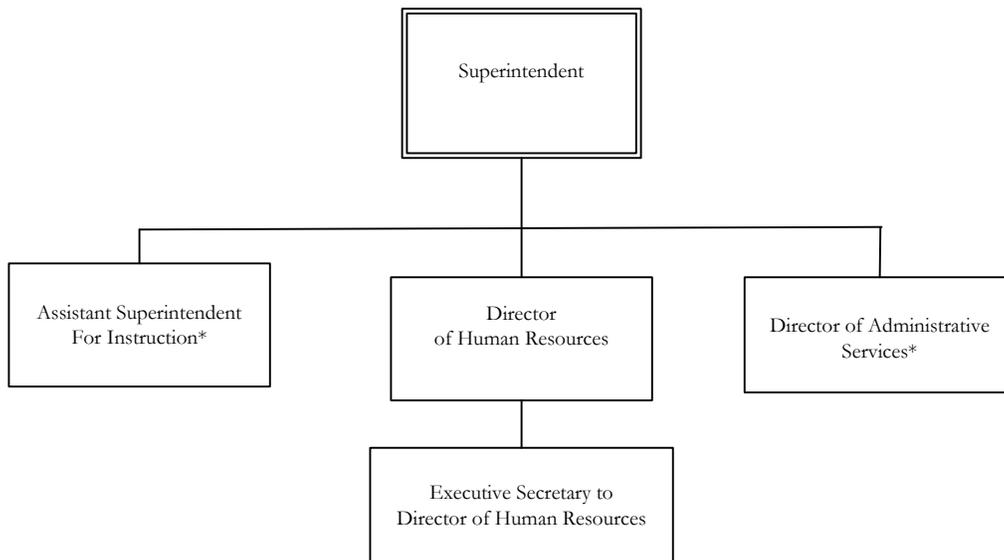
- abolish annual contracts for classified employees;
- develop a comprehensive Employee Handbook, provide the Handbook to all new employees, and publish the Handbook electronically for all employees;
- collect and track data related to recruitment and advertising vacant positions; and
- conduct a comprehensive compensation and classification study to ensure internal equity and market competitiveness.

### 3.1 ORGANIZATION AND MANAGEMENT

The Director of Human Resources works closely with the Superintendent to administer personnel-related functions in the division. With the exception of professional development responsibilities, which are distributed among several staff members, the Director of Human Resources and the Executive Secretary to the Director of Human Resources and Student Services maintain responsibility for all personnel functions of the division.

The organizational chart depicted in **Exhibit 3-1** includes those job titles of division positions that perform human resources-related duties, including the two additional positions performing professional development activities.

**Exhibit 3-1**  
**Organization of ACPS Human Resources Office**



Source: Alleghany County Public Schools, 2006.  
\* Performs some professional development duties.



## FINDING

Allegheny County Public Schools recently purchased RDA Systems software for financial and personnel management, but at the time of the on-site visit, the division has implemented only the financial management component.

RDA Systems provides three modules for education users, including:

- Financial Management,
- Human Resources, and
- Procurement.

Division staff indicated to Evergreen Solutions consultants that the components purchased for Human Resources had limited functionality and had not been implemented due to a lack of employee time available to enter data into the new system. Licensure information and payroll information have been entered into the system for all employees, but other personnel data have not been entered.

According to the RDA Systems Web site, the personnel component offers a way for school divisions to collect and manage a variety of personnel statistics. **Exhibit 3-2** provides a list of the statistics available in the personnel component purchased by ACPS. Additional pieces, such as the applicant tracking functionality, were not purchased by ACPS.

### Exhibit 3-2 RDA XPERT Education Personnel Component Data Points

- User-defined matrix of personnel statistics including:
  - Original Hire Date
  - Fair Labor Standards
  - Termination Codes
  - EEO Codes
  - Education History
  - Job Skills
  - SSN
  - Emergency Contacts
  - Certification Types
- Alpha-numeric personnel ID for easy recognition of employee records and data
- Maintain citizenship information for each employee
- Maintains dependent information file
- Track hire date and consecutive /cumulative years of employment
- Track virtually all personnel-related information
- Interactive Design Tools for tracking personnel related information
- Standard Reports:
 

– Personnel Master Report	– Employee Status Report
– Employee Directories	– Location Report
– Birth Date Reports	– Skills Report
– Seniority Reports	– Illness History
– Grievance History	– Affirmative Action Reports
– EEO Reporting	

Source: RDA Systems Web site, 2006.



By collecting comprehensive employee data electronically, the division can track crucial employee information and produce necessary reports for the Board and state and federal agencies. Evergreen Solutions consultants were told that it would take approximately six months for a temporary employee to become acquainted with the system and enter all appropriate data.

**RECOMMENDATION**

**Recommendation 3-1:**

**Fully implement the Human Resources component of the RDA Systems that the division has purchased.**

The division should implement the Human Resources component of RDA. Given the limited staffing in the Human Resources Department, it would not be feasible to expect the Human Resources Director and Executive Secretary to enter in all appropriate data.

**FISCAL IMPACT**

The division should consider having another staff person with time available to enter the information. If this is not feasible, the division should hire a temporary employee to key in the data. Assuming the division can pay a temporary agency approximately \$15 per hour for a data entry temporary employee, and the employee would need approximately 950 hours, the data could be entered for approximately \$14,250.

<b>Recommendation</b>	<b>2007-08</b>	<b>2008-09</b>	<b>2009-10</b>	<b>2010-11</b>	<b>2011-12</b>
Implement Human Resources RDA Component	(\$14,250)	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0

**FINDING**

In December 2005, the Allegheny County School Board approved the division’s six-year plan, called the “Comprehensive Improvement Plan,” to provide goals for the division in the coming years in the areas of student achievement, character development, parents and community, capital improvement, and human resources.

The overall human resources mission as noted in the plan is that, “All certified and classified employees will demonstrate positive morale and effective performance.”

The nine individual objectives listed in the plan are shown in **Exhibit 3-3**.

The outlined goals include a wide variety of human resources-related issues, including salary competitiveness, minority recruitment and retention, tuition assistance, employee wellness, and employee communication.



**Exhibit 3-3**  
**Goal III: Human Resources, ACPS Comprehensive Improvement Plan**  
**2006-2012**

**Objectives**

1. Refine the school board recognition program for employees to ensure that commendations maintain a group focus and underscore the degree to which individual achievements represent the achievements of all employees. Continue to recognize staff service in five-year intervals.
2. Maintain salaries and benefits that rate at least in the top half of the eight Virginia school divisions that are most compatible to Alleghany County in terms of rural county design, composite index, and average daily membership.
3. Maintain effective two-way communication with all employees through a variety of methods, such as visibility of school board members and administrators, conduct of school board meetings in schools, a teacher advisory committee, a classified employee advisory committee, surveys, and Board Bits.
4. Conduct an annual review of tuition assistance and other activities to enhance professional development.
5. Conduct an annual review of administrative activity to recruit and retain minority personnel.
6. Conduct an annual review and modification of employee evaluation procedures and products to ensure accountability on the part of all employees.
7. Ensure that all applicable teachers and instructional assistants are “highly qualified” by June 30, 2006.
8. Develop a consensus concerning the school nursing program and develop a plan to transition program costs away from dependence on funding from the Alleghany Foundation.
9. Establish a system of communication that expands employee understanding of the benefits of their health insurance plan and raises employee awareness of the benefits of mental and physical fitness to fiscal costs and long-term happiness.

*Source: Alleghany County Public Schools, 2006.*

**COMMENDATION**

**Alleghany County Public Schools is commended for incorporating reasonable and measurable goals in its comprehensive plan related to personnel and human resources.**

**3.2 PERSONNEL POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**

An organization may be measured by the clear mission, strategic plan, and policies that are in place. The effectiveness of the organization’s management of resources and the accountability it assumes for the delivery of services and outcomes are grounded in the policies and procedures of that organization. Personnel policies and procedures must be up to date and clearly articulated.



## **FINDING**

Some job classifications in Alleghany County Public Schools may be incorrectly categorized according to the Federal Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA).

Alleghany County School Board Policy GAA, Staff Time Schedules, outlines the division's FLSA compliance. In addition to defining the work week, typical work schedule, and how overtime and compensatory time are handled in the division, the policy identifies sample exempt and non-exempt positions. The division does not keep this information in an easy-reference electronic format.

The Fair Labor Standards Act provides exemptions from overtime pay for employees who perform executive, administrative, professional, or computer job duties. These employees must meet certain minimum requirements related to their essential job functions and must be specific salary requirements to be considered exempt. Revisions to FLSA regulations went into effect in 2004, requiring organizations to conduct a review of the FLSA status of positions related to the new regulations.<sup>1</sup>

The requirements a position must meet to be considered exempt under the administrative exemption, include an employee:

- whose salary is at least \$455 per week;
- whose primary duty is the performance of office or non-manual work directly related to the management or general business operations of the employer or the employer's customers; and
- whose primary duty includes the exercise of discretion and independent judgment with respect to matters of significance.

The division may need to review current FLSA determinations for positions to ensure the status is correct and the correct exemptions are cited, where necessary. By maintaining an updated and comprehensive list of positions and their associated FLSA determinations, division leaders can ensure they are correctly adhering to federal labor laws.

Since this review did not include a comprehensive Fair Labor Standards Act review of classification titles in the division, and since current FLSA determinations are not available as part of current ACPS job descriptions, it cannot be determined as part of this review whether the division has correctly categorized positions as exempt or non-exempt. However, qualitative information provided to Evergreen Solutions consultants by some division employees indicated there may be some misclassified positions present in the division.

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<sup>1</sup> *Federal Register, Part II, "Defining and Delimiting the Exemptions for Executive, Administrative, Professional, Outside Sales and Computer Employees; Final Rule," April 23, 2004, 29 CFR Part 541.*



**RECOMMENDATION**

**Recommendation 3-2:**

**Review FLSA status of each position in the division and maintain updated status in an electronic file for easy reference.**

The division should review the FLSA status of each position using the new Department of Labor guidelines, revised in 2004. Should the division need assistance in conducting the review, the cost to hire an expert would be minimal considering the relatively small number of positions.

**FISCAL IMPACT**

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

**FINDING**

The ACPS School Board regulations for addressing additional time worked by employees classified as non-exempt according to the FLSA are captured in Board Policy GAA, Staff Time Schedules. The Overtime and Compensatory Time Section provides specific guidelines for handling non-exempt employee schedules and hours worked. The Board policy on overtime and compensatory time is provided in **Exhibit 3-4**.

**Exhibit 3-4  
ACPS Board Policy GAA, Overtime and Compensatory Time**

The Alleghany County School Board discourages overtime work by non-exempt employees. A non-exempt employee will not work overtime without the expressed written approval of his/her supervisor in advance of working the overtime, except in an emergency situation. All overtime work must be expressly approved in writing by the superintendent or his/her designee. In emergency situations, verbal approval may be given but must be followed by written approval by the supervisor when timesheets are submitted. Employees who intentionally work unauthorized overtime, as well as supervisors who fail to prevent employees from working unauthorized overtime, may be subject to disciplinary action. All supervisory personnel must monitor overtime on a weekly basis and report such time to the superintendent or his/her designee. Principals and supervisors will monitor employees' work, will ensure that overtime provisions of this policy and the Fair Labor Standards Act are followed, and will ensure that all employees are compensated for any overtime worked. Principals or supervisors may need to adjust daily or weekly schedules to prevent non-exempt employees from working more than 40 hours in a workweek.

*Source: Alleghany County Public Schools, Board Policy Manual, 2006.*

Evergreen consultants were told during the on-site visits that some supervisors in the division may be providing overtime work to some employees consistently and frequently, and not providing this opportunity to other employees. While this practice is not prohibited by FLSA regulations, it may be considered by some employees as an unfair compensation practice and may be contributing to employee morale issues.

Multiple employees told Evergreen Solutions consultants that they felt some employees reaped the benefits of overtime work and associated pay, while other employees were never offered an



opportunity to earn overtime pay. This appears to be creating some employee morale problems in the division. The perception of unfair treatment by supervisors or the division on a whole can have a significant negative impact on employee morale. If the decision to provide overtime work and associated pay to particular employees were based on performance, tenure, or some other measurable factor, or on a rotating basis, employees would clearly understand why they were or were not selected for the additional work. Further, clearly communicating how employees are to be chosen to complete overtime work to staff can help the division avoid these morale issues.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

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

#### **Revise the current board policy on overtime to provide guidance to supervisors on scheduling employees for overtime work.**

The division should revise the current overtime policy to include direction for supervisors regarding how to schedule employees for overtime work. Clearly communicating these directions will help avoid issues of negative employee morale related to selection of employees for overtime work. To ensure the policy is fairly enforced across the entire division, the Superintendent or the Director of Human Resources should distribute the revised policy to all supervisory staff.

## **FISCAL IMPACT**

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

### **3.3 JOB DESCRIPTIONS AND PERSONNEL RECORDS**

Most organizations use job descriptions to help communicate expectations, requirements, and standards to employees. A lack of job descriptions can leave employees without a clear understanding of what is expected of them. In fact, a lack of job descriptions that are comprehensive and updated may communicate incorrect information to employees.

The maintenance of complete and accurate personnel records is one of the most crucial responsibilities of a human resources department. Human resources personnel are relied upon to produce reports, generate personnel statistics, and ensure the division maintains compliance with local, state, and federal regulations regarding personnel.

## **FINDING**

ACPS was not able to provide Evergreen Solutions consultants with job descriptions for some positions in the division. Most descriptions the division has are kept in hard copy in the Human Resources Office. Moreover job descriptions are not provided to new employees during new employee orientation, and they are not used to assist with performance evaluations.

Electronic job descriptions provided to Evergreen Solutions consultants have been revised within the past few years, but only about 23 job descriptions were available electronically. The format



and content of the paper job descriptions indicate they likely have not been updated for some time. Of the job descriptions available, a majority of the descriptions included the following categories:

- Title
- Primary Function
- Qualifications
- Reports to
- Performance Responsibilities
- Equipment Used
- Terms of Employment
- Evaluation
- Working Conditions

Most education organizations use classification descriptions that apply to all employees who share a job title, rather than position descriptions that apply individually to each employee in the organization. Classification descriptions generally are broad enough and flexible enough to encompass a variety of duties performed by employees in the same job title. However, the classification descriptions should be unique to a pay grade and job title; they should not cross over to different levels of a job. This is the format used by the division, as evidenced by the recently revised electronic job descriptions.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

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

**Create and maintain classification descriptions in an electronic format that accurately reflect job duties being performed by division staff, and create a schedule for updating job descriptions every three years on a rotating basis.**

The Director of Human Resources should ensure the division has an updated and legally sound job description for every classification title. The Director would work with staff members and supervisors to formulate and edit the job descriptions, and work with the Executive Secretary to ensure the descriptions are maintained in Word or other electronic format. By maintaining the job descriptions electronically, staff can update the descriptions in a relatively quick manner, and the division can provide the descriptions on its Web site, which can assist with recruitment of staff by providing easy online access to job descriptions for vacant positions.

Job descriptions could be developed as part of the compensation and classification study in **Recommendation 3-11**, but the Director should be responsible for maintaining the descriptions over time. This will provide an adequate baseline for comparison of jobs and will help ensure the division is maintaining fair and equitable pay for jobs.

The Director of Human Resources should devise a schedule by which staff can update the job descriptions every three years on a rotating basis. For example, after the initial acceptance of all job descriptions, jobs with titles that begin with A through I can be reviewed in year one, jobs



with titles that begin with J through Q can be reviewed in year two, and jobs that begin with R through Z can be reviewed in year three. This schedule allows all job descriptions to be updated every three years, but distributes the work across all three years.

## **FISCAL IMPACT**

This recommendation can be implemented at no additional cost to the division. All costs related to this recommendation are captured in **Recommendation 3-12**.

## **FINDING**

The ACPS does not have record retention or destruction policies related to personnel records.

The Virginia Public Records Act authorizes the Library of Virginia to issue retention schedules that state agencies and localities must follow. The Library's Records Management and Imaging Services Division releases *Records Retention and Disposition Schedules* that provide instructions and guidelines for maintaining and disposing of records.<sup>2</sup>

Personnel records retention and disposition guidelines are provided in General Schedule No. 3, Human Resources/Personnel Records. Items referenced and their retention schedules include:

- Attendance Records - retain as long as administratively required;
- Certification Records - retain three years after employee departure, then destroy;
- Employee Personnel File - retain 50 years after termination, then destroy;
- Exit Interview Files - retain three years, then destroy;
- Leave Records - retain three years or until audited, then destroy;
- Promotion/Demotion, Layoff, Termination, or Tenure Records - retain three years, then destroy; and
- Verification of Employment Records - retain three years after request, then destroy.

The majority of division personnel records impacted by records retention schedules are maintained by the Director of Human Resources.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

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

**Develop and adhere to a records retention and destruction policy related to personnel records.**

<sup>2</sup> "Chapter 3: Records Retention and Disposition Schedules," *Virginia Public Records Management Manual, The Library of Virginia*.



The Director of Human Resources should draft a Board policy related to personnel records retention and disposition. The policy should be flexible and clear. Further, the Director of Human Resources should develop a plan to implement the Board policy and maintain responsibility for adhering to the plan. To provide accountability for personnel records management, the Director of Human Resources and the Executive Secretary to the Director of Human Resources should maintain responsibility for the retention and destruction of records according to the prescribed schedule.

**FISCAL IMPACT**

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

**3.4 EMPLOYMENT OF STAFF**

The ACPS Human Resources Department is responsible for overseeing and coordinating the recruitment and employment of staff, in conjunction with principals, central office department heads, and the Superintendent. Attracting and retaining high quality staff is crucial to the success of the school division, and creating cost-effective and proven methods to draw high quality employees to the division is a vital step in the process.

**FINDING**

In 2004, the Alleghany Foundation awarded ACPS a \$29,950 grant to help create visually appealing promotional materials designed to assist with ACPS recruiting endeavors. The division had identified its difficulties in recruiting teachers to a rural school division, and sought and gained funding assistance from the Alleghany Foundation to address the issue. The Superintendent indicated, in a description of the initiative, that the positive results the division realized include the following:

- applications from certified candidates for math teaching positions increased from none in 2004 to 13 in 2005;
- prior to 2005, Alleghany County often received no applications from certified candidates for selected hard-to-staff positions, such as math, foreign language, and special education, and during 2005, at least three certified applicants applied for all teaching vacancies;
- prior to 2005, Alleghany County often started the school year with at least one remaining teacher vacancy and almost always needed to employ at least one teacher who lacked full certification, and by August 2005, all teacher vacancies were filled by fully certified candidates; and
- the teacher recruitment campaign received top honors from the Blue Ridge Chapter of the Public Relations Society of America in its annual Summit Awards competition.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>3</sup> "Alleghany Teacher Recruitment Initiative Phase II," Alleghany County Public Schools, 2006.



The grant for revision and creation of recruiting collateral is considered Phase I of the project. Phase II addresses the retention of ACPS teachers and is just beginning, so results are not yet available. The division identified a shortfall in retention of teachers as compared to the national average. According to Phase II project documents, nationwide, 11 percent of teachers leave a locality after their first year of teaching, 30 percent leave within three years, and 45 percent leave within five years. The ACPS attrition rate for novice teachers is approximately 50 percent (19 total teachers) before reaching their third year of employment in the division.

To address this shortfall in teacher retention, the division requested and received a grant from the Allegheny Foundation to implement an expanded teacher mentoring program, as well as an orientation and training framework for teachers in the first three years of employment with the division. The program, as outlined in the grant request, is titled “Allegheny Induction and Mentoring,” or AIM for short. In addition to the mentoring component, the division requested funding to enhance the ACPS Web site. The division was awarded grant money to accomplish its goals, though the Foundation provided less than the originally requested amount.

## COMMENDATION

**Allegheny County Public Schools is commended for addressing teacher recruitment and retention issues by obtaining grants from the Allegheny Foundation and applying these funds to teacher recruitment collateral and the Allegheny Induction and Mentoring Program (AIM).**

## FINDING

ACPS has created a Minority Advisory Committee to encourage recruitment of minority employees, among other goals related to involvement of minorities in the division. In meeting summary notes from October 2006, the purpose of the Committee is stated as follows:

*This Committee provides an on-going opportunity for representatives from our minority committee to participate in our division-wide effort to assess our needs, determine our goals, map out our strategies, and evaluate our policies, procedures, and programs. The committee also addresses issues that are of particular concern to the minority community, such as monitoring the hiring practices of our school division.*

The three key elements of the division’s minority hiring strategy were presented in the meeting summary, as well, and are listed as follows:

- targeting colleges and universities;
- ensuring an interview for all minority candidates; and
- working hard to make the school division a more attractive and inviting organization in which to work.



The division currently has 6.25 percent minority teachers and 5.45 percent minority classified employees, and the minority student population hovers around 8 percent. One of the first priorities of the Committee is to ensure the division-wide percentage of minority teachers and classified employees is at or above the percentage of minority students in the division.

## **COMMENDATION**

**Allegheny County Public Schools is commended for proactively addressing minority recruitment and retention in the division through the Minority Advisory Committee.**

## **FINDING**

All classified employees in the division are on contract with the ACPS; the Board annually approves contracts, contract changes, and adjustments for all classified employees.

The process of creating, updating, and maintaining contracts for the 201 classified employees in the division is a time-consuming process for the Human Resources Department, the Superintendent, and the Board. In addition to the main contractual agreements for each employee, any supplements they might be receiving are based on contracts that must be approved by the Board. This process generates a significant amount of paperwork on an annual basis.

The ACPS has 15 official salary schedules, as well as a supplements schedule and formulas for determining administrator salaries. Employee salaries are set according to the published schedules.

Current ACPS Board policies related to personnel (GCB) do not specify that classified employees operate under contract with the division; they do specify that professional staff operate under contract. Notifying classified employees of salary changes annually is a positive move on the part of the school division; however, requiring that the Board chair, the Board Clerk, and the employee sign contractual agreements annually is unnecessary.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

### **Recommendation 3-6:**

**Abolish annual contracts for classified employees.**

The Superintendent and the Board should abolish annual contractual agreements for classified employees. However, contracts should remain in place for the Superintendent, central office and school-based administrators (directors, principals, and assistant principals), and teachers. This action will result in a reduction of more than 200 annual contracts, leaving approximately 290 contracts. **Recommendation 3-7** further states how teacher contracts should be handled.

The division should have classified employees sign a general initial contract upon employment that indicates all classified employees in the division are at-will employees and they agree to abide by specified requirements of all employees in the division, including the number of working days, expected hours, and terms of employment. On an annual basis, the division should



continue to notify employees of the recommended salary for their position, as well as any additional information in the current contract that may change from year to year.

This recommendation will reduce time spent on administering contractual agreements by the Superintendent's Office and classified employees. Further, removing this time-consuming task will allow the Superintendent and the Board to focus on more pressing issues.

### **FISCAL IMPACT**

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

### **FINDING**

All teachers in the division are on contract with the ACPS; the Board annually approves contracts, contract changes, and adjustments for instructional employees.

The process of creating, updating, and maintaining contracts for the 248 teachers in the division is a time-consuming process for the Human Resources Department, the Superintendent, and the School Board. In addition to the main contractual agreements for each employee, all supplements are based on contracts that must be approved by the Board. This process generates a significant amount of paperwork on an annual basis.

The ACPS has an official Board salary schedule for teachers, as well as a supplements schedule. Employee salaries are set according to the published schedules. **Exhibit 3-5** depicts a sample teacher contract for the 2006-07 school year.

Virginia Code Section 22.1-303A provides, in part: "A probationary term of service for three years in the same school division shall be required before a teacher is issued a continuing contract. ..." Evaluations for teachers on continuing contracts in Virginia are further discussed in Section 22.1-295C: "Instructional personnel employed by local school boards who have achieved continuing contract status shall be evaluated not less than once every three years."<sup>4</sup>

Once a teacher has taught three consecutive years in any school division in Virginia (the probationary period), he or she is entitled to a continuing service contract. In practice, continuing contracts are renewed automatically each year unless otherwise requested by the employee or Board.

### **RECOMMENDATION**

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

**Revise the timing of teacher employment contracts—for the probationary period (first three years), maintain annual contracts, and increase contractual period to three years for continuing service contracts.**

<sup>4</sup> Chapter 373 of the Code of Virginia, Virginia Legislative Information System, 2006.



Exhibit 3-5
Sample ACPS Teacher Contract
2006-07 School Year

THIS ARTICLE of AGREEMENT, between the School Board of Allegheny County, Commonwealth of Virginia, ("School Board") and \_\_\_\_\_ subject to the authority of the School Board, under the supervision and direction of the division superintendent of schools, and agrees to the following conditions:

- 1. The employee: (check one)
2. The service to be performed hereunder shall begin on \_\_\_\_\_ and continue thereafter as prescribed by the school board.
3. The employee shall perform such duties during the period of this contract as are deemed necessary by the school board and superintendent for the efficient and successful operation of the school system.
4. The employee shall comply with all school laws, Board of Education regulations, and all regulations made by the school board in accordance with law and Board of Education regulations, and shall make promptly and accurately all reports required by the division superintendent of schools.
5. The employee agrees to abide by the provisions of the Constitution of Virginia and the Constitution of the United States.
6. The division superintendent shall have the authority to assign employees to their respective positions in the school wherein they have been placed by the school board and may, with the approval of the school board, reassign any employee to any school within the division during the term of this contract, provided no change or reassignment shall adversely affect the salary of the employee under this contract..
7. The reassignments of administrative or supervisory personnel to a teaching position shall be in accordance with Section 22.1-294 of the Code of Virginia (1950), as amended.
8. Before the superintendent recommends to the school board the non-renewal of the contract of an employee who has not achieved continuing contract status, the superintendent shall notify the employee of the proposed recommendation in Accordance with Section 22.1-304 of the Code.
9. The school board, upon recommendation of the division superintendent, reserves the right to dismiss, suspend, or place on probation the employee, paying for services rendered in accordance with this agreement to date of dismissal.
10. In case schools are closed temporarily, as a result of an epidemic or for other necessary cause, the said board may require such loss of time to be made up within the school term or may extend the school term.
11. This contract shall not operate to prevent discontinuance of employment as provided or allowed by laws.
12. The employee may request that the school board release the employee from the terms of this contract by giving the school board two weeks notice in writing and setting forth therein the reason considered just cause for resignation. In the event the school board declines to grant the request for release from the contract on the grounds of insufficient or unjustifiable cause, and the employee breaches the contract, the school board may pursue remedies prescribed by the Board of Education or other remedies consistent with law or contract.
13. The school board agrees to pay employee for the duration of this contract 2006-2007 payable:
(a) in 10 or 12 installments for services rendered, payable by the first day of each calendar month or as soon thereafter as possible; or
(b) in accordance with schedule under "Special Covenants."
14. The school board shall not be obligated to the salary terms above unless and until sufficient funds are provided to fulfill the obligations of the school board by the appropriating body provided, further, that the school board shall give the employee written notice of such approval or disapproval, as the case may be, within seven (7) days of such action.
15. In the event this contract is terminated by mutual consent prior to the end of the contract period, payment will be made for services rendered on a daily basis to be determined by dividing the salary stipulated in this contract by the number of days officially covered under the provisions of this contract.
16. The school board shall deduct monthly from the salary due the employee the computed amount due the Virginia Retirement System (included State-supported group insurance) and applicable state and federal statutes.
17. This contract shall be void and unenforceable should the School Board fail to receive or continue to receive funds which, in the sole discretion of the School Board, are sufficient to fulfill its obligations hereunto.
18. SPECIAL COVENANTS:
a. Teacher shall report each workday of the contract in accordance with the schedule established for the school or facility to which they are assigned.
b. Extra duties and other special assignments by the Principal or School Administration may require some extension of the normally scheduled workday.
c. A probationary period of one (1) year in the Allegheny County Public Schools is required of an employee who has previously attained continuing contract status elsewhere in the Commonwealth of Virginia.
d. The employee must assume the responsibility to obtain and/or maintain the proper endorsement/licensure as required by the State Board of Education and the Allegheny County Public Schools.
e. This position is designated EXEMPT under the Fair Labor Standards Act.
f. The teacher shall have the option of receiving pay in either (10) month or (12) month installments.
g. The Allegheny County School Board agrees to pay said party of the second part as follows:

- (1) Base Pay: \_\_\_\_\_
(2) Additional Time: \_\_\_\_\_
(3) Master's Supplement: \_\_\_\_\_

This contract shall at all times be subject to any and all laws, regulations, and policies existing during the term of the contract relating to conditions of employment such as leave, salaries, and length of school terms. Failure of the employee to fulfill this contract shall constitute sufficient grounds for the termination of the contract by the school board.

The parties agree to the terms of this contract effective this \_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 2006.

Chairman, Allegheny County School Board

Superintendent, Clerk of the School Board

Employee Signature

Date

Source: Allegheny County Public Schools, 2006.



Once a teacher has completed the requisite probationary period (first three consecutive years of teaching in a Virginia school division), and achieves a continuing service contract, Virginia law requires evaluation every three years. To reduce the amount of paperwork required for the current annual schedule for teacher employment contracts, the division should increase the contractual period for continuing service contracts to three years. This coincides with Commonwealth Codes while reducing the time required by the Board and Superintendent to handle individual contracts.

Supplemental contracts for coaching and other similar duties may still be handled annually. The Human Resources Department should continue to provide annual notice to teachers of their proposed salary for the school year; however, the notice can be an informal communication, rather than a formal School Board notification. The proposed extended schedule for continuing employment contracts does not preclude the division or the employee from breaking a contract for reasons identified in Virginia Code, such as dismissal, suspension, termination, retirement, or resignation.

This recommendation will reduce time spent on administering contractual agreements by the Superintendent's Office, Human Resources Department, and teachers. Further, removing this time-consuming task will allow the Superintendent and the Board to focus on more pressing issues.

### **FISCAL IMPACT**

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

### **FINDING**

ACPS does not have an Employee Handbook. While new hires are provided with documents and forms regarding some division policies and procedures, there is not a single reference point for employees.

At present, all questions regarding policies and procedures are directed to an employee's immediate supervisor or to the Human Resources Office. This process may be resulting in differential interpretations of policies, enforcement that is not uniform, and an information bottleneck in the Human Resources Department.

Employee handbooks should be designed as a resource for all employees, with information they may need to refer to frequently in order to meet the terms and conditions of their employment. A typical school division employee handbook includes basic information about the division, such as a staff directory, welcome from the Superintendent, addresses and locations of division offices and schools, general statistics about the division (e.g., enrollment for the past five years, number of employees), the division mission, and annual goals.

An example of the Table of Contents of an Employee Handbook for a school district is included in **Exhibit 3-6** on the following page.



**Exhibit 3-6  
Sample Employee Handbook  
Table of Contents**

SECTION 1-- WELCOME TO LEON COUNTY SCHOOLS	SECTION 4--PAYROLL SERVICES
The School Board of Leon County School Board Meetings District Organizational Structure Department Phone Numbers Schools and Principals District Map Strategic Plan Goals Florida System of School Improvement & Accountability State Education Goals Education Standards Commission Employment Practices Discrimination Policy Statement Prohibition of Harassment of Employees Code Of Conduct Confidential Student Records Access Clean Air Policy Bloodborne Pathogens Control Plan Hazardous Substances Weapons or Firearms on School Property Drug Free Workplace Additional District References Clean Air Policy Bloodborne Pathogens Control Plan Hazardous Substances Additional Reference Sources	Calculation of Salary Direct Deposit of Paychecks Overtime Pay for Contracted Employees Miscellaneous Payroll Deductions Stop Payment Procedure for Payroll Checks Uniform Allowances Calculation of Salary Direct Deposit of Paychecks
	SECTION 3--POLICIES AND PROCEDURES
	Accidents and Injuries at Work Appointment Instructions for New Employees Courier Mail Procedures and Guidelines Credit Union Employee Assistance Wellness Program Employee Recognition Programs Leon County Blood Bank FIRN Leaves of Absence How to Determine Leave Accrual Personnel Records Reassignments Recreational Discount Cards Resignations Retirement Sick Leave Bank Summer School Hiring Suspension and Dismissal Transfers Travel Reimbursement Procedures Unpaid Leave and Employee Benefits Vacancy Advertisement Worker's Compensation Holidays Liability Insurance Unemployment Compensation Social Security Years of Experience Verification Emergency Closing of Schools Safety and Evacuation Procedures
SECTION 2--DEPARTMENTS AND SERVICES	
Community Involvement Department Early Childhood Education Program Intervention Services Staffing Services Health Services Safe Schools/Healthy Students Initiative Exceptional Student Education/Student Services Facilities Department Food Services Instructional Media Center Technology Information Services Student Services Maintenance Department Staff Development Department Transportation Department Planning & Policy Department Employee Relations Teaching & Learning Finance Department Purchasing Risk Management Minority Business Enterprise Office	
	SECTION 5--EMPLOYEE BENEFITS SUMMARY
	General Notice General Information Flexible Benefits Plan Non-Flexible Benefits Enrollment COBRA General Notice General Information Flexible Benefits Plan

Source: Leon County Public Schools, Florida, 2006.



As depicted in the exhibit:

- **Section 1** includes general information about the school district and statewide education regulations impacting the district.
- **Section 2** provides brief descriptions of each department; this section helps direct employees to the appropriate staff member for specific questions and helps inform employees about programs and functions of each department/functional area.
- **Section 3** includes specific personnel policies and procedures.
- **Section 4** describes employee pay practices.
- **Section 5** discusses the employee benefits package.

The sample employee handbook included here may contain more information than the ACPS Employee Handbook would need. However, the categories included in the sample are important to include in an ACPS Employee Handbook.

Many school divisions in Virginia and school districts across the country post their employee handbooks online. By creating the handbook in an electronic format (either in PDF, Microsoft Word, or html), a school division can quickly disseminate handbooks and/or provide an easy reference to employees via the division's Web site.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

### **Recommendation 3-8:**

**Develop a comprehensive Employee Handbook, provide the Handbook to all new employees, and publish the handbook electronically for all employees.**

The Director of Human Resources should coordinate the creation of the Employee Handbook. This action would include generating some sections (e.g., personnel policies and procedures) and coordinating inclusion of others (e.g., staff directory, Superintendent's welcome message).

The ACPS Employee Handbook should be developed in an electronic format, such as PDF or Microsoft Word, and should be published on the division's Web site. If publishing the handbook on the Web site is not feasible, it should be distributed to all current employees via e-mail, or in hard copy for staff who do not have e-mail addresses. All new employees should receive a copy of the handbook during the new employee orientation.

Since many school divisions in Virginia and school districts across the country post their employee handbooks online, there are a multitude of sample documents available to division staff to use as templates. However, should the division choose to utilize software templates to create the handbook, a low-cost version of employee handbook development software could be purchased for approximately \$200.



## FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented at no additional cost to the division. However, should the division decide to purchase employee handbook development software to assist in the process, an additional cost of \$200 would be incurred.

## FINDING

In Alleghany County Public Schools, primary recruiting is conducted at job fairs in the West Virginia/Western Virginia region.

**Exhibit 3-7** provides recruitment statistics for the 2005-06 school year, as compiled by the Director of Human Resources, who is primarily responsible for coordinating recruiting trips. As depicted in the exhibit, the division conducted 162 total interviews as a result of attendance at regional job fairs and hired five teachers. At job fairs, the division uses the new recruitment collateral, including the table display, glossy folders, and colorful inserts that describe the Western Virginia area, and Alleghany County and ACPS in particular.

### Exhibit 3-7 ACPS Recruiting Summary 2005-06 School Year

Job Fair	Location	Date	Distance from Covington	Interviews	Hires
Concord University	Athens, WV	11/18/2005	120 miles	6	1
Hampton University	Hampton, VA	3/21/2005	242 miles	4	0
West Virginia Public Education Consortium	Salem, VA	2/3/2006-2/4/2006	48 miles	97	3
St. Paul's College	Lawrenceville, VA	11/10/2005	238 miles	8	0
Lynchburg	Lynchburg, VA	2/27/2006	81 miles	5	0
Roanoke College	Roanoke, VA	2/8/2006	47 miles	3	0
Great Virginia Teach-In	Richmond, VA	3/17/2006-3/18/2006	165 miles	12	0
Marshall University	Huntington, WV	4/4/2006	204 miles	8	0
West Virginia State	Institute, WV	4/6/2006	160 miles	7	0
Hampton University	Hampton, VA	3/21/2006	242 miles	8	0
Radford – VPI & SU	Radford, VA	1/26/2006	83 miles	4	1
<b>Total/Average</b>			<b>148 miles</b>	<b>162</b>	<b>5</b>

Source: Alleghany County Public Schools, Human Resource Office, 2006.

The division hires approximately 20 to 25 teachers each year, though two years ago the division hired more than 40 teachers. Evergreen Solutions could not locate a dedicated recruitment budget. Funding for the recruiting function may be housed in the Human Resources Department budget, but budgetary detail was unavailable to the consultants. It is unclear how much is spent on recruiting events, including overnight stays for the job fairs more than 150 miles away. On average, the division travels nearly 150 miles to attend job fairs.

Other information not captured by the division in recruiting reports, includes the characteristics of the new hires and cost to the division of the recruiting trips. The Director of Human Resources is responsible for advertising for vacant positions in local and regional newspapers and on



identified Web sites. No data are currently collected related to the cost benefit of advertising in particular newspapers or on particular Web sites.

ACPS staff were positive in Evergreen's survey of administrators and teachers about the recruitment program and its perceived successes. In a survey of ACPS administrators conducted by Evergreen Solutions, approximately 56.5 percent of teachers and 85.7 percent of division administrators state that the personnel recruitment in the division is *adequate* or *outstanding*. More than 95 percent of administrator and 60 percent of teacher respondents said the division has a good orientation program for new employees.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

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

#### **Collect and track data related to recruitment and advertising vacant positions.**

Without knowing how much money the division has spent on recruitment, Evergreen consultants could not determine whether the recruiting practices are cost efficient. Additionally, without knowing whether the new teachers hired as a result of recruiting trips fit the minority recruitment goals of the division, it is not possible to judge the cost benefit of the trips. With the data provided, it is not possible to tell whether the division has, in fact, been able to recruit minority teachers as a result of these trips.

The Director of Human Resources should collect additional data related to recruitment trips, including:

- characteristics of teachers hired as a result of a recruiting trip (e.g., race, gender); and
- costs to the division of the recruiting trips.

In addition, the Director should collect data related to advertising for vacant positions, including:

- the quarterly and annual cost of advertising by newspaper/Web site;
- the number of responses and new hires generated by newspaper/Web site; and
- overall cost benefit of each form of advertising used by the division.

Collecting the data will require staff time. However, should the data show that cost of advertising in particular newspapers or a particular recruiting trip outweigh the benefits (in other words, if the dollars spent per new hire are significant), the division could achieve a cost savings by revising the recruitment strategy to use more cost-effective methods.

## **FISCAL IMPACT**

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



FINDING

Alleghany County Public Schools does not collect detailed data related to reasons for employee separation from the division.

The Human Resources Department conducts exit interviews with all employees separating from service with the division. The form utilized is called "Teacher Exit Interview," although it is used with all employees. Questions from the form are included in Exhibit 3-8.

Exhibit 3-8
ACPS Teacher Exit Interview

Name \_\_\_\_\_ School \_\_\_\_\_
Position \_\_\_\_\_
Length of Service to the Division \_\_\_\_\_
Length of Total Educational Service \_\_\_\_\_
Was the reason for your departure from ACPS retirement? Yes No
If not, please identify the reason(s) for your departure.
If the initial response is categorized as an internal reason; ask the respondent to cite the factor(s) that contributed the most to his/her decision to leave the school division. Or, on a scale of 1 to 10 rate the following factors that contributed most to your departure
Dissatisfaction with School Administration: \_\_\_\_\_
Work place conditions \_\_\_\_\_
Lack of influence within the school system \_\_\_\_\_
Classroom intrusion \_\_\_\_\_
Inadequate time for instruction \_\_\_\_\_
Lack of parental support \_\_\_\_\_
Job dissatisfaction \_\_\_\_\_
Others: \_\_\_\_\_
If the initial response is categorized as an external reason, ask the respondent to cite the factor(s) that contributed the most to his/her decision to leave the school division. Or, on a scale of 1 to 10 rate the following factors that contributed most to your departure.
Medical reasons \_\_\_\_\_
Leave of Absence – Sabbatical \_\_\_\_\_
Salary/Benefits \_\_\_\_\_
Continuing Education \_\_\_\_\_
Family/Personal Relationship(s) \_\_\_\_\_
Others: \_\_\_\_\_
Use the back of this page to cite any extenuating circumstances that led to departure.

Source: Alleghany County Public Schools, 2006.

As depicted in the exhibit, the questions asked primarily relate to reasons for teacher separation from service. Further, the reasons for departure from the division are not collected in a format that can be updated and referenced when needed. In documents related to the Alleghany Induction and Mentoring (AIM) Program, the division acknowledges that "data has not been formally collected to determine reasons for leaving Alleghany County Public Schools."

Exhibit 3-9 includes the resignations and retirements data provided by the ACPS Human Resources Department for the 2005-06 school year.



**Exhibit 3-9  
ACPS Resignation and Retirement Summary  
2005-06 School Year**

<b>Resignations</b>		<b>Retirements</b>	
Teachers	13	Teachers	5
Custodians	4	Teacher Assistants	1
Teacher Assistants	8	Bus Drivers	3
Bus Drivers	1	Secretaries	1
Cafeteria Workers	2	Cafeteria Workers	1
Central Office Admin	1		
Nurse	1		
Maintenance	1		

Source: Allegheny County Public Schools, 2006.

While this information is helpful to the division, the reasons for the resignations, totaling 31 or approximately six percent of total staff, are not clear. The division should begin collecting data related to reasons for separation from service, reviewing the data in aggregate, and identifying recurring reasons for separation in order to reduce turnover.

**RECOMMENDATION**

**Recommendation 3-10:**

**Collect and track data related to separation from service in Allegheny County Public Schools**

As part of the exit interview process, the Director of Human Resources should collect the data from departing employees regarding reasons for separation for service and provide the data to the Executive Secretary for Human Resources to enter into an electronic file. The data should be kept in an Excel file or similar format to be analyzed at a later date.

The Director can analyze such data quarterly and annually to determine recurring reasons for separation from service, and identify methods for addressing any recurring reasons.

**FISCAL IMPACT**

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

**3.5 EMPLOYEE COMPENSATION**

In order to attract and retain the best and brightest employees, school divisions must provide competitive salaries. Employee compensation includes both salaries and fringe benefits; divisions should focus on both to ensure total compensation packages for employees are fair and competitive.



**FINDING**

Allegheny County Public Schools conducts regular reviews of the competitiveness of division teacher and classified employee salaries. However, the division does not appear to compare administrator pay ranges with comparable peer organization pay ranges. Evergreen consultants were told that past comparisons to peer division administrator salaries were not helpful, since many peers do not utilize pay schedules or other measurable formulas for these high-level positions. Rather, the Superintendent in those divisions analyzed the salaries based on negotiations with the employee, available funds, or other non-standard factors.

The ACPS average principal salary was approximately seven percent greater than the peer average in fiscal year 2005, and six percent greater in fiscal year 2006. While the division is providing principal salaries that are greater than its peers on average, a majority of peer districts (3 of 5) provided larger increases in this period than ACPS did. The market is constantly changing; however, like all employers, school divisions must stay on top of the changing market to maintain competitiveness in recruitment and retention of quality employees.

Similarly, the ACPS average assistant principal salary was approximately 3.1 percent greater than the peer average in fiscal year 2005, and 3.2 percent greater in fiscal year 2006. In this time period, ACPS provided a greater increase than peers on average; however, the overall difference from peers is less than for principals. One would expect that the difference between principal and assistant principal salaries would be comparable to the differences in peer divisions.

In on-site interviews with Evergreen Solutions consultants, some employees expressed concerns about internal equity issues in the division. As jobs have evolved over the years, the division may not have adequately adjusted compensation for positions or have revised job titles to accurately reflect the work performed.

Public sector organizations typically hire external consultants to conduct comprehensive compensation and classification studies every three to five years to gauge overall market competitiveness and adjust salary schedules to be more competitive, and to judge internal equity and correct any inequities identified. External consultants are hired to provide an objective, third-party review and to use their expertise and proven methodologies to make unbiased recommendations. It appears that the division has never conducted an internal comprehensive compensation and classification study nor hired an external consultant to conduct such a study. While the division has hired external consultants and worked with professional statewide associations in the past to review division compensation, ACPS has not worked with an external group to look at classification in a detailed, objective review. While market reviews can be conducted internally, the classification review component typically is conducted by a group or individual from outside the division, since it involves a detailed review of individual job duties and requires objectivity in making individual classification and pay recommendations.

The internal equity, or classification review portion of the study should include a detailed analysis of individual position duties as they relate to other positions in the division. The external equity, or compensation review component of the study should include a detailed comparison of division pay ranges to market peer pay ranges. Often, as part of a compensation and classification study, school divisions and districts across the country request the selected



consultant develop updated, electronic job descriptions, review Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) requirements, and review Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) determinations for all job titles. The information needed to develop these items is collected as part of the study, and the division could save time and ensure quality end products by hiring an expert to produce them.

**RECOMMENDATION**

**Recommendation 3-11:**

**Conduct a comprehensive compensation and classification study to ensure internal equity and market competitiveness.**

The Director of Human Resources should work with the Director of Budget and Finance to develop an RFP for an external human resources consultant to conduct a comprehensive compensation and classification study and oversee the competitive bid process. The study should not be confined only to compensation or only to classification; rather, the study should be comprehensive and address both internal and external equity issues.

The RFP should include all components of a full compensation and classification study, as well as development of electronic, updated job descriptions, including ADA-related physical requirements and FLSA determinations, for all jobs in the division.

Once a firm is selected and work begins, the Director of Human Resources should act as the primary project contact for the selected firm.

**FISCAL IMPACT**

This recommendation can be implemented at a one-time cost to the division of approximately \$20,000 and \$25,000. The costs shown below represent the median of the likely range of competitive bids. The cost for implementing this recommendation solely would be related to hiring an external consultant. While there is a one-time cost to hire a consultant, ACPS can expect to strategically position itself as a market competitor in the future by implementing a sound and equitable compensation and classification system, and reap intangible benefits, such as increased employee morale.

<b>Recommendation</b>	<b>2007-08</b>	<b>2008-09</b>	<b>2009-10</b>	<b>2010-11</b>	<b>2011-12</b>
Conduct Compensation and Classification Study	(\$22,500)	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0

**3.6 PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

To comply with state and federal laws and to maintain a high-quality and effective workforce, a school division must ensure the appropriate licensing of professional staff and a well-planned professional development program tied to the goals and objectives of the division.



## FINDING

ACPS uses individual staff members, predominantly the Assistant Superintendent for Instruction, to determine staff development needs for the division. In some cases, the Director of Administrative Services and the Director of Human Resources determine staff development needs for classified employees.

In Evergreen's survey of ACPS teachers by Evergreen Solutions, more than 23 percent of teacher respondents indicated they *agree* or *strongly agree* that "There are not enough high quality professional development opportunities for teachers." Further, 7 percent of respondents said the professional development program in the division needs major improvement, and an additional 30 percent felt it needs some improvement. While these numbers are not indicative of serious problems related to professional development, they indicate there is room for improvement in the division.

Many school divisions and districts across the country conduct needs assessments surveys of employees periodically to determine what professional development opportunities are needed and wanted. Such needs assessments typically are conducted of all employees, not just teachers and administrators. Creating a democratic professional development selection process elicits buy-in from the staff and helps them feel like a crucial part of the decision-making process. Final decisions about courses should still be rooted in financial constraints and the ability of the courses to contribute to meeting division goals; however, suggestions from employees should receive significant consideration.

The division has a three-year staff development plan for 2006-09 that documents each functional area's major goals, objectives, professional development activities, timeline, and anticipated cost. While this is critical to ensuring major professional development activities contribute to the overall success of the organization in meeting division-wide goals, it does not include other professional development opportunities that would contribute to individual growth or effectiveness.

**Exhibit 3-10** provides sample teacher questions from a professional development needs assessment survey. Such questions could be used in ACPS for teachers, and similar questions could be developed that are more specific to classified positions.

## RECOMMENDATION

### Recommendation 3-12:

**Develop a professional development needs assessment survey, and distribute the survey to staff on an annual basis to determine professional development needs.**

The ACPS Assistant Superintendent of Instruction should develop a professional development needs assessment survey, with assistance from the Director of Human Resources for questions specific to classified employees. The survey should be distributed on an annual basis to all employees in the division. The Assistant Superintendent of Instruction and Director of Human Resources should compile results and review to determine the professional development needs of the division. Professional development offerings should be geared toward the needs and wants of employees, in addition to any requisite offerings outlined in the Staff Development Plan.



### Exhibit 3-10 Sample Professional Development Needs Assessment Survey

Please indicate to what extent you agree with the following statements? Please use the following rating scale to determine your answer:

- (1) Strongly Agree
- (2) Agree
- (3) Disagree
- (4) Strongly Disagree

**1. Professional development in which I have participated in the last 5 years has:**

- a. Been linked to other program improvement activities at my school..... 1      2      3      4
- b. Been followed by needed follow-up sessions or additional training..... 1      2      3      4
- c. Been followed by school administration support in applying what I have learned..... 1      2      3      4

**2. Currently, I feel well prepared to do the following activities:**

- a. Implement new methods of teaching..... 1      2      3      4
- b. Implement state or district curriculum and performance standards..... 1      2      3      4
- c. Integrate educational technology in the subject I teach... 1      2      3      4
- d. Use student performance assessments (e.g. methods of testing, applying results to modify instruction)..... 1      2      3      4
- e. Maintain order and discipline in the classroom..... 1      2      3      4
- f. Address the needs of students from diverse cultural backgrounds..... 1      2      3      4
- g. Address the needs of students with limited English proficiency..... 1      2      3      4
- h. Address the needs of students with disabilities..... 1      2      3      4
- i. Meet the overall demands of my teaching assignment... 1      2      3      4

**3. Professional development in the following areas would benefit me:**

- a. Content – Subject Specific..... 1      2      3      4
- b. Effective Teaching Practices..... 1      2      3      4
- c. Discipline Management..... 1      2      3      4
- d. Assessment..... 1      2      3      4
- e. Technology Training..... 1      2      3      4
- f. Personal Professional Development (time management, stress reduction, etc.)..... 1      2      3      4
- g. Working with Diverse Populations..... 1      2      3      4
- h. Group Dynamics – Working in Teams..... 1      2      3      4
- i. Curriculum Integration..... 1      2      3      4

**4. I feel the ideal time for professional development would be:**

- a. Early morning before school..... 1      2      3      4
- b. During the school day..... 1      2      3      4
- c. After school..... 1      2      3      4
- d. Evenings..... 1      2      3      4
- e. Saturday mornings..... 1      2      3      4
- f. Online – anytime, anywhere..... 1      2      3      4

Source: Bridgewater-Raynham Regional High School, Bridgewater-Raynham School District, MA, 2006.



Further, by having designated points of contact (the Director of Instruction for teachers/administrators and the Director of Human Resources for all classified employees), supervisors can submit requests during the year to provide specific staff development/training opportunities.

### **FISCAL IMPACT**

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

### **FINDING**

The ACPS Director of Administrative Services conducts training for the approximately 44 bus drivers in the division twice each year.

Each year, Administrative Services provides two training sessions for all bus drivers in the division, whether they are tenured employees or have just joined the school division. For new employees, the trainings provide an overview of their responsibilities as bus drivers and the division's expectations, clarifies reporting relationships and supervisory hierarchies, introduces them to the staff, and allows them to ask questions of the supervisors/managers/directors.

**Exhibit 3-11** depicts the August 2006 bus driver training agenda.

For many ACPS bus drivers, the information provided in the training sessions is remedial. However, considering the integral safety and security roles drivers play, it is important that this information be repeated regularly. Further, the training sessions can engender camaraderie among drivers, allow them to exchange ideas among themselves, and provide a good opportunity for them to offer suggestions for improvement/change to management in a positive environment.

### **COMMENDATION**

**Allegheny County Public Schools is commended for developing and administering a comprehensive annual bus driver training.**

**ALSO SEE RECOMMENDATION 10-9 IN CHAPTER 10**



**Exhibit 3-11  
Bus Driver Training Agenda  
August 2006**

- 1) Welcome
  - a. Importance of the Bus Driver
- 2) Introductions (tell name, school, years with ACPS)
- 3) Thanks – Good Team
- 4) Key Boxes and Bus Security
- 5) Role of the Principal, Director, Executive Secretary for Administrative Services, and Transportation Manager in relation to the bus drivers
  - a. Principals are your line supervisor – personnel matters, daily supervision
  - b. Director is an “active consultant” – coordinate training, purchases/supplies, contracted resources, regulatory compliance
  - c. Executive Secretary for Administrative Services – most critical person, schedules drivers, arranges training, etc.
  - d. Transportation Manager handles maintenance, bus allocation, etc.
- 6) Attendance
- 7) Tobacco policy must be strictly adhered to
- 8) Good behavior and language
- 9) Reporting maintenance needs and safety issues
- 10) Clean bus
- 11) Pre-trip inspections very important
- 12) No standing on bus
- 13) Gossip (The Director is going to fire all the custodians)
  - a. Hurtful and harmful
  - b. Loose lips sink ships
  - c. Golden rule
- 14) Do not tell students what their punishment will be for poor behavior, etc. Principals will handle this
- 15) Fuel savings – no bus idling, make suggestions for route changes that reduce mileage
- 16) Bus drivers interested in summer driving (summer school, activities, etc.) must put their request in writing to Director prior to the end of school
- 17) Bus videos are considered student records and should be treated as such for confidentiality
- 18) Questions/comments
- 19) Training – very important

*Source: Alleghany County Public Schools, 2006.*



***CHAPTER 4:  
FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT***



## *Chapter 4*

# ***FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT***

This chapter addresses the business, financial, and risk management functions of Allegheny County Public Schools (ACPS) and includes five major sections:

- 4.1 Planning and Budgeting
- 4.2 Financial Management
- 4.3 Student Activity Funds
- 4.4 Asset Management
- 4.5 Risk Management

In the current environment of scarce fiscal resources, an effective system of accountability for business operations management is imperative for a school division to meet student needs and community expectations. A credible school division accountability system includes budgets supporting the division's goals and objectives, comprehensive and transparent financial reporting, and dependable asset management. Such an accountability system helps to ensure confidence in, and support for, the division's use of public funds.

The Evergreen Review Team conducted interviews and surveys, a public forum, and an analysis of the business and financial functions of Allegheny County Public Schools. Evergreen's financial review included an analysis of the division's policies and procedures, audited financial statements, budgets, and financial accounting and control systems. Federal, state, and local laws, rules, and regulations were used in evaluating school division business operations. A finding and recommendation regarding an Educational Foundation is provided in Chapter 10.

For comparison purposes, Allegheny County Public Schools selected five Virginia school divisions for this efficiency review. School divisions chosen for the comparison to ACPS are: Dickenson, Nottoway, Patrick, Prince Edward, and Southampton. School divisions are compared for benchmark indicators such as the local composite indices, revenue, and expenditures.

**Exhibit 4-1** shows ACPS and peer division local composite indices for 2004-05 and for 2006 through 2008. The local composite index is an indicator of ability to pay. In 2004-05, ACPS ranked last of the peer divisions for local composite index and is therefore lower than the peer division average of .2652. The local composite index is capped at .8000 by Commonwealth law to ensure that no locality is required to pay more than 80 percent of Standards of Quality costs.

**Exhibit 4-2** shows an analysis of revenue for Allegheny County Public Schools in relation to its peer districts. The revenue is shown in percentages for each division for federal funds, state funds, local funds, and other funds. ACPS has the next to last percentage revenue from state sources in comparison to other peer divisions. ACPS is last in percentage of federal revenues in comparison to peer divisions, yet is first in percentage of local funds. ACPS ranks next last of its peers in revenue from other funds.



**Exhibit 4-1**  
**Local Composite Index**  
**Allegheny County Public Schools and Peers**  
**2004-05 School Year and 2006 Through 2008 School Years**

School Division	2004-05	2006-08
Dickenson	.2492	.2344
<b>Allegheny</b>	<b>.2423</b>	<b>.2423</b>
Nottoway	.2431	.2429
Patrick	.2859	.2592
Southampton	.2802	.2671
Prince Edward	.2906	.2776
<b>Peer Division Average</b>	<b>.2652</b>	<b>.2539</b>

Source: Virginia Department of Education, Web site, 2006.

**Exhibit 4-2**  
**Revenues by Fund Source**  
**2004-05 Fiscal Year**

School Division	Percent Federal Funds	Percent State Funds	Percent Local Funds	Percent Other Funds
<b>Allegheny County</b>	<b>7.0%</b>	<b>48.4%</b>	<b>35.6%</b>	<b>9.0%</b>
Dickenson County	12.1%	53.6%	24.8%	9.5%
Nottoway County	17.1%	53.0%	19.3%	10.6%
Patrick County	9.7%	57.3%	22.5%	10.5%
Prince Edward County	10.8%	52.6%	25.7%	10.9%
Southampton County	8.6%	47.9%	32.1%	11.4%
<b>Peer Division Average</b>	<b>11.7%</b>	<b>52.9%</b>	<b>24.9%</b>	<b>10.6%</b>

Source: Virginia Department of Education, Web site, 2006.

**Exhibit 4-3** shows the total disbursements and per pupil costs by division. ACPS total annual disbursements of \$26,956,741 rank highest of the six peer divisions and the peer division average of \$23,484,358. ACPS annual per pupil cost of \$9,207 ranks third from the highest of its peer divisions and more than the peer division average of \$8,992.

**Exhibit 4-3**  
**Allegheny County Public Schools and Peers**  
**Total Disbursements by Division**  
**2004-05 School Year**

School Division	Total Disbursements	Per Pupil Cost
Patrick County	\$21,427,342	\$8,305
Prince Edward County	\$24,089,489	\$8,789
Dickenson County	\$22,763,305	\$9,127
<b>Allegheny County</b>	<b>\$26,956,741</b>	<b>\$9,207</b>
Nottoway County	\$22,287,837	\$9,322
Southampton County	\$26,853,817	\$9,416
<b>Peer Division Average</b>	<b>\$23,484,358</b>	<b>\$8,992</b>

Source: Virginia Department of Education, Web site, 2006.



## **CHAPTER SUMMARY**

The financial management functions for Allegheny County Public Schools are performed primarily by the Finance Director who is supported by two professional assistants, the Executive Secretary for Payroll and Executive Secretary for Disbursements. The Superintendent, with Finance Director support, has primary responsibility for preparation of the division budget. The Director of Administrative Services performs functions relative to fixed asset and risk management, and the Director of Human Resources is responsible for employee health insurances and benefits. The Allegheny County finance staff process the disbursements for payroll and accounts payable. The Treasurer for Allegheny County collects revenues for the division and has signatory authority for all disbursements. The Allegheny County Board of Supervisors approves the school division budget and the allotments for school division operations. Allegheny County employs an independent auditor to perform the annual audit of the school division and County.

The division is commended for its budget priority survey to help establish division annual priorities and for wisely managing funds to support education in the school division. Recommendations in this chapter are intended to refine certain existing division processes and practices, and to provide guidance for the establishment of others. Primary recommendations in this chapter include:

- establish a budgetary process that creates a budget correlated to the adopted goals and objectives of Allegheny County Public Schools;
- obtain a financial accounting system capable of communication between schools and department;
- develop and implement a comprehensive fixed asset management system;
- develop and implement a coordinated School Board/County procedure for cash flow and the calculation of interest earnings;
- develop and implement a comprehensive school activity funds manual and monitor audit findings;
- strengthen certain internal controls, and develop and implement a comprehensive business and finance operating procedures manual; and
- explore cooperative bidding for health benefits.

### **4.1 PLANNING AND BUDGETING**

An organization's financial planning and monitoring, as well as its budget development and management, establish the foundation for all financial management operations. Effective budget processes typically include input from all schools and departments; appropriate guidance from administrators; desired goals, objectives and outcomes from strategic planning processes; and detailed management and reporting functions throughout the budget cycle.



The budget process is generally comprised of four major phases that include planning, preparation, adoption and evaluation. These phases are:

- **Planning** - defines the goals and objectives of the school division and develops programs to attain those goals and objectives.
- **Preparation** – includes allocating resources to support the programs developed to achieve the established goals and objectives.
- **Adoption of the Budget** – made by school board approval after a public hearing and public opportunity for comment.
- **Evaluation of the Budget** - is performed periodically to monitor the receipt of revenue and expenditure of funds, and to ascertain the extent to which the division is meeting its goals and objectives.

## **FINDING**

The ACPS budget does not adequately correlate between the division's budget and the goals and objectives of the School Board and Superintendent. The 2005-06 Allegheny County Public Schools budget makes some reference to division goals outlined in the comprehensive plan, but does not correlate dollars allocated in the budget for annual priorities.

The ACPS Proposed 2006-07 Operating Budget presented to the Allegheny County Board on March 28, 2006 includes:

- **Introduction** - The introduction letter from the ACPS Superintendent sets forth the revenue levels for the upcoming year and outlines proposed allocations for the 2006-07 budget. The introduction letter is an informative, general overview of the upcoming budget.
- **Summary of Proposed Budget** – The summary of the proposed budget includes a comparison of revenue projections in relation to the Governor's budget, projected new expenditures with explanations, and an analysis of the percentage of budget each functional expenditure represents.
- **Appendix: Proposed Budget by Account Number** – This appendix presents the 2007 proposed budget revenues and expenditures compared to the 2006 proposed budget with the difference and percent increase calculated.
- **Appendix: Miscellaneous Information** – This appendix presents comparative statistical information on teacher salary rankings, employee health insurance premiums, composite index comparisons and rankings, and the textbook budget history.

Division goals and objectives are not linked to the allocation of budgetary resources. The Association of School Business Officials (ASBO) sets international standards for meritorious budgeting and recommends a clear association between the goals and objectives from the division's strategic plan and the allocation of resources.



**RECOMMENDATION**

**Recommendation 4-1:**

**Establish a budgetary process that creates a budget correlated to the adopted goals and objectives of the Alleghany County School Board and Superintendent.**

Providing a resource allocation system that budgets for the goals of the division helps to ensure that the priorities outlined in a division’s plan are appropriately funded. A budget document clearly reflective of the division’s plan and priorities elicits support essential for a proper implementation of the plan.

**Exhibit 4-4** provides an example of the linkage between goals and objectives, and also shows a sample budget summary correlated to a division’s strategic plan goals and objectives. Detailed information explaining the summary budget amounts is presented in supporting schedules to document the correlation between the division strategic plan and the division budget.

**Exhibit 4-4  
Sample Budget Summary  
Correlated to Division Plan Goals & Objectives  
Annual Budget**

Goal	Plan Priority	Budget Amount
Goals 4 & 6	Salary and Benefits increases	\$xx.
Goal 2	3 New Teachers	\$xx.
Goal 2	2 Reading Coaches	\$xx.
Goal 6	2 Nurses	\$xx.
Goal 2	Character Training	\$xx.
Goal 2	Extended School Day Programs	\$xx.
Goal 3	Teacher Training	\$xx.
Goals 7 & 8	8 New Computers	\$xx.
Goals 1 & 2	Summer School	\$xx.
Goal 1: Students arrive at school ready to learn. Goal 2: All students are literate. Goal 3: Curriculum is world class. Goal 4: All employees are highly qualified. Goal 5: Communications and collaborations are strong and effective. Goal 6: The culture is healthy. Goal 7: The division continues to invest in technology. Goal 8: The division’s fiscal management is world-class.		

*Source: Created by Evergreen Solutions, 2006.*

**FISCAL IMPACT**

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

**FINDING**

The ACPS budgetary process is well planned and communicated. Board policy DB, entitled Annual Budget, in compliance with the laws of Virginia, establishes the budgetary process as follows:



*The Superintendent or his/her designee shall prepare a budget calendar identifying all deadlines for the annual budgetary process. The calendar shall include a work session for reviewing the budget and at least one public hearing on the budget. Notice of the time and place for the public hearing must be published at least ten days in advance, in a newspaper having general circulation within the school division.*

Documents presented to Evergreen and discussions with staff indicate that principals are encouraged to engage staff and local parent advisory committees for input in development of budget requests which are submitted to the senior administration in early November. A senior-level administrative budget committee, including two school board liaisons, meets between each school board meeting and or budget session and analyzes input from building-level staff, public hearing comments, and school board member input. Refinements to the budgetary documents are presented at the next public meeting.

ACPS offers several opportunities for budgetary input during the process. The division's public hearing is conducted in December, then all public input from the hearing is evaluated by the School Board at its budget work session in January. Division documents state: "the School Board believes strongly that public input should be sought at the beginning of the budget process instead of at the end, when most of the critical decisions have reached a point at which they seldom can be modified."

Citizens are informed throughout the budgetary process by:

- newspaper and school board publications;
- school division public hearings;
- Board budget calendar; and
- school division advisory committees that include parents, teachers, classified employees, and minority representatives.

**Exhibit 4-5** shows the survey results for ACPS administrators and teachers compared to those in Evergreen's survey database. As shown, both ACPS administrator and teacher groups rated the division's budgeting operation more highly than similar groups in other school districts.

**Exhibit 4-5**  
**Teachers and Administrators Survey Results on Budgeting in**  
**Allegheny County Public Schools and Districts in Evergreen's Survey Database**

Survey Statement: Indicate your opinion of school division budgeting operations.	Allegheny County Public Schools		Evergreen's Survey Database	
	Needs Major or Some Improvement	Adequate or Outstanding	Needs Major or Some Improvement	Adequate or Outstanding
Teachers	14.1%	55.4%	56.5%	28.3%
Administrators	9.5%	90.4%	40.9%	54.5%

Source: *Evergreen Solutions Survey Results, 2006.*



A well-communicated, inclusionary budgetary process is essential to establish confidence and support for the school division. **Exhibit 4-6** shows the ACPS Budget Development Calendar for the 2007-08 fiscal year which includes state-required timeline dates and supporting administrative dates necessary to meet the state deadlines. This comprehensive timeline with pertinent administrative dates communicates an open, transparent budgeting process with employees and the community.

The participation of school and community members in the budget process helps to create district support and provides valuable input. Preparation and use of a budget calendar and timeline are critical to help communicate to staff and the community the important activities of the budgeting process. The communication of the budget timeline creates a sense of openness and transparency to the process. Posting of the timeline and the budget documents on the ACPS Web site also helps facilitate better communication.

### **COMMENDATION**

**Allegheny County Public Schools is commended for a budgetary process that is open, easily understood, and well-communicated.**

### **FINDING**

School and departmental employees within Allegheny County Public Schools are included in the budgetary process. The Superintendent annually conducts an Employee Budget Priority Survey. In November 2005, employees were asked to respond to a survey of school division budget priorities, with the respective importance of the priorities for the 2006-07 school year. Employees, for the third year, were asked to express their views on how school division resources should be distributed. The Superintendent used survey questions obtained from various areas of the division community, including representatives of the Allegheny County Education Association, members of the teacher and classified advisory committees, and members of the administrative staff. The division achieved an estimated 93 percent response rate for the survey.

A review of district records and discussions with staff indicate that most principals and many teachers agree that the budgeting process is used effectively to involve principals and teachers. The division's budget calendar and public input process provide several opportunities for input into the budget.

The collection of employee budgetary priority information helps ensure that principals, faculty, and department heads within the division are active participants in the process. Participation in the process helps to create a supportive environment for the division's spending plan.

### **COMMENDATION**

**Allegheny County Public Schools effectively uses an Employee Budget Priority Survey to gather input for the budget process.**



**Exhibit 4-6**  
**ACPS Budget Development Timeline**  
**July 1 through June 30**

October 3 (Tuesday)	Introduction of budget process to principals and administrative staff
October 16 (Monday)	Submission of budget calendar to School Board (regular meeting) 6:00 p.m.
	Designation of School Board liaison with administrative budget committee
	Establishment of December 12th as date for public hearing on budget
October 20 (Friday)	Preliminary administrative staff budget committee meeting #1 (8:00 a.m.)
	Review of budget process assignments and calendar
October 30 (Monday)	Administrative budget committee meeting #2 (9:30 a.m.)
	Establish preliminary overall budget priorities
October 31 (Tuesday)	Submission of budget requests by principals and administrative staff 8:30 a.m.
November 20 (Monday)	Public reminder concerning December 11th as date for public hearing on budget
November 27 (Monday)	Administrative budget committee meeting #3 (9:30 a.m.)
	Analysis of budget requests and review of preliminary priorities
	Preliminary report on market analysis of cohort school divisions
November 29 (Thursday)	Advertise for public hearing scheduled December 11
December 4 (Monday)	Advertise for public hearing scheduled December 11
December 4 (Monday)	Annual school board legislative work session
	Final report on market analysis of cohort school divisions
	Refinement and alignment of projected expenditures
December 11 (Monday)	Public hearing on proposed budget (regular meeting) Sharon Elementary
	Report to school board on preliminary budget priorities (regular meeting)
	Invitation for school board member input on preliminary budget priorities
December 18 (Monday)	Administrative budget committee meeting #5 (9:30 a.m.)
January 8 (Monday)	School board work session 6:00 p.m.
	Analysis of preliminary budget priorities
	Review of projected state revenues based on the Governor's proposed budget
January 11 (Thursday)	Administrative budget committee meeting #6 (9:00 a.m.)
	Refinement of budget priorities based on school board work session
January 22 (Monday)	Presentation of projected state revenues based on the Governor's proposed budget
	Invitation for further school board member input on budget
January 25 (Thursday)	Administrative budget committee meeting #7 (9:00 a.m.)
	Refinement of budget priorities based on public hearing and board member input
February 5 (Monday)	Presentation of first formal draft of budget. (School Board work session) 6:00 p.m.
February 7 (Wednesday)	Administrative budget committee meeting #8 (9:00 a.m.)
	Refinement of budget priorities based on February 6 work session
	Analysis of House and Senate versions of budget
February 19 (Monday)	Presentation of second formal draft of budget (regular meeting)
	Update on projected state revenues
March 5 (Monday)	(School Board work session) 6:00 p.m.
March 8 (Thursday)	Administrative budget committee meeting #9 (9:00 a.m.)
March 19 (Monday)	Target date for school board approval of budget (regular meeting) 6:00 p.m.
March 27 (Tuesday)	Target date for joint budget work session with Board of Supervisors
	Presentation of budget to Board of Supervisors
April 24 (Tuesday)	Target date for approval of budget resolution by Board of Supervisors
May TBD	Called meeting for School Board certification of final budget April 25-May 4
May 7 (Monday)	Target date for issuance of professional personnel contracts
May 21 (Monday)	Target date for issuance of classified personnel contracts

Source: Allegheny County Public Schools, Finance Department, 2006.



**FINDING**

ACPS spends more than its peers on instructional disbursements. Division decisions on spending for instructional and administrative disbursements demonstrate management's philosophy on spending priorities. An analysis of division expenditures, Evergreen survey results, and discussions with staff indicate concurrence that funds are managed wisely.

**Exhibit 4-7** shows an analysis of instructional expenditures for ACPS and peer divisions. As the exhibit shows, ACPS spends more per pupil for instructional disbursements than all peer divisions. ACPS spends \$6,438 per pupil on instructional disbursements which is more than all peers and the school division average of \$5,916.

**Exhibit 4-7**  
**Instructional Disbursements by Division**  
**2004-05 School Year**

School Division	Instruction	Per Pupil Cost
Nottoway County	\$13,567,587	\$5,674
Patrick County	\$14,755,543	\$5,719
Dickenson County	\$14,926,496	\$5,985
Southampton County	\$17,071,518	\$5,986
Prince Edward County	\$17,036,426	\$6,215
<b>Alleghany County</b>	<b>\$19,437,221</b>	<b>\$6,638</b>
<b>School Division Average</b>	<b>\$15,471,514</b>	<b>\$5,916</b>

Source: Virginia Department of Education, Web site, 2006.

**Exhibit 4-8** shows an analysis of administrative expenditures for ACPS and its peer divisions. As the exhibit shows, ACPS spends third among the six peer divisions for per pupil administrative disbursements. In other words, ACPS spends \$299 per pupil on administrative disbursements; this is third best of all peers and the school division average of \$282.

**Exhibit 4-8**  
**Administrative Disbursements\* by Division**  
**2004-05 School Year**

School Division	Administration	Per Pupil Cost
Patrick County	\$330,078	\$128
Nottoway County	\$539,717	\$226
<b>Alleghany County</b>	<b>\$847,241</b>	<b>\$299</b>
Southampton County	\$868,974	\$305
Prince Edward County	\$925,559	\$338
Dickenson County	\$1,030,430	\$413
<b>Peer Division Average</b>	<b>\$738,952</b>	<b>\$282</b>

Source: Virginia Department of Education, Web site, 2006.

\*Note: In the VA DOE database, administration includes central office positions; principals and assistant principals are coded within the instructional category (and not under administration) in the Superintendent's Annual Report.



Evergreen’s survey results indicate that teachers and administrators *strongly agree* or *agree* that funds are managed wisely to support education in the school division. **Exhibit 4-9** shows overwhelmingly that survey respondents *agree* that funds are spent to support education.

**Exhibit 4-9**  
**Survey Results on Use of Division Funds in**  
**Allegheny County Public Schools and Districts in Evergreen’s Survey Database**

Survey Statement: Funds are used wisely to support education in the school division.	Allegheny County Public Schools		Evergreen’s Survey Database	
	Strongly Agree/Agree	Strongly Disagree/Disagree	Strongly Agree/Agree	Strongly Disagree/Disagree
Teachers	47.8%	24.5%	30.9%	34.0%
Administrators	95.2%	0.0%	75.0%	13.6%

Source: Evergreen Solutions Survey Results, 2006.

The school community clearly supports the use of funds to support education. The division is spending more than peer divisions on instruction and is third in spending among six peers on district administration. This finding supports the opinions of the survey respondents.

**COMMENDATION**

**Allegheny County Public Schools is commended for wisely managing funds to support education in the school division.**

**4.2 FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT**

Effective financial management ensures that a school division properly accounts for all revenue from federal, state, and local sources, properly identifies and records expenditure transactions, and maintains an accurate and up-to-date statement of financial position. Proper, accurate, and timely financial information is crucial to the decision-making process necessary for the overall successful operation of a school division.

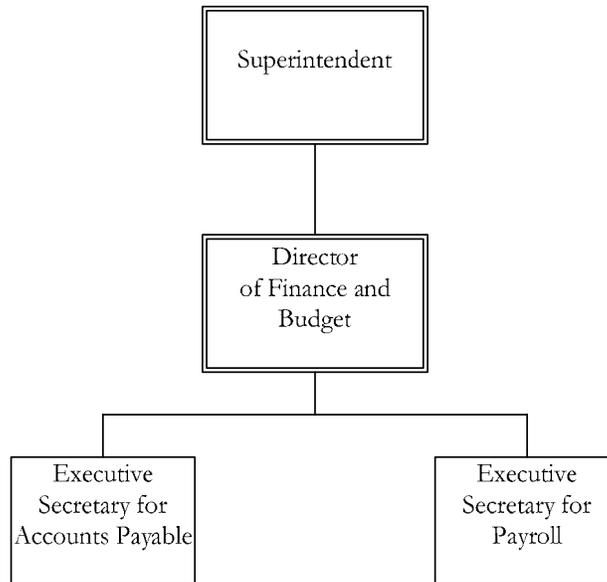
The Financial Management Section includes several aspects of ACPS financial management and accountability. The review in this section included an analysis of financial accounting and reporting, a review of activity funds, and a review of the division payroll function. The ACPS financial management system comprises the reporting and accountability functions for all funds, including the district activity funds accounting system. The Food Service is accounted for independently of other division funds. Financial and accounting records are maintained centrally with disbursements controlled by purchase orders and specific authorization. Activity fund accounting reports are compiled monthly and audited annually.

Financial management and accountability in ACPS is performed substantially at the division office by three central office employees reporting to the Superintendent. In addition to financial management, the Finance Department employees are responsible for other financial aspects, such as the division budgets, payroll, and activity funds. The financial management functions in



Allegheny County Public Schools are supervised by the Director of Finance and Budget, and distributed among the Director, the Disbursements Secretary, and the Payroll Secretary. **Exhibit 4-10** shows the organizational structure of the ACPS Finance Department.

**Exhibit 4-10  
Organizational Chart  
ACPS Finance Department  
2006-07 School Year**



Source: Allegheny County Public Schools, 2006.

**Exhibit 4-11** provides Evergreen’s survey results relative to school division financial management. The results indicate that teachers and administrators agree that school division financial management is *adequate* or *outstanding*. ACPS teachers rate the school division financial management as *adequate* or *outstanding* at 59.2 percent, compared to Evergreen’s survey database of 37.1 percent. Administrators rate ACPS financial management as *adequate* or *outstanding* at 90.4 percent, compared to 57.6 percent for survey database respondents.

**Exhibit 4-11  
Teachers and Administrators Survey Results on Financial Management in  
Allegheny County Public Schools and Districts in Evergreen’s Survey Database**

Survey Statement: Indicate your opinion of school division financial management.	Allegheny County Public Schools		Evergreen’s Survey Database	
	Needs Major or Some Improvement	Adequate or Outstanding	Needs Major or Some Improvement	Adequate or Outstanding
Teachers	8.7%	59.2%	42.3%	37.1%
Administrators	9.6%	90.4%	37.9%	57.6%

Source: Evergreen Solutions Survey Results, 2006.



**FINDING**

The ACPS Finance Department recently implemented a new financial accounting system which saves operating time and money. The ACPS Finance Department previously used the CIMS accounting system, a system that forced staff to handcount totals to get reliable data information. The old system was reportedly cumbersome and antiquated. The new RDA Expert is an integrated system capable of generating various reports regarding subfunctions, such as payroll, human resources, and accounts payable.

Since migrating to the new system in January 2006, the division has saved operating time and money. The division expects to save \$19,096 annually on maintenance support. The maintenance costs for the old system was \$32,346 annually, and the new system is \$13,250 annually. By eliminating time required to re-process certain aspects of the financial accounting system, the division has saved staff operating time as well.

**COMMENDATION:**

**Allegheny County Public Schools is commended for its initiative to save division time and money by improving efficiencies in the financial accounting system.**

**FINDING**

The ACPS Finance Department and division schools are on different accounting systems. The Finance Department has implemented a new financial accounting system with integration capabilities. The division schools are on a different financial accounting system which does not communicate with the Finance Department’s RDA system. Currently, hard copy reports are generated at the schools and taken to the Finance Department. In some cases, such as for disbursements, finance employees have to re-enter the data into the finance system.

Financial functions that could be accessed online through an integrated system include:

- Purchase Orders
- Monthly Instructional Allotments and Reports
- Monthly Consumables and Reports
- School Activity Reports and Information
- Monthly Financial Expenditure Reports

**RECOMMENDATION**

**Recommendation 4-2:**

**Integrate the financial accounting system between schools and departments in the division.**

Integrating the division financial accounting systems will help eliminate redundancy of processing operations and potentially reduce maintenance over the long term. Creating an integrated system will provide a streamlined accounting process for the schools and departments.



## FISCAL IMPACT

The financial impact of this recommendation is approximately \$8,100 for the modules and implementation and annual support of \$6,000, for a total of \$14,100. Also, the annual software fee is \$3,500 annually (\$500 x 7 schools). Subsequent year costs are \$6,000 for central and \$3,500 for all the schools for a total annual maintenance of \$9,500. Although not directly quantifiable, qualitative benefits of an integrated system include a more efficient process which will avoid unnecessary redundancies and potential for errors. This recommendation does not include a reduction in force; however, certain work load efficiencies can be achieved.

Recommendation	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12
Integrate Financial Accounting Systems	(\$14,100)	(\$9,500)	(\$9,500)	(\$9,500)	(\$9,500)

## FINDING

ACPS lacks a current comprehensive procedures manual that clearly sets forth the work flow of business and financial transactions. A lack of clearly defined, communicated, and implemented operating procedures can lead to uncertainty and inconsistency in the processing of financial transactions. The ACPS Finance Department provides certain written procedures in memo form and provides certain employees with a Secretarial Inservice Handbook. The ACPS Board Policy Manual includes certain policies for business and financial functions.

Examples of business and financial policies adopted by the Board include:

- Management of Funds
- Annual Budget
- Custody and Disbursement of School Funds
- Financial Accounting and Reporting
- Purchasing
- Vendor/Payroll Deductions
- Payroll
- Expense Reimbursements

Procedures setting forth, in more detail, the work flow and interrelationships of business and financial functions, provide guidance to employees, and help ensure a more consistent application of Board policies. A consistent application of Board policies is essential for smooth, equitable division operations. Written documentation of procedures, widely communicated, provides a framework in which intergovernmental cooperation can thrive.

## RECOMMENDATION

### Recommendation 4-3:

**Develop and implement a comprehensive procedures manual for business and financial transactions.**



Implementing detailed procedures that document the financial accounting processes will provide ACPS employees with guidance to consistently apply Board policies. Compiling the division's current procedures with newly developed procedures should enhance the overall accountability structure and help eliminate any uncertainty about division expectations.

## FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

## FINDING

The ACPS has no supporting documentation for interest earnings. Division records indicate interest earnings for certain funds; however, documentation for the interest earning calculations and the allocation formula are not evident in the Finance Office. Finance Department employees lack sufficient information to properly allocate interest earnings and prepare cash flow statements.

**Exhibit 4-12** shows interest earnings for the 2003-04 through 2005-06 fiscal years.

**Exhibit 4-12**  
**Annual Interest Earnings**  
**2003-04 through 2005-06 Fiscal Years**

Category	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06
Interest Earnings	\$2,867	\$18,665	\$50,140

*Source: Created by Evergreen Solutions from ACPS Records, November 2006.*

Interest earnings numbers are provided to the division by the County Treasurer. The division works with the County Treasurer whose responsibility it is to invest division funds at the highest rate of return possible, while safeguarding division assets by ensuring safety and liquidity of funds. The Treasurer's investment decisions are governed by Commonwealth statutes which set forth permissible investments. The Treasurer takes into consideration the cash flow needs of the division balanced with the goals of maximizing the rate of return on funds while protecting ACPS resources.

The Finance Department is responsible for prudent management and accountability of public resources provided for educational services. Interest earnings are public resources for which the ACPS Finance staff provides accounting operations. Sufficient supporting documentation is important for the division to properly report and allocate interest earnings.

## RECOMMENDATION

### Recommendation 4-4:

**Develop and implement a coordinated ACPS Board/Allegheny County Government procedure for the documentation and allocation of interest earnings.**



Having a coordinated procedure between Alleghany County and School Board regarding documentation for interest earnings should allow the ACPS Finance Department to more adequately allocate and document interest on division funds. The County currently provides the amount of interest earnings. Providing the interest earnings rate and balances to which to rates are applied should enable ACPS to more effectively process its financial transactions.

## FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

## FINDING

ACPS lacks the most desirable fiscal internal control over certain aspects of its business and financial operations. The division issues approximately 1,500 purchase orders and processes more than 13,000 payroll and accounts payable disbursements annually. An unclear accountability system for financial transactions can create ambiguity in establishing responsibility for potential errors or irregularities. Lack of internal control increases the potential for the occurrence of errors or irregularities. Documentation provided to Evergreen states as follows:

*Internal control techniques are used by all administrators to make their operations conform to a desired pattern to establish objectives. However, some of the most desirable fiscal internal controls cannot be fully implemented in procedures because of the shortage of personnel and the nature of the operation.*

Instances of a lack of internal control include:

- Disbursements –The same employee has access to checks, access to vendor files, and accounting records.
- Purchasing – Purchases are sometimes received by employees making the purchase with the same employee recording the transaction and processing payments.
- Purchasing – Purchases are sometimes made prior to approval of a valid purchase order.

School Board Policy DJ-R (4) requires that:

*...all expenditures using funds allocated by the school board shall be preceded by the issuance of a requisition form that shall receive prior approval of the superintendent or his designee, and final authorization of the Administrative Assistant for Budget and Finance.*

School Board Policy DJ-R (5) states:

*..all expenditures of school-based funds, such as funds resulting from fundraising activity, shall be preceded by the issuance of a school-based purchase order that shall receive prior approval of the principal.*



- Payroll – The same employee adds new employees, records payroll transactions, and processes checks.
- Student Activity Funds – The same employee has the responsibility for receipting, recording, and depositing funds. Board Policy DJ-R (13) states: “whenever practicable, principals should avoid situations whereby the individual who is responsible for a given deposit, is also the individual who conducts the deposit of those same funds in the bank.”

School Board Policy DJA entitled, Purchasing Authority, states that:

*The Superintendent, or his/her designee, shall establish appropriate procedures for internal accounting controls. School Board policy DJ-R entitled, Regulations Governing Purchases and Internal Accounting, states that “the Administrative Assistant for Budget and Finance shall serve as the Superintendent’s designee for all matters associated with the enforcement of these regulations.*

A proper segregation of duties is essential to establish checks and balances, and responsibility for specific transactions. The limited number of division personnel makes the establishment of “textbook” internal control measures difficult. ACPS has, however, established compensating controls to help mitigate the lack of segregation of duties by having the ACPS School Board and County approve the disbursements and check registers. These controls are positive steps, but a more adequate accountability system can be achieved with a better segregation of duties or stronger compensating controls.

## RECOMMENDATION

### Recommendation 4-5:

#### **Strengthen internal controls over division assets in Allegheny County Public Schools.**

Strengthening internal controls over division assets can be achieved by improving the segregation of duties. For example, the same employee who is responsible for the recording of transactions for disbursements should not have the ability to add new payees and/or have access to checks. Stronger compensating controls could result from changes in procedures such as strict control of the division’s vendor and payee functions. Division financial management practices should comply with school board policies.

## FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

## FINDING

Disbursements for purchasing card transactions are not properly documented. A review of accounts payable disbursement records indicate a lack of sufficient detail to determine the division purpose of the expenditure. For example, expenditures for meals purchased with the First Citizens Visa were not always documented adequately. Pertinent information, such as the



names of the meal participants, the purpose of the expenditure, and an itemized transaction receipt were not always apparent.

ACPS purchasing cards are kept in a locked safe in the Finance Department. Cards are individually checked out to users by Finance staff. Finance staff maintains documentation of the purchasing card use, including the date, person checking out the card, and the type of card. All cards have purchasing limits.

**Exhibit 4-13** shows examples of purchasing card payments made without proper documentation of the purpose and/or an itemized receipt showing the purchased items.

**Exhibit 4-13**  
**Example Purchasing Card Disbursements**  
**2005-06 Fiscal Year**

Date	Vendor	Amount	Purpose	Itemized Receipt	Participants
May 10, 2006	Court Street Restaurant	\$34.00	RDA Training	No	No
May 10, 2006	Quiznos	59.94	Scoring Session	No	No
May 9, 2006	Pizza Hut	42.88	Scoring Session	No	No
April 30, 2006	Old Virginia Barbeque	14.35	Administrative Meeting	No	No
April 30, 2006	Applebee's Grill & Bar	45.00	Teachers' Seminar	No	Yes
April 24, 2006	Cuccis Pizzeria	48.19	Secretary Luncheon	No	No
April 27, 2006	Court Street Restaurant	46.13	Copier Visits	No	No
November 25, 2006	Ruby Tuesday	32.17	Unknown	No	No
November 29, 2005	Court Street Restaurant	215.63	Legislative Workshop	No	No
October 18, 2005	Longhorn Steakhouse	58.80	Unknown	No	No
October 28, 2005	BoardWalk Billys	61.50	Unknown	No	No
October 18, 2005	Smokey Bones	33.48	Unknown	No	No
October 16, 2005	Outback Steakhouse	21.35	Unknown	No	No
August 25, 2005	Chilies Bar & Grill	33.27	Unknown	No	No

Source: Allegheny County Public Schools, Disbursements Records, 2006.

## RECOMMENDATION

### Recommendation 4-6:

**Amend Board policies and develop procedures that strengthen the accountability for purchasing card transactions.**

Strengthening procedures regarding purchasing card transactions should improve control over division assets and help ensure compliance with Board policies. For example, written procedures should be established that clearly set forth authorized meal expenditures (such as the amounts, limits on alcohol, the purpose, and eligible participants). Enhanced Board policies and procedures will provide guidance and support Finance Department efforts toward accountability.

## FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.



### 4.3 STUDENT ACTIVITY FUNDS

Student activity funds are comprised primarily of funds received from extracurricular school activities, such as athletic events, entertainment, clubs and fundraisers. School divisions are responsible to account for student activity funds in accordance with regulations established by the Virginia State Board of Education. Principals are responsible for managing the student activity funds and providing a system of accountability to safeguard assets.

In addition to student-sponsored activities, schools account for consumable fees in the activities funds. Consumable fees are identified as those tangible items used in the school division that are consumed or lose usefulness within one year. ACPS parents are not charged consumable fees. Rather, the ACPS Board provides consumable funds to the individual schools for purchase items (such as batteries, ink cartridges, glue, laminating supplies, and student planners).

Virginia Code states that a school board may establish accounts in each of its departments and schools committed solely for the purchase of instructional materials and office supplies. The code states that the Board may authorize up to 35 percent of the funds budgeted to a school for such allocations.

#### FINDING

ACPS does not have a current, comprehensive School Activity Fund Manual. The School Activity Fund Manual presented at the time of Evergreen's site visit shows a School Board adoption date of March 16, 1992. Board policy DI, entitled Financial Accounting and Reporting, references school level accounting. Included as reference in the Board Policy Manual is a memo dated July 26, 2004 from the Director of Budget and Finance which outlines procedures for consumable fees. Consumable fees are accounted for in the activities funds of the schools.

The July 26, 2004 memo sets forth the statutory authorization for consumable fees, explains the relevance and context of the fees, and discusses the purpose of the fees. The memo outlines guidelines for the allocation and management of the consumable fees as follows:

- *A check made payable to each school will be forwarded from the Director of Budget and Finance to each principal on or before August 16, 2004 to be deposited into a separate consumable account line.*
- *This account will be managed by the principal of the school.*
- *A monthly accounting of the funds must be submitted to the Director of Budget and Finance. This should also include invoices, receipts, and purchase orders.*
- *No additional funds shall be transferred to or commingled with this account.*
- *All funds must be encumbered by May 1, and spent by June 1 of the fiscal year.*
- *On June 2, all funds remaining in the account must be returned by check to the Board (Director of Budget and Finance) simultaneously with a full accounting of the disbursements.*



Procedures in the July 26, 2004 memo are well written and informative, and serve as a model for procedures to be included in a comprehensive, updated School Activity Fund Manual.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

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

#### **Develop a comprehensive School Activity Funds Manual.**

Having a current School Activity Funds Manual should document the intent of the Board, and provide guidance for school activity funds. The School Activity Funds Manual should include procedures for all funds accounted for at the school level.

## **FISCAL IMPACT**

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources. School division staff generally develop manuals as a part of effective implementation of Board policy.

## **FINDING**

The independent audit of the ACPS school activity accounts found several comments regarding audit findings and recommendations. Each year, Alleghany County Public Schools contracts with an independent external auditor to perform audits of the division's school activity funds. The Public School Activity Funds Cash Basis Financial Statement (Year Ended June 30, 2006) Audit Report lists 10 comments for the schools and departments audited. Most of the comments are minor; however, some represent repeat audit findings.

**Exhibit 4-14** shows examples of the audit comments regarding school activity accounts for two fiscal years (FY 2005 and FY 2006).

The division provided documentation of steps taken to assure a sound system of accountability at the school level such as:

- every principal is engaged with a directive to submit an action plan for every citation in every activity fund audit every year;
- school plans are reviewed prior to presentation of the audit report to the School Board; and
- the execution of effective fund controls is included in principal evaluations.

While the division has taken steps to minimize audit findings, it is evident from the examples, that the division schools have repeat comments for the same issue (such as purchases prior to purchase orders and payment of sales tax). Internal control and accountability procedures need to be strengthened to preclude such instances of repeat comments.



**Exhibit 4-14**  
**School Activity Funds**  
**Year Ended June 30**  
**Independent Audit Comments**  
**2005 and 2006 Fiscal Years**

June 30th	Audit Comment
2005	Public Schools are not covered under the Virginia Security Deposits Act and should evaluate their coverage under the FDIC.
2005	Actual invoice was not attached with authorization to pay.
2005	Purchase orders dated after the invoice.
2005	School cashed checks.
2005	School paid sales tax.
2006	Teacher receipts not properly accounted for.
2006	Ambiguous receipts.
2006	Purchase orders dated after the invoice.
2006	School paid sales tax.
2006	Disbursement posted incorrectly.
2006	Money deposited prior to actual recording to books.
2006	Principal's checks chased by the school cafeteria.

Source: Allegheny County Public Schools, Audited Financial Statements, 2005 and 2006.

As **Exhibit 4-15** shows, approximately \$2 million dollars is accounted for in the ACPS school activity accounts each year. Receipts and disbursements of such magnitude must be properly safeguarded with a strong accountability system.

**Exhibit 4-15**  
**Activity Funds Year-End Balances**  
**2003 to 2006 Fiscal Years**

Year Ended June 30th	Beginning Balances	Receipts	Disbursements	Ending Balances
2006	\$360,461.25	\$2,045,229.47	\$1,961,374.82	\$444,315.90
2005	323,589.69	1,901,414.48	1,864,542.80	360,461.37
2004	353,575.45	1,605,261.62	1,635,247.38	323,589.69
2003	350,309.65	1,471,789.86	1,468,524.05	353,575.46

Source: Created by Evergreen Solutions from ACPS Activity Funds Audits, 2006.

## RECOMMENDATION

### Recommendation 4-8:

**Strengthen internal controls to reduce repeat audit findings and ensure compliance with federal, state, and local rules, regulations, and sound financial practices.**

Division finance staff are auditing accounts and providing technical assistance as needed. An emphasis on the elimination of repeat audit comments at the school level should be encouraged.



**FISCAL IMPACT**

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

**4.4 ASSET MANAGEMENT**

Virginia school divisions are responsible for the protection, prudent management, and accountability of public assets. Fixed assets are a major investment of school division resources. A Fixed Asset Management Program supports the accountability for division property through proper accounting control and safeguarding of assets. A Fixed Assets Management Program provides safeguarding of assets (such as land and buildings, furniture and equipment, books and vehicles). An effective fixed asset management system requires that responsibilities for the safeguarding of assets are clearly defined with policies and procedures established to protect division assets from initial acquisition through disposal.

**Exhibit 4-16** shows the ACPS June 30, 2005 schedule of assets with a value of close to \$3 million in machinery and equipment.

**Exhibit 4-16  
Schedule of Fixed Assets  
June 30, 2005**

Asset Category	Beginning Balance	Increases	Decreases	Ending Balance
<b>Capital Assets, not being depreciated:</b>				
Land	\$328,632			\$328,632
Construction in Progress	4,591,460	\$518,698		5,110,158
<b>Total Capital Assets not Depreciated</b>	4,920,092	518,698		5,438,790
<b>Capital Assets, being depreciated:</b>				
Buildings	7,927,480			7,927,480
Machinery and Equipment	2,910,497	259,206	(\$204,258)	2,965,445
<b>Total Capital Assets being Depreciated</b>	10,837,977	259,206	(204,258)	10,892,925
<b>Less Accumulated Depreciation for:</b>				
Buildings	(5,148,181)	(182,789)	523,292	(4,807,678)
Machinery and Equipment	(1,620,440)	(716,691)	202,468	(2,134,663)
<b>Total Accumulated Depreciation</b>	(6,768,621)	(899,480)	725,760	(6,942,341)
<b>Total Capital Assets being Depreciated, net</b>	4,069,356	(640,274)	521,502	3,950,584
<b>Total Capital Assets, net</b>	8,989,448	(121,576)	521,502	9,389,374

Source: Created by Evergreen Solutions from ACPS Records, 2006.

Alleghany County Public Schools has two Board policies governing asset management. ACPS Board Policy DI, entitled Financial Accounting and Reporting, has a section on inventory that states: "The Superintendent or his/her designee will be responsible for the inventory of all fixed assets of the school division". In addition, Board Policy DN, entitled Disposal of Surplus Items, discusses the methods of property disposal.



**FINDING**

Allegheny County Public Schools has not maintained a comprehensive Fixed Asset Management Plan. Responsibility for assets is spread among staff, primarily staff at the Educational Technology Center (ETC) who handle the division’s technology, and the Director of Administration who handles other property. The ETC maintains an extensive detailed listing of computers, printers, and other technology for all schools and departments. The Administrative Services Department maintains the inventory of non-fleet vehicles, buses, buildings, and equipment. **Exhibit 4-17** shows examples in inventories maintained by ACPS personnel.

**Exhibit 4-17  
Examples of Inventories Maintained by Division Personnel  
June 30, 2005**

<b>Asset Category</b>	<b>Documentation Provided</b>							
Powered Equipment Inventory	Description	Building Location	Model Number	Serial Number	Energy Sources	Lagout Tagout	Vendor	Capacity
Buildings	Name	Address	Building Value	CTS Value				
Inland Marine	Description	Value						
Vehicles	Vehicle License Numbers	Make Model	Body Number	Capacity/ Cost	Body Type	Purchase Date	New Used	Driver
Computers	Description	Room	IP Address	Operating System	Serial Number	Manufacturer	Device Type	

Source: Created by Evergreen Solutions from ACPS Records, 2006.

Safeguarding and recording of assets is essential for proper control and accountability over division assets. A comprehensive asset management plan provides guidance and procedures for use in safeguarding division assets.

**RECOMMENDATION**

**Recommendation 4-9:**

**Develop and implement a comprehensive Fixed Asset Management Plan.**

Developing a Fixed Asset Management Plan will provide guidance for the proper accounting and safeguarding of division assets. A comprehensive Fixed Asset Management Plan should include an updated Board policy, updated comprehensive procedures, samples of expectations for inventory records, and a clear method of communications.

Dollar values for inventory should be established as well as procedures for annual inventory of division assets. Certain property and equipment (such as computers, digital cameras, etc.) should be defaced and marked with a ACPS property control number. A bar coding system should be implemented and become a part of the accountability system.



The accountability system should require information on the purchase (such as the purchase order number, purchase date, item description including serial numbers and the physical location of the item). Recent changes in accounting standards require a schedule for depreciation, such as those outlined in the annual financial statements. The fixed asset records should be updated by additions and deletions of property and equipment. Purchases and disposals should be maintained in accordance with Commonwealth law and Board policy.

## **FISCAL IMPACT**

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

## **4.5 RISK MANAGEMENT**

Virginia school divisions are responsible for the protection, prudent management, and safeguarding of division assets. An effective risk management program provides for a safeguarding of division assets by minimizing risk of loss and protecting division assets. ACPS is responsible for safeguarding division assets including not only fixed assets, but human resources such as students and employees as well. An effective risk management program includes:

- analyzing alternatives to traditional insurance coverages;
- analyzing deductibles, out of pocket and copayment expenses; and
- identifying, and protecting against, potentially dangerous situations to minimize exposure for potential losses.

Divisions must provide control of risks of loss through insurance, education, and safety programs. Workers' compensation insurance protects against lost wages in the event of work-related injuries, and loss prevention plans strive to prevent injuries. Property and casualty insurance protect the division from liabilities resulting from incidents such property damage and bodily injury. The Evergreen Review Team conducted an analysis and evaluation of all aspects of ACPS risk management functions, including workers' compensation, property casualty and liability insurances, and employee-related insurances.

The school division functions partially within the Alleghany County's Risk Management Program. The County provides disbursement signatory, banking services procurement and monitoring, bank reconciliations, and investment services. ACPS provides insurance coverages for employee health and workers' compensation, property casualty and liability protection, and training for certain loss prevention. All such services are critical to an effective risk management program.

## **FINDING**

The ACPS School Board has recently approved a comprehensive Emergency Management Plan. The plan identifies critical emergency contact numbers such as the police, Alleghany Regional



Hospital, and the Allegheny County Sheriff’s Office as well as emergency contact numbers for the Superintendent and senior staff. School administration contact numbers are provided in an appendix. The content of the plan is sufficiently detailed to function as a procedures manual. Such a document serves as a ready reference for school and department personnel for use in potentially stressful and confusing situations.

**Exhibit 4-18** shows the contents of the division Emergency Management Plan.

The development and implementation of the comprehensive Emergency Management Plan provides guidance to employees in the event of emergency or crisis situations. Communication and training for the plan are essential to ensure consistent application of the procedures outlined in the plan.

**Exhibit 4-18**  
**Emergency Management Plan**  
**Subject Matter Covered**

Subject Areas Included	
Abduction/Kidnapping	Intruder/Hostage
After School Hours	Lock Down Procedures
Assault/Fights	Missing Child
Bomb Threat	Plane Crash
Bus Accident	Radiological Incident
Chemicals	Rape/Assault
Child Left at School	Serious Injury/Death
Containment Procedures	Sheltering Procedures/Civil Defense Alert
Demonstrations	Shooting
Disturbances	Suicide
Early Dismissal	Terrorism
Evacuation/Relocation Procedures	Utility Emergency
Fire	Vandalism/Burglary
Hazardous Materials	Weapons
Health Crisis/Medical Emergencies	Weather

*Source: Created by Evergreen Solutions from ACPS Records, 2006.*

**COMMENDATION**

**Allegheny County Public Schools is commended for developing a comprehensive Emergency Management Plan.**

**FINDING**

The responsibility for the workers’ compensation function is disaggregated among several employees in Allegheny County Public Schools. The division’s organizational chart and employee listing do not show the risk management function. Evergreen’s interview schedule listed an individual as the contact for risk management; however, our interviews identified several employees with portions of the risk management function. The division lacks a central point of responsibility to ensure overall program efficiencies and effectiveness. Such a function,



responsible for the avoidance of risk and the safeguarding of division assets, must have established programmatic responsibility and authority.

Examples of portions of the risk management function assigned to various employees are as follows:

- The Director of Human Resources and Program Development is responsible for the contract procurement and management for health, vision, dental and various employee benefits, property casualty and liability coverage's, and workers' compensation.
- The Director of Administration is responsible for developing and implementing components of a loss prevention program such as the Emergency Management Plan, safety orientation, and training for four support departments and new employees.
- The Payroll Secretary is responsible for processing and managing the ACPS workers' claims and files. Her duties include managing various reports for health insurance, workers' compensation, and related injury claims.

Establishment of a primary point of responsibility will help assure a timely, comprehensive approach to risk avoidance and management. It is imperative that, in the event of an emergency, the division has established clear, concise emergency contacts and backup contacts to minimize confusion and the potential for loss.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

### **Recommendation 4-10:**

#### **Establish central responsibility and authority for risk management in one employee.**

Work assignments can continue to be disaggregated provided central responsibility is established. The employee charged with primary responsibility should coordinate all aspects of the risk management function, ensure compliance with federal, state, and local laws, rules and regulations, and maintain comprehensive programmatic and training records.

## **FISCAL IMPACT**

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

## **FINDING**

Allegheny County Public Schools has no formalized, widely communicated, loss prevention or injury reduction plan. The division has several memos, training videos, and booklets that provide information on various loss prevention topics, but does not have a clear, comprehensive loss prevention plan.

Several training opportunities are offered through the ACPS Department of Administration, including topics such as:

- asbestos awareness;



- MSDS notifications;
- hazardous chemicals;
- confined spaces;
- slips, trips, and falls; and
- fire safety.

**Exhibit 4-19** shows the workers' compensation utilization for 2003 through 2005.

**Exhibit 4-19**  
**Workers' Compensation Utilization**  
**2003 through 2005 Fiscal Years**

Year Ended June 30th	2003	2004	2005
Annual Claims Amounts	\$29,355	\$158,440	\$23,358
Annual Number of Claims	27	30	24

*Source: Created by Evergreen Solutions from ACPS Records, November 2006.*

ACPS workers' compensation premiums are determined by utilization, reflected in an experience modifier. ACPS workers' compensation records explain the experience modifier as follows:

*The experience modifier is compiled by the insurer by analyzing the loss of history of the insured for the past three years beyond the most recent year. Better than average loss experience is reflected with a number less than one or a "credit mod" and adverse loss history is reflecting in a number greater than one, the "debit mod" This standard premium generated through payrolls and rates is then multiplied by the experience modification to generate the final premium.*

**Exhibit 4-20** shows the workers' compensation experience modifiers for the 2003-04 through the 2006-07 school years.

**Exhibit 4-20**  
**Workers' Compensation Experience Modifiers**  
**2003 through 2006 Fiscal Years**

Workers' Compensation Experience Modifier			
2003-04	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07
.98	.86	.86	1.07

*Source: Alleghany County Public Schools, Workers' Compensation Records, 2006.*

## RECOMMENDATION

### Recommendation 4-11:

**Develop, communicate, and implement a comprehensive loss prevention plan for injuries and work-related accidents.**

ACPS has several components of a loss prevention plan. Coordinating staff efforts and communicating the plan and training opportunities should create an awareness and help create a culture of safety. Once the plan is properly implemented, documentation of the plan and



participation with plan activities should prove useful in the event of a loss and/or challenges resulting from a loss. A well-documented, comprehensive loss prevention plan should help reduce loss claims and better safeguard ACPS employees and other assets. The development and communication of a loss prevention plan will show the value that the ACPS Board places upon loss prevention.

**FISCAL IMPACT**

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

**ALSO SEE RECOMMENDATIONS 10-4 AND 10-19 IN CHAPTER 10**



**CHAPTER 5:  
EDUCATIONAL SERVICE DELIVERY AND  
MANAGEMENT**



*Chapter 5*

***EDUCATIONAL SERVICE DELIVERY  
AND MANAGEMENT***

This chapter addresses the instructional delivery operations of the Allegheny County Public Schools (ACPS) and includes the following eight sections:

- 5.1 Organization of Curriculum and Instruction
- 5.2 Instructional Delivery and Student Performance
- 5.3 Special Education
- 5.4 Parent Involvement
- 5.5 Gifted and Talented Program
- 5.6 Instructional Technology
- 5.7 Career and Technical Education
- 5.8 English for Speakers of Other Languages

The educational service delivery of a school system depends on central office staff to serve as the support system, and provide leadership and coordination for the education that is provided in district schools. The effectiveness of instructional delivery depends on factors such as organization, staffing and procedures that have been created and monitored in order to assure consistency of instruction and student assessment across the division. The way in which these central office factors are designed can either support or prevent progress towards high achievement for students.

**CHAPTER SUMMARY**

The ACPS Instructional Department is staffed by personnel who are well-suited to their particular responsibilities and are enthusiastically committed to continual improvement of services to the students and staff of the school division. Division leadership has a vision of critical priorities it must address and the impact they will make on student performance and employee knowledge and skills. They have established sound practices that serve as a foundation for using data to inform instruction and strengthen curriculum and specific content programs.

The division's inclusive approach to ongoing curricular revision has contributed to a strong middle school math program based on differentiated instruction for all students and to all schools and the division making Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP). The division's concern for reaching the *No Child Left Behind* goal of all students graduating is evidenced in a comprehensive, divisionwide initiative to address factors at all levels that lead to potential dropouts. ACPS is also commended for integrating student literacy into parental engagement activities.

Recommendations contained in this chapter relate to refining and expanding current procedures, structures, and functions in order to contribute to more effective coordination and planning of tasks that should provide a more cohesive support system for the curricular and instructional



functions of the division's operations. Some key recommendations that should assist the division in achieving an even stronger instructional program for every student include:

- identify required training for teachers that will equip them to routinely use available data for instructional decisions;
- expand the division's current examination of curriculum and data to cross-grade discussions and curriculum map development;
- formalize current instructional monitoring procedures into a comprehensive, unified, divisionwide approach;
- identify special and regular education teachers who are willing to co-teach to model and extend its benefits for students to other teachers;
- adapt strategies proven effective in other Virginia divisions to address student needs in regular classes before referral to special education;
- extend partnerships with the community college and community organizations to provide reading instruction for parents at sites within the community;
- expand the ACPS Gifted Program to include elements to nurture student talents and include principals in plan development; and
- devise ways to incorporate English Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) students and their families into division and community activities.

## **5.1 ORGANIZATION OF CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION**

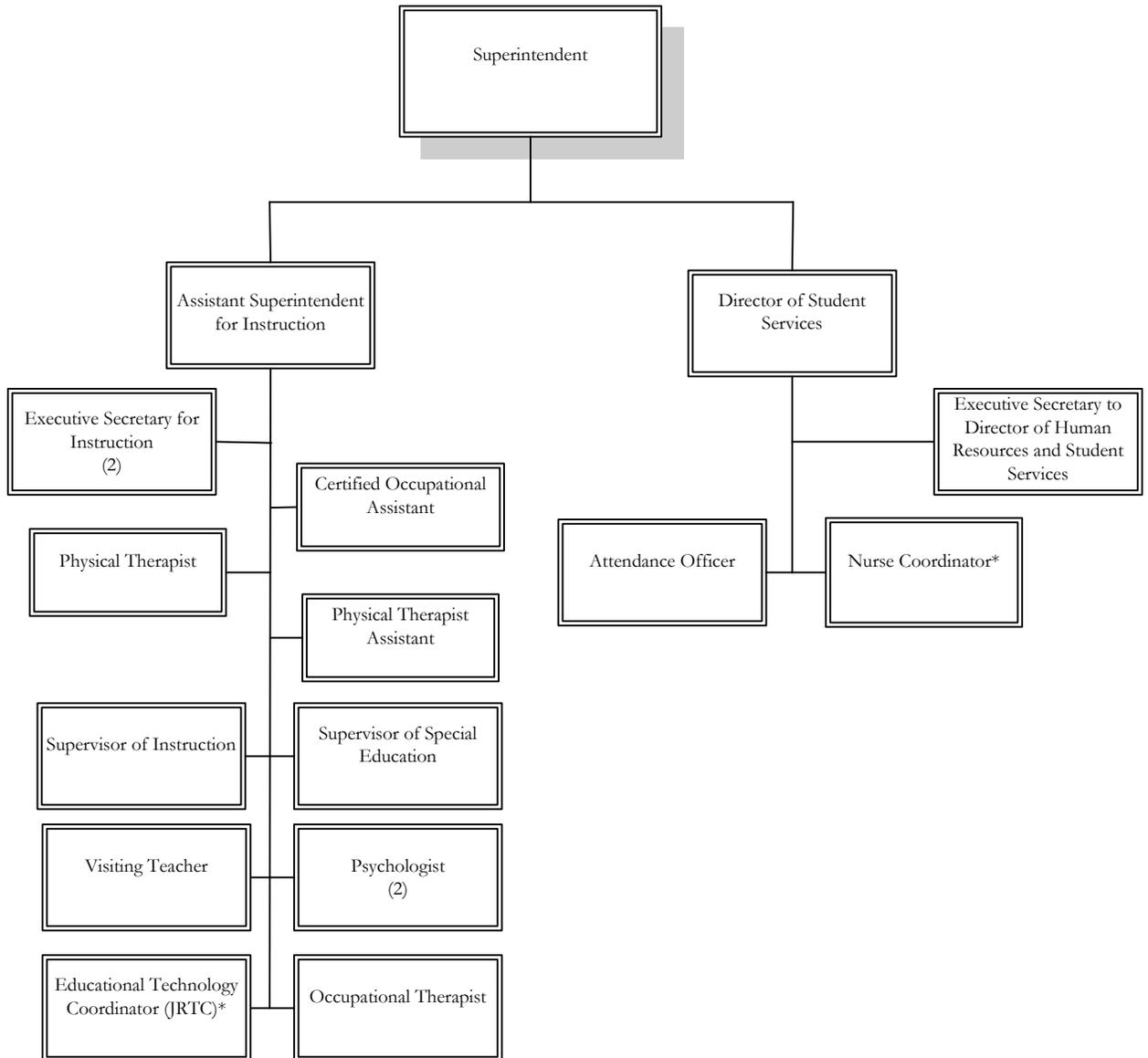
Central office administrators and staff serve as the support system for the education that is provided in schools of any school division and, depending on factors such as organization, staffing, and processes, can either strengthen or hinder progress towards high achievement for students. A well-orchestrated, balanced relationship between school needs and central office support and coordination 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, explicit guidelines and expectations, processes that streamline and reinforce division goals, and monitoring of division priorities are essential responsibilities of the central office.

### **FINDING**

**Exhibit 5-1** shows the current organizational structure of the ACPS Instructional and Student Services Departments.



**Exhibit 5-1  
Current Organization of the Instructional and Student Services Departments**



Source: Allegheny County Public Schools, Instructional and Student Services Department, 2006.  
\*Shared with Covington City Public Schools

Several individuals interviewed noted that formerly, division-level instructional administrators had been able to spend time in schools observing, providing feedback, and garnering information about needs. Currently, however, the duties of several division-level personnel detract from their ability to focus on the core instruction-related activities of their job responsibilities. Additionally, the minimal number of division-level staff with the authority to supervise personnel contributes to key instructional staff performing administrative and supervisory functions rather than more direct contributions to improved student learning.



The Assistant Superintendent is responsible for the personnel evaluations of eleven direct reports within the instructional department. Those positions include:

- the Supervisors of Instruction and Special Education;
- the two executive secretaries;
- the Jackson River Technical Center Educational Technology Coordinator, a position shared with Covington City Public Schools;
- the two division psychologists;
- the visiting teacher;
- the Certified Occupational Assistant;
- the physical therapist;
- the physical therapy assistant; and
- the occupational therapist.

Her areas of responsibility include both aspects of technology (infrastructure and instruction), in addition to testing, career and technical education, federal programs (with the exception of Title I A and D), coordination and development of the strategic and staff development plans, tuition reimbursement for re-certification, grant-writing, development of the school calendar, textbook adoption, and curriculum alignment/revision and related data analysis to guide curricular decisions.

Formerly, she worked with teachers and principals observing all new teachers in their first year in the division, but no longer serves in that role. Every 30-60 days, there is some aspect of division-level testing responsibilities that needs to be addressed, even though the division has test coordinators at each school. The Assistant Superintendent meets with them and conducts related training as needed.

The Supervisor of Instruction has no personnel supervisory responsibilities, but oversees Title I in general, gifted education, English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESL), works with the Assistant Superintendent on curricular and pacing guide revisions and textbook adoption, holds some curricular departmental meetings, conducts monthly beginning teacher seminars, is responsible for PALS testing, software evaluation, and Compass benchmark assessments, and works with the Director of Human Resources (HR) on mentoring. She also serves as the division liaison with external organizations such as the Blue Ridge East Technology Consortium.

The Supervisor of Special Education does not evaluate staff. She is responsible for collaborating with external sites such as the Autism Center, and oversees the work of the division's special education teachers and speech therapists. She was identified, too, as the "first line of defense" regarding parent issues. Much time is spent working with the Director of Student Services on transportation arrangements for suspended or expelled special education students. Another time-



consuming, but beneficial role of the Supervisor involves Community Services Act duties that entail spending two days a month with the Family Assessment Planning Team where community agencies join forces to evaluate the needs of students with special needs. The Supervisor is involved in arrangements for testing students every three months, reviewing the Individual Family Support Plan, and managing related funding. The Supervisor also sits in on meetings as each child's needs are considered.

Many staff members interviewed professed admiration for the Supervisor's knowledge of special education laws and regulations, and her ability to work with parents. Staff interviewed at the school and division level stated that, until approximately two years ago, she had spent many hours in the schools providing direct information and support to teachers and that she had met monthly with them. Currently, though, the primary means of communication identified by personnel in schools and at the division office with her office is through email and memos.

Having positions such as the psychologists, certified occupational assistant, proposed visiting teacher/attendance officer, physical therapist, physical therapist assistant, and occupational therapist report directly to the Assistant Superintendent rather than the Supervisor of Special Education creates a potential disconnect in information flow and services within ACPS. Placing all of those positions under the Supervisor of Special Education and giving her the authority to evaluate them would prevent that division, improve communications, give the Supervisor the authority to serve as the unequivocal leader of the special education department, and free the time the Assistant Superintendent spends in communications and evaluation of those positions. Individuals in schools stated that with the absence of regular meetings formerly held with the Supervisor of Special Education, they feel that they are no longer listened to or even solicited regarding "big picture" issues by other central office personnel. Although staff members reported that the Supervisor's communications are effective, no written communications can be as effective as face-to-face meetings, particularly when working with challenging student groups and their parents.

The Director of Student Services is the contact person for the Office of Civil Rights, the policy manual, student handbook, school safety, homelessness, homebound, student re-enrollment, student records management, attendance, monitoring of graduation rates, oversight of two of the five goals for implementation of the six-year-plan (parent involvement and character education), school resource officers, the nursing program shared with Covington City Public Schools, the alternative program, guidance supervision, emergency management and parent complaints. Another primary and time-intensive role he holds is serving as the division's hearing officer for disciplinary matters and expulsions. His direct reports include the Attendance Officer and the Nursing Coordinator who are shared with Covington City Schools.

The responsibility of the Attendance Officer has historically been one of intervention rather than prevention, although the Director of Student Services has been working with the officer and principals to involve him in prevention efforts before students reach the age when they can legally drop out. Conversely, the visiting teacher serves as a liaison with parents once students are referred for testing for placement in special programs. Although efforts have been made to encourage earlier intervention/prevention by the Attendance Officer, no consistent procedure is used. Both positions were reported to be underutilized. **Exhibit 5-2** shows comparable positions in peer divisions.



**Exhibit 5-2**  
**Visiting Teacher and/or Attendance Officer Positions in**  
**Comparable School Divisions**  
**2006-07 School Year**

School Division	Number of Visiting Teachers	Number of Attendance/Truancy Officers	Number of Combination Attendance/Visiting Teacher Positions
Allegheny County	1	1	0
Dickenson County	0	1	0
Nottoway County	0	0	0
Patrick County	0	0	1
Prince Edward County	0	1	0
Southampton County	N/A	N/A	N/A
<b>Peer Division Average</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>.4</b>	<b>.2</b>

*Source: Created by Evergreen Solutions from phone interviews with division staff, January 2007.*

**Exhibit 5-3** shows the numbers and types of central office instructional positions in divisions that were selected for their comparability to Allegheny County Public Schools. In every division, personnel in all titles were responsible for supervising and evaluating other personnel as well as coordinating programs. What the data do not show is the responsibilities for instructionally-related tasks that are held by employees with responsibility in other areas. For example, in Nottoway County, the Director of Personnel is also responsible for Instruction and the Director of Finance oversees technology. In Dickenson County, similarly, the Director of Federal Programs and Testing is also responsible for personnel functions. The number of ACPS instructional administrative staff is comparable to divisions selected for their similarities to Allegheny County Public Schools; however a realignment to disperse responsibilities is needed.

**Exhibit 5-3**  
**Central Office Positions Related to Instruction in**  
**Comparable School Divisions**  
**2006-07 School Year**

School Division	Total Student Population	Assistant Superintendents	Directors	Supervisors	Coordinators	Total
Allegheny County	2,928	1	1*	2	0	4
Dickenson County	2,494	0	1	3	1	5
Nottoway County	2,391	1	3		* 1 principal is assigned responsibility for testing	4
Patrick County	2,580	0	4	0	0	4
Prince Edward County	2,741	0	4	0	3	7
Southampton County	2,852	1	1	3	1	6
<b>Peer Division Average</b>	<b>2,612</b>	<b>.5</b>	<b>2.3</b>	<b>1.3</b>	<b>.8</b>	<b>5</b>

*Source: Created by Evergreen Solutions from phone interviews with division staff, November 2006.*

\* Director of Students Services is included because of responsibilities related to instructional programs (i.e. alternative education, homebound)



**RECOMMENDATION**

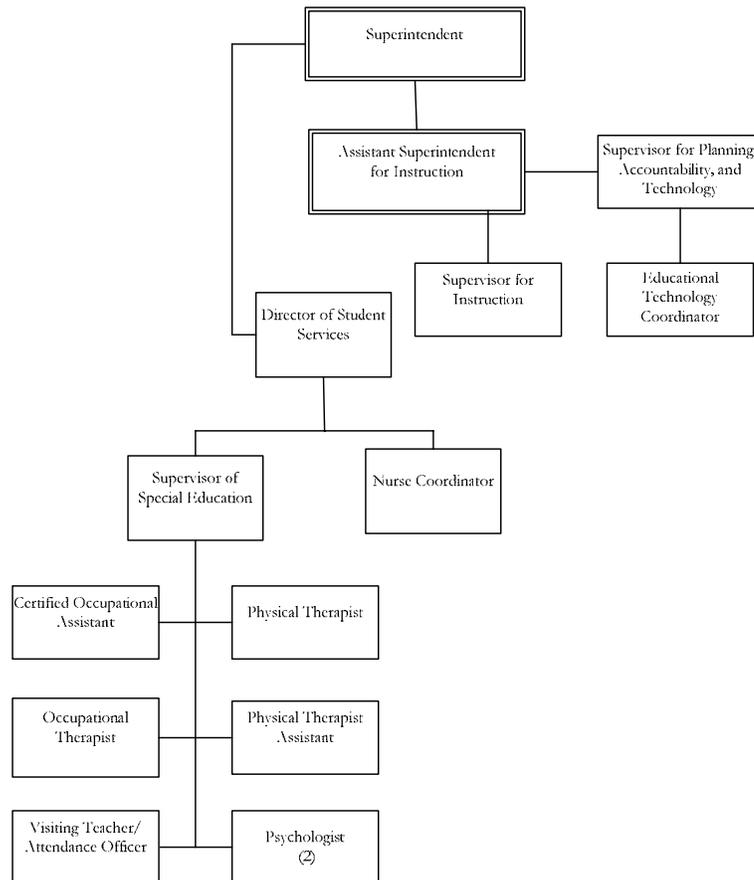
**Recommendation 5-1:**

**Reorganize the instructional and student services departments in the central office.**

**Exhibit 5-4** shows the proposed organizational structure of the Instructional Department. Changes would include:

- having the Supervisor of Special Education report to the Director of Student Services;
- merging the responsibilities of the visiting teacher and the attendance officer;
- placing the psychologists, certified occupational assistant, proposed visiting teacher/attendance officer, physical therapist, physical therapist assistant, and occupational therapist under the Supervisor of Special Education. Should the recommendation relating to shared services for psychological services be implemented, their reporting relationship would need to be evaluated relative to both school divisions.

**Exhibit 5-4  
Proposed Organization of the Instructional and Student Services Departments in Allegheny County Public Schools**

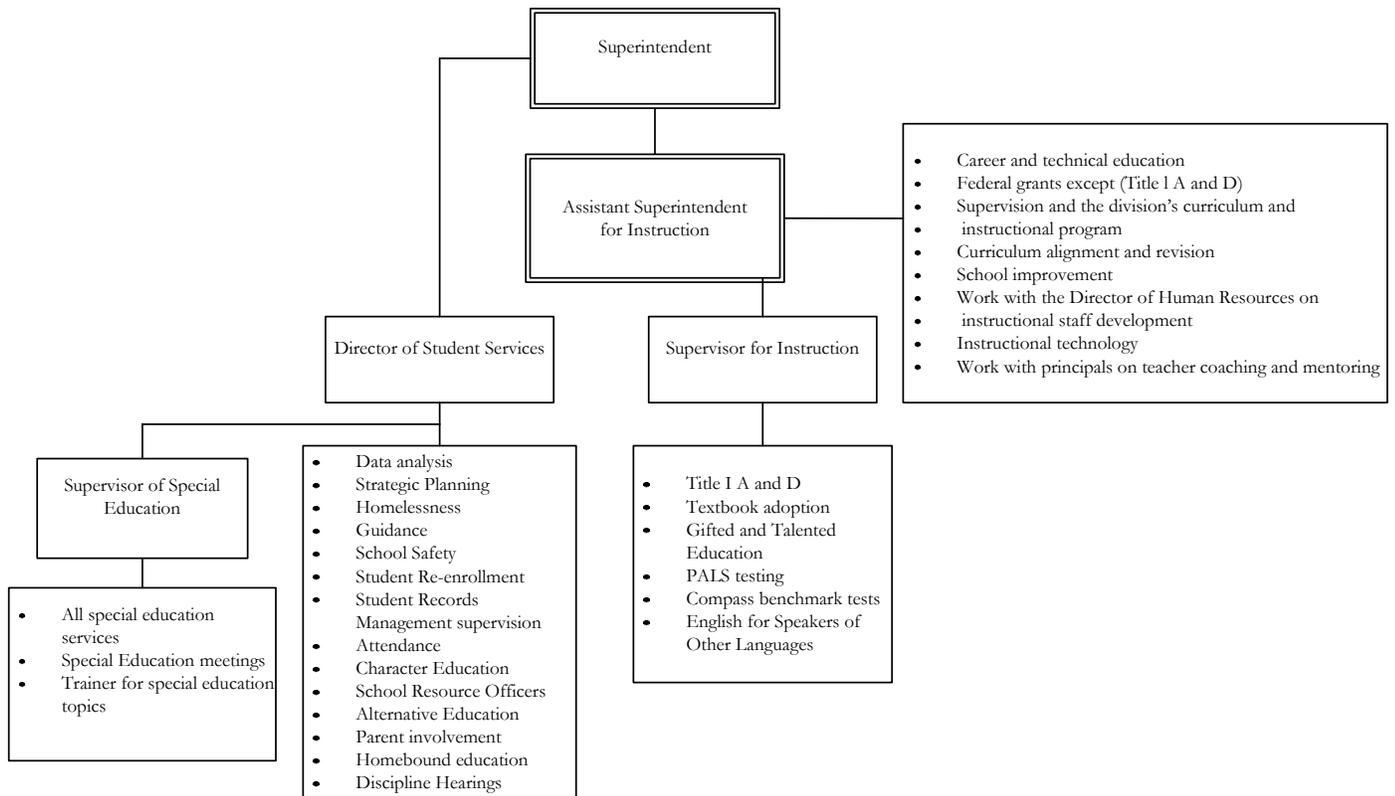


Source: Created by Evergreen Solutions, 2006.



Exhibit 5-5 shows the changes in functions resulting from the reorganization of the Instructional Department.

**Exhibit 5-5  
Proposed Functions Within the Instructional and Student Services Departments**



Source: Created by Evergreen Solutions, 2006.

Some of the responsibilities that currently reside in the instructional office would more effectively be placed in the Office of Human Resources. Responsibility for administration of the para-pro test for aides and tuition reimbursement for teacher recertification are more HR-related functions than instructional. Moving the above functions from the instructional offices to other loci in the division would free instructional leaders to more efficiently and effectively focus on the curriculum and instruction roles of their positions that are critical to student achievement. Instructional technology should be an integral role of the instructional office in order for technology to become a seamless part of instructional delivery and assessment rather than an add-on.

Since Student Services provide critical support for the needs of special education students, special education should be moved into that office for better coordination and support. The benefits of the proposed reorganization changes would be:

- both the visiting teacher and the attendance officer are involved in working with community agencies such as social services and the Community Services Board (By merging the responsibilities of the two positions, the strong parent linkage developed by



the visiting teacher can be built on to strengthen intervention efforts for other students currently served by the Attendance Officer);

- merging the two positions would also reduce duplication of the number of division staff who work with community agencies in a prevention role and focus actions on preventive strategies for all students;
- placing the psychologists, certified occupational assistant, proposed visiting teacher/attendance officer, physical therapist, physical therapist assistant, and occupational therapist under the Supervisor of Special Education would place them within the office that supports the primary students who receive their services; and
- the Assistant Superintendent would have fewer direct reports to supervise and coordinate and more time to focus her knowledge and expertise on instructional and curricular priorities that are more likely to lead to improved student learning.

Additional re-allocation of responsibilities among positions would include moving responsibility for tuition reimbursement for re-certification from the Instructional Department to the Human Resources Department.

**FISCAL IMPACT**

The elimination of one position through the merger of the positions of Visiting Teacher and Attendance Officer would accrue cost savings of \$74,896 per year for the division. The annual salaries for the two positions of Visiting Teacher (\$48,359) and Attendance Officer (\$61,782) currently total \$110,141. Adding an average benefits rate of 36 percent, the total district cost for these positions is \$149,792.

Thus, combining these positions would save the district approximately one-half of that total or \$74,896 per year.

<b>Recommendation</b>	<b>2007-08</b>	<b>2008-09</b>	<b>2009-10</b>	<b>2010-11</b>	<b>2011-12</b>
Combine Visiting Teacher/ Attendance Officer Positions	\$74,896	\$74,896	\$74,896	\$74,896	\$74,896

**FINDING**

During the current administration, the Board has been reluctant to assign evaluation responsibilities to personnel at the supervisor’s level. In most other school divisions, positions such as the psychologists, visiting teacher and occupational therapist report to and are supervised by directors or supervisors of special education. The ACPS visiting teacher reports to the supervisor, but is not a direct report. Peer divisions surveyed indicated that the person responsible for these positions also supervised and evaluated them.



**RECOMMENDATION**

**Recommendation 5-2:**

**Re-evaluate the role of supervisors with respect to evaluation.**

The potential benefits of implementation of this recommendation would include creating awareness among Board members of similar practices in peer divisions and improved disbursement of responsibilities and reporting relationships within the division’s organizational structure.

**FISCAL IMPACT**

The implementation of this recommendation can be achieved with existing resources. The possibility of increased costs resulting from a cost study of related positions with respect to supervisory responsibilities exists, but it is not likely.

**FINDING**

Personnel interviewed stated that division-level administrators typically do not get into schools frequently in order to assess and discuss needs or to observe the impact of training and division decisions. While Evergreen was in the division, the Assistant Superintendent had recently attended one of many state meetings related to her responsibilities. During the on-site visit, she also conducted a training session on implementation of the Virginia Grade-Level Alternative (VGLA) Assessment.

Some of the responsibilities for which the Assistant Superintendent is responsible could be delegated to others in the division on a rotating basis with her serving only as a standing member. Examining the activities she spends time on, especially those that take her away from the division, in the context of the overall potential impact on student achievement might prove instructive in identifying responsibilities that could be delegated to others. While it is critical for central office staff with oversight responsibility for programs to be conversant with their requirements, they do not have to be the sole individuals to attend meetings and conduct trainings. Delegating other responsibilities that are currently housed at the central office to personnel in the division would disseminate leadership closer to students and classes, and stimulate professional growth among them. When other individuals are trusted with such responsibilities, the number of people invested in the outcome increases.

Best practices find that schools that deliberately build teams empower staff and create a broader sense of ownership in decisions and reform. Other Virginia divisions, such as Clarke County, have even assigned responsibility for specific curricular areas to individual principals. This assignment allows others to become the experts in specific areas, and to broaden the knowledge level of leaders across the division.



## **RECOMMENDATION**

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

**Expand the number of personnel who attend state meetings, head local committees, and conduct division training beyond the core of division-level leaders.**

The implementation of this recommendation diffuses the need for division-level personnel to be the repository of all knowledge through attendance at all state meetings and training in many areas. It also expands the commitment to decisions and related programs by entrusting others with responsibilities beyond their job descriptions. There will, of course, be meetings that will be essential for division administrators to attend in order to ensure that they understand first-hand state accreditation and federal AYP implications.

### **FISCAL IMPACT**

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

## **5.2 INSTRUCTIONAL DELIVERY AND STUDENT PERFORMANCE**

Successful school systems have established guidelines and expectations that underlie a sound, challenging curriculum designed to foster the success of every student. They extend beyond state standards, providing enrichment and remediation opportunities for students based upon individual needs. Regularly collected and analyzed data guide ongoing instructional and programmatic decisions. Grounded in research-based strategies, curricular documents and processes define the realization of clear learning goals. The curriculum encompasses relationships between goals, specific learning objectives, instructional activities, and student assessments. The curriculum also identifies a scope and sequence in which information, skills, and concepts are taught and reinforced throughout the years to inculcate learning into the students' knowledge base.

Effective curricular guiding documents also build in assessments and periodic monitoring of both student achievement and the effectiveness of the documents themselves. Materials can then be identified and purchased that assist in teaching concepts and knowledge not otherwise addressed in division curricular resources and that provide for student remediation and enrichment.

Efficient and effective educational processes promote the highest possible levels of student achievement at the classroom level when a school district:

- is organized with procedures that are conscientiously aligned;
- systematically communicates them to employees and constituents; and
- monitors them regularly.

Personnel in the central office must have expertise in their area of responsibility. Processes that allow them time to direct that knowledge toward improved student achievement must be in place. Effective districts identify key educational elements on which to focus actions and resources, and use them as filters for decision making. Sufficient staff members are employed to



ensure that time is able to be devoted to functions the district has determined essential. School and central office personnel systematically analyze available sources of data for information they can provide relating to curricular and instructional adjustments. Data analysis also informs them about individuals and groups of students who either require additional enrichment or remediation to achieve at their highest capability. Clear and frequent communication between schools and the central office enable district leaders to ensure consistency of procedures and policies. Ongoing communications also help the district to focus on core activities it has identified as critical for high levels of student achievement.

## **FINDING**

A part of the division's staff development plan demonstrates a commitment to data-driven decision making. Interviewees referenced current staff development and book studies that reinforce that goal, and gave examples of various degrees of actual use of data for classroom and school decisions. In several interviews, ACPS staff referenced the use of data as a basis for decisions and planning (e.g., development of the School Improvement Plan).

The Assistant Superintendent has reviewed student performance data by question, grade level, and content area, working with teachers to create objectives for instruction. Plans are for principals to spend three days this year being trained in data use by a consultant from Virginia Tech, although none had been held by the time of the Evergreen site visit. One principal has asked to schedule a day for his/her teachers in the fall. Individual instances of principals encouraging the use of data with their teachers for instructional decisions were given. Overall, there was little indication, though, that teachers in any way uniformly understand the importance of data analysis and its application for their classrooms. This occurs despite a statement that the teacher evaluation notebook specifies using data for instructional planning.

Multiple documents provided Evergreen reflect an ongoing examination of student performance data at the division level. They include:

- comparisons of the scores of third grade students on PALS, CCC (when it was used), and English Standards of Learning (SOLs);
- longitudinal numbers of third graders tested and percentages who read on the third grade level or above;
- analyses of NCLB AYP school and division reports; and
- analyses of student SOL scores, identified areas of concerns, and reference to instructional improvement plans in areas of concern.

These practices should be systematically extended to the school level with procedures being devised that will enable school personnel to effectively analyze data and ensure they are doing so.



## RECOMMENDATION

### Recommendation 5-4:

#### **Identify required training for teachers that will equip them to routinely use available data for instructional decisions.**

Allegheny County Public Schools has set a foundation for infusion of practices of data collection and analysis into its work at the administrative level with its book study and principal training. Principals understand the importance of data in ongoing student achievement improvements and school reform. The next step should be division-wide training for teachers so that they understand the implications of regular examination of data from their own tests as well as SOLs and other available data for continuous improvement. Staff development days are scheduled throughout the school year, so time and resources have already been allocated for implementation of this recommendation. Principals can then include ongoing monitoring and discussion of data in their leadership practices.

Winchester City Schools (WCS) has adopted professional development strategies that have or are likely to positively affect teacher skills and student learning to reinforce their understanding and use of data to inform instruction. WCS provides three levels of training toward that end:

- Mechanics: how to use the information provided by reports online;
- Data analysis: information the data offer regarding teaching and learning; and
- Application: changes in practice based on data.

*Seven Actions That Improve School District Performance* in the Center for School Reform and Improvement's November 2006 eNewsletter, notes that districts that show continued improvement base decisions on data rather than on habit or hunch, using a variety of sources of data to garner a comprehensive picture for ongoing, effective reform.

## FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

## FINDING

ACPS has initiated numerous strategies to strengthen its curriculum and specific content programs. Each June, all teachers are invited to participate in curriculum revision in major content areas. Funds are set aside so that all teachers, if they choose, can participate. The underlying belief behind that practice is that the more people involved, the better the final product will be and the greater the commitment to it. Elements considered in the review include:

- what is taught;
- when and how long it is taught; and
- the sequence in which information and concepts are presented.



Student performance data are also reviewed as a part of that evaluation process.

Although individuals commented that the process was initially onerous, it has since become a part of the division culture. Staff also stated a belief that it had been a contributing factor to all ACPS schools becoming accredited. Reviews of pacing guides have even involved librarians in order to create consistency throughout the division about how library time and instruction are used to improve student learning. Principals have been involved in book studies such as the study of *Schools and Data* cited earlier. Division curriculum policies are also explicit in expectations for the curriculum development process and instructional goals and objectives.

Prior to the site visit, surveys were sent to administrators and teachers for feedback regarding various aspects of division services. Survey data in **Exhibit 5-6** show the responses from ACPS teachers and administrators regarding the division's extent of emphasis on learning within recent years. Respondents from both groups indicate a strong belief in the positive direction of the division with respect to an emphasis on learning.

**Exhibit 5-6**  
**Evergreen Solutions Survey Results**  
**Emphasis on Learning in ACPS**  
**October 2006**

Survey Statement: Emphasis on Learning	Strongly Agree/Agree	Disagree/Strongly Disagree
Administrators	90.5%	0%
Teachers	79.4%	7.6%

*Source: Evergreen Solution Survey Results, 2006.*

Best practices demonstrate that curriculum is based on clear learning goals that are correlated to specific learning objectives, instructional activities, and student assessments. In such schools, faculties conduct periodic reviews of curriculum documents.

*No Child Left Behind* legislation requires states to develop procedures for measuring the yearly progress of schools, divisions, and states relating to meeting national student performance standards. Each reporting group and subgroup must meet Annual Measurable Objectives (AMOs) that are approved by the US Department of Education. Benchmarks are raised each year until 100 percent of students meet them in the 2013-14 school year.

**Exhibit 5-7** shows the Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) of schools that has resulted from this and other division initiatives related to student learning.

## COMMENDATION

**Alleghany County Public Schools is commended for their inclusive approach to ongoing curricular revision and improvement that has led to all schools and the division achieving Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP).**



**Exhibit 5-7**  
**Allegheny County Public Schools**  
**Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP)**  
**2004-05 through 2005-06 School Years**

Division/School	2004-05		2005-06		2006-07	
	Made AYP	Did Not Make AYP	Made AYP	Did Not Make AYP	Made AYP	Did Not Make AYP
<b>Allegheny County Division</b>		<b>X</b>		<b>X</b>	<b>X</b>	
Allegheny High School	X		X		X	
Clifton Middle School		X		X	X	
Boiling Spring Elementary School	X		X		X	
Callaghan Elementary School	X		X		X	
Falling Spring Elementary	X		X		X	
Mountain View Elementary	X			X	X	
Sharon Elementary	X		X		X	

*Source: Allegheny County Public Schools, Office of the Assistant Superintendent for Instruction, 2006.*

## FINDING

Staff interviewed stated that teachers in the same grade generally assemble twice a year to discuss curricular and instructional topics, but that teachers in adjacent grades do not meet for cross-grade articulation. These meetings of all teachers in individual grades or team leaders at the high school include either the Assistant Superintendent or the Supervisor of Instruction. Such meetings offer teachers the opportunity to share strategies that have been effective for them with students in the same grades or subjects. These meetings also afford teachers the chance to brainstorm ideas to address common challenges. They do not, however, stimulate discussion of the same topics that are discussed in the summer curricular revision meetings across grade levels, such as content sequencing across grade levels. Holding cross-grade discussions would enrich the division's curriculum plans by including teacher input regarding identification of key foundational skills in prior grades and thoughtful reinforcement of concepts in subsequent grades.

Staff development on curriculum mapping would strengthen the division's current curriculum revision practices and create a more seamless curriculum that expands current efforts to differentiate instruction. Two options would strengthen the division's current approach to curriculum review and revision. Sending one elementary and one secondary teacher and/or principal, in addition to the Assistant Superintendent and Supervisor of Instruction, to training would create a strong team to lead the division as it extends and fortifies the strong foundation it has built. There are many leaders in the field of curriculum mapping who can provide guidance to Allegheny County Public Schools.

ACPS very infrequently allows out-of-state travel, so a second alternative to sending a team to be trained that would perhaps better comply with the division's guidelines is the purchase of a training DVD and manual on curriculum mapping. It could be used to train a larger team of perhaps six people from various positions, grade levels, and departments in curriculum mapping. These individuals could then lead the expanded process during summer curriculum revisions.



## **RECOMMENDATION**

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

#### **Expand the division's current examination of curriculum and data to cross-grade discussions and curriculum map development.**

Best practices suggest that curriculum alignment includes comparing what has been taught previously to what needs to be taught in light of SOLs. Comprehensive alignment identifies critical elements to be taught at each grade level to increase the probability of student success. It includes consideration of SOL content at all grade levels, not just where tests are administered. Where data, too, are analyzed across grade levels and within grade levels across disciplines, a more strategic approach to data analysis contributes to ongoing curricular and instructional improvement. Such discussions could be held in conjunction with the division's existing summer curricular revisions.

## **FISCAL IMPACT**

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

## **FINDING**

ACPS has strategically developed a successful approach to student math instruction, particularly at the middle school. At the elementary level, pacing guides in math are coordinated with the goal of having all students ready for sixth grade math when they leave fifth grade. Student test scores on the Standards of Learning (SOLs) determine their placement in sixth grade math. Throughout the year at the middle school, all students have 90 minutes of math a day geared toward their individual needs. The division calls the approach CMS @ CMS (Creating Math Success at Clifton Middle School). All middle school math teachers teach a section at each grade level. The teachers also have common planning times. Those classes are taught at the same time so that students can move back and forth depending upon their readiness and individual needs. For instance, special education students are included in all math classes, but a special education teacher might be assigned to a group that has students with Individualized Education Plans (IEPs).

When slower performing students catch up, they are moved to a higher performing group. This approach also allows students to complete a year's math in one semester, presenting the possibility of students being able to complete algebra and even geometry before leaving middle school. The intent of the strategy is for all students to be solid math students by the end of eighth grade. Division representatives have presented the success of the program at superintendent meetings and other venues. A book that teachers have compiled details program specifics and includes Web resources, books, and games that offer students interaction as well as infusion of technology into their math learning activities.



**Exhibit 5-8** shows the progress since 2000 that Clifton Middle School students have made in their rate of passing math 8, algebra, and geometry. The exhibit shows that 100 percent of students passed geometry in 2004 and 100 percent passed both Algebra I and Geometry in 2005.

**Exhibit 5-8  
Clifton Middle School  
Math Passing Rates  
2000-2005 School Years**

Math Area	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
Math 8	59%	61%	72%	93%	91%	87.11%
Algebra I	96%	97%	100%	98%	96%	100%
Geometry	-	-	-	-	100%	100%
Total						<b>90.45%</b>

Source: Alleghany County Public Schools, Office of the Assistant Superintendent, 2006.

**Exhibit 5-9** shows the 2005-06 SOL math scores of ACPS students and those in comparable school divisions and the state. This exhibit shows that the percentage of ACPS students meeting or exceeding standards was consistently above the peer division average in all grades and above the state average in grades 3 and 5. In grade 8, only one percent fewer (75%) ACPS students met or exceeded standards than the state average of 76 percent.

**Exhibit 5-9  
Standards of Learning (SOL) Math Results  
Percentage of Students Meeting or Exceeding State Standard  
2005-06 School Year**

School Division	Grade 3	Grade 5	Grade 8
<b>Alleghany County</b>	<b>94%</b>	<b>86%</b>	<b>75%</b>
Dickenson County	87%	80%	80%
Nottoway County	95%	75%	83%
Patrick County	89%	87%	78%
Prince Edward County	84%	58%	57%
Southampton County	90%	87%	59%
<b>Peer Division Average</b>	<b>89%</b>	<b>77%</b>	<b>71%</b>
<b>State Average</b>	<b>90%</b>	<b>83%</b>	<b>76%</b>

Source: Virginia Department of Education Web site, 2006.

## COMMENDATION

**Alleghany County Public Schools is commended for its creative approach to middle school math instruction that is based on differentiation of instruction for all students.**

## FINDING

Principals note that they received training last year on conducting classroom walk-throughs in their schools. Several reported using locally or individually developed adaptations of examples provided. Division-level administrators, though, as in most school systems, reported that they do



not get into classes as often as they would like. Walk-throughs are a quick method of focusing administrative observations on key instructional activities and interrelationships between teachers and students. They also have the potential to serve as a useful communications tool and for documentation and collection of best practices to share or areas to target for improvement and additional staff development.

Division staff informed Evergreen representatives that principals are considered to have the primary responsibility to coach teachers and ensure that changes have been implemented. Additionally, this school year, central office personnel have been assigned as buddies for new teachers through the ACPS mentor program. When principals and other staff were asked how observations for the use of division instructional priorities, accommodations, and inclusionary practices were conducted, responses reflected a level of trust that, if teachers were not using practices, ACPS instructional personnel would be told.

The division has obviously implemented elements of instructional monitoring that are intended to increase accountability for instruction with the walk-through training and various forms that principals use. Buttressing those strategies by creating a comprehensive list of specifically elements of training the division has invested in, such as differentiation or the utilization of accommodations for special needs students, would provide even greater accountability for the instructional methodologies that the division leadership considers essential for students.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

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

#### **Develop procedures to formalize instructional monitoring.**

Allegheny County Public Schools has adopted a number of positive processes that are highly likely to improve student achievement. Adding a procedure that will provide ongoing accountability at all levels of the division for use of intended practices will strengthen the foundation that they have laid with curricular and data initiatives.

Division leaders will have better, more frequent information regarding curricular, instructional, and staff development needs of teachers and principals when they:

- ensure that all instruments contain elements that are agreed upon by school and division-level instructional leaders;
- use the instruments regularly as feedback mechanisms for teachers; and
- establish and follow a procedure and timelines, or regular discussion in instructional staff meetings, to verify that instructional monitoring of skills and knowledge the division considers important is taking place regularly.

## **FISCAL IMPACT**

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.



**FINDING**

Although data continuously show a high percentage of students enrolling in either four-year colleges or universities or two-year colleges, ACPS leaders have not been satisfied with student graduation rates. **Exhibit 5-10** shows those details regarding college enrollment and dropout data.

**Exhibit 5-10**  
**Percentages of Allegheny High School Students**  
**Attending Two- or Four-Year Colleges/Universities and**  
**Dropout Rates**  
**2003-2006 School Years**

Year	Percent of Students Enrolling in Two-Year Colleges	Percent of Students Enrolling in Four-Year Colleges or Universities	Percent of Dropouts
2002	45%	33%	3.70%
2003	22%	46%	2.38%
2004	46%	28%	2.38%
2005	39%	31%	3.68%

*Source: Allegheny County Public Schools Fast Facts, 2003-06.*

Due to concern about the impact of dropout rate on individual students and the division's ability to have all students meet the NCLB goal of 100 percent graduation rate by 2013-14, three committees have been established to develop interventions as well as preventive strategies to address student needs before they become dropouts. The three committees are:

- curriculum;
- structures; and
- support services.

By analyzing longitudinal data on division dropouts, members of the Student Support Services Committee have identified profiles of past dropouts as a basis for identifying interventions for potential dropouts. The three most common variables they identified were that students were either transfers to the division, students with disabilities, or those not engaged in school activities such as clubs or teams. They also identified two other tiers of characteristics of potential dropouts based on historical data. The division held a student forum on the issue and a broader forum to discuss the problem and identify measurable symptoms and measurable objectives. The three committees have developed an action plan. Interim activities, such as strengthening the division's transition processes among schools, are already in progress.

**COMMENDATION**

**Allegheny County Public Schools is commended for its aggressive initiative to reach a 100 percent graduation rate.**



**FINDING**

Evergreen conducted comparative analyses of both expenditures and staffing related to instruction with ACPS peer divisions. **Exhibit 5-11** shows that, according to VDOE data, in fiscal year 2005 ACPS spent on average \$722 more per pupil on instructional disbursements than the school division average of divisions chosen for comparability. Funds spent ranged from \$964 to \$423 more than peer divisions.

**Exhibit 5-11  
Instructional Disbursements  
Fiscal Year 2005**

School Division	Instruction	Per Pupil Cost
<b>Allegheny County</b>	<b>\$19,437,221</b>	<b>\$6,638</b>
Dickenson County	\$14,926,496	\$5,985
Nottoway County	\$13,567,587	\$5,674
Patrick County	\$14,755,543	\$5,719
Prince Edward County	\$17,036,426	\$6,215
Southampton County	\$17,071,518	\$5,986
<b>School Division Average</b>	<b>\$15,471,514</b>	<b>\$5,916</b>

Source: Virginia Department of Education, Web site, 2006.

**Exhibit 5-12** compares staffing levels among the same divisions. It shows that ACPS has fewer teachers per 1,000 students (78.23) than comparative divisions (80.48), but is near the state average of 78.6. In comparison, the number of teacher aides per 1,000 students in ACPS (20.31) is greater than either peer divisions (15.41) or the state (16.85). With respect to guidance counselors and librarians, ACPS has higher numbers per 1,000 students (5.16) than either peer divisions (4.76) or the state (4.79).

**Exhibit 5-12  
Instructional Staffing Levels Per 1,000 Students  
Fiscal Year 2005**

School Division	Total Student Population	Total Teachers Per 1,000 Students	Total Teacher Aides Per 1,000 Students	Total Guidance Counselors and Librarians Per 1,000 Students
<b>Allegheny County</b>	<b>2,928.0</b>	<b>78.23</b>	<b>20.31</b>	<b>5.16</b>
Dickenson County	2,494.0	87.57	7.14	5.95
Nottoway County	2,391.0	75.09	12.37	4.59
Patrick County	2,580.0	76.27	22.29	4.52
Prince Edward County	2,741.0	83.46	17.15	3.30
Southampton County	2,852.0	80.02	18.11	5.46
<b>Peer Division Average</b>	<b>2,611.6</b>	<b>80.48</b>	<b>15.41</b>	<b>4.76</b>
<b>State Average</b>		<b>78.60</b>	<b>16.85</b>	<b>4.79</b>

Source: Virginia Department of Education, Web site, 2006.



**RECOMMENDATION:**

**Recommendation 5-7:**

**Examine staffing allocations for teacher aides to determine the benefits of freeing funds by decreasing aide positions to the peer average.**

Depending on the use and training of aides, re-allocating funds from aide salaries to other instructional purposes has the potential to strengthen achievement of instructional goals. Special education percentages between ACPS and peer divisions show that ACPS has a lower percentage of special needs students than peers, indicating that the higher percentage in ACPS is not due to special education numbers.

**FISCAL IMPACT**

The average salary of a teacher aide is \$21,043 including benefits. Multiplying 2.928 (the number of thousands of students in ACPS) by 20.31 aides/1,000 students gives 59 aides. Multiplying 2.928 by the peer average of 15.41/1,000 results in 45, a decrease of 14 positions. Reducing ACPS aides from 59 to 45 would free \$294,602 for other instructional purposes. Assuming that seven (7) positions could be eliminated in 2007-08, savings would be half that next year.

<b>Recommendation</b>	<b>2007-08</b>	<b>2008-09</b>	<b>2009-10</b>	<b>2010-11</b>	<b>2011-12</b>
Reduce Number of Teacher Aide Positions	\$147,301	\$294,602	\$294,602	\$294,602	\$294,602

**5.3 SPECIAL EDUCATION**

Special education provides supplemental or extended support for students and their families and enhances student performance and academic achievement. Special education is provided to supplement, accommodate, or modify the general academic course of study, and is intended to provide adequate support to ensure the academic success of students with disabilities. The student support role is to provide supplemental or extended support for students and their families that contribute to enhanced student performance and academic achievement.

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. NCLB reinforces that goal with its express expectation that all students will be proficient by 2013-14. Toward that end, for years many districts have provided training and encouragement to help regular classroom teachers learn how to accommodate the needs of special education students in their classes.



## FINDING

Although personnel interviewed stated that the majority of ACPS special education students are in inclusive settings with support offered by special education teachers, only pockets of co-teaching were identified as a strategy for meeting student needs within the setting of a regular classroom. One interviewee noted that, at Callaghan Elementary School, a preschool handicapped teacher goes into a Junior Kindergarten class with his students and that it is impossible to identify students with developmental delays from those in Junior Kindergarten. This observation proves the merits of co-teaching and its expansion. Despite their benefits to both regular education and special education students, those practices have not yet been broadly embraced to strengthen the inclusion of special education students in regular education classes.

Co-teaching is an effective strategy to develop a strong base for the use of educational practices that support the effective integration of special education students into regular classes. The January 2005 issue of *Teacher Magazine* describes teacher collaboration the following way:

*Perhaps the most well-developed model of teacher collaboration is the “lesson study” process, described by James Stigler and James Hiebert in The Teaching Gap. Used in Japan as a primary means of professional development, lesson-study groups are organized by grade level or subject area. These teams meet regularly to discuss the learning challenges of their students and to collaboratively develop lessons that more effectively meet the kids’ needs. Teachers take turns conducting these model lessons and critiquing one another’s work until they feel it’s polished enough to share with colleagues. Stigler and Hiebert believe this process goes a long way toward explaining why the level of instruction in most Japanese classrooms appears to be consistently higher than that of other countries.*

The division’s approach to serving students in the mainstream is not only more effective at helping students to develop socially, emotionally, and academically, but also far more cost-effective than special education classes per se. Best practices demonstrate that, where special education and regular education teachers collaborate, instructional repertoires for both teachers are expanded with all students benefiting.

## RECOMMENDATION

### Recommendation 5-8:

**Identify special and regular education teachers who are willing to co-teach to model and extend its benefits for students to other teachers.**

ACPS staff is able to name teachers and schools where effective co-teaching is taking place. Using those teachers to provide training and coaching to others who might be interested would benefit both special needs and regular education students. It would also create a sense of efficacy among teachers selected for the initiative.



## FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources. Teachers can share their experiences during faculty meetings and provide training during the division's workshop days. Funds are in the budget for trainers. This would simply enable division staff to serve as the trainers.

## FINDING

The percent of students identified as special needs in ACPS is similar to that of other divisions selected for their comparability to Allegheny County and the average of the peer divisions. However, using the 12/1/04 child count of special education students and the Fall 2005 student membership numbers, an estimated 14 percent of the population in Virginia's schools is enrolled in special education, three percent lower than ACPS special education student enrollment. One possible reason for higher percentages of students in the ACPS Special Education Program cited in discussions is the relatively low socio-economic demographics in the community.

Division interviewees had recently attended a Response to Intervention state meeting and were excited about moving towards that method for earlier intervention before identification for special programs. Others reinforced the need to develop stronger, more uniform procedures to provide earlier assistance to students with learning needs, regardless of possible eligibility for special programs.

**Exhibit 5-13** shows the percent of students in each division identified as limited English proficient (LEP) and special education.

**Exhibit 5-13**  
**Special Needs Students in Peer Divisions**  
**2004-05 School Year**

School Division	Total Student Population	Percent Limited English Proficient (LEP)	Percent Special Education Students*
<b>Allegheny County</b>	<b>2,928.0</b>	<b>0.1%</b>	<b>17.0%</b>
Dickenson County	2,494.0	0.0%	17.9%
Nottoway County	2,391.0	0.16%	17.8%
Patrick County	2,580.0	2.8%	17.1%
Prince Edward County	2,741.0	0.1%	20.4%
Southampton County	2,852.0	0.07%	18.7%
<b>Peer Division Average</b>	<b>2,611.6</b>	<b>0.63%</b>	<b>18.38%</b>

Source: Virginia Department of Education, Web site, 2006.

\*As of December 15, 2005 count.

Other divisions, such as Clarke County, Virginia, have aggressively worked to address student needs within regular classrooms before initiating referral procedures for testing for placement in special education classes. Although demographics between the two communities differ, some of Clarke's preventive methods could be adapted for use in Allegheny County Public Schools.



Strategies that Clarke County has used successfully to reduce the percentages of identified special education students include:

- communications and guidelines from the Office of Pupil Personnel constantly keep the question of whether the disability is what negatively impacts the student's educational performance and promote alternative strategies within the student's classroom;
- all pupil personnel staff provide service to non-identified students who need interventions for success;
- reading specialists in schools enhance and intensify success in reading for all students;
- all teachers and paraprofessionals participate annually in training regarding differentiating instruction within the regular classroom prior to referral for testing;
- the content of Child Study Committee discussions is focused on instructional, staffing, staff development and classroom strategies that might be employed, rather than student disabilities so problem solving occurs around the child's needs rather than deficiencies;
- teaching candidate interviews probe for congruence with the division's philosophy of accommodating students' various learning needs;
- English as a Second Language (ESL) services address possible language barriers preventing success;
- co-teaching is extensive in the division, allowing all students to benefit from the strengths of regular and special education students and teachers to share and learn from each other;
- much individualization and differentiation of instruction occurs to address student differences and learning styles;
- regular education teachers receive a copy of accommodations required for students in their classes, and sign and return them to the school special education lead teacher;
- students are taught how to advocate for themselves and, at the high school level, taught study skills with a special educator to reinforce those skills;
- support is provided students after dismissal from special education services; and
- Instructional Support Teams (ISTs) at two schools devise approaches using programming and intervention within regular education classes.

The Instructional Support Teams (ISTs) actively identify individual student learning needs and styles and devise strategies within the school as a whole and the regular classroom to support student success outside a special education environment. This collaborative approach to meeting student needs helps educators focus on curriculum and teaching styles rather than purported student deficiencies. IST teachers match classroom teacher strengths with student needs and monitor the success of IST strategies implemented. As teams continue to meet and problem-



solve together, additional personnel and strategies are employed as attempts are made to develop a process that provides appropriate support for student learning throughout the year. Only when IST actions have not proven effective in meeting student needs are students then referred to Child Study Teams for consideration of special education interventions.

**RECOMMENDATION**

**Recommendation 5-9:**

**Adapt strategies proven effective in other Virginia divisions to address student needs in regular classes before referral to special education.**

ACPS has already demonstrated its commitment to serving its special needs students within regular classes. The implementation of this recommendation would buttress special needs students’ ability to be served in regular classes and likely prevent a number of them from ever being referred for special education. It would further prepare division staff for Response to Intervention implementation. Since ACPS has special education chairpersons in each school who receive stipends for their services, they could become trained as leaders of IST teams to individualize preventive measures for more students requiring additional support. The program could begin with a pilot in two schools and be expanded as experience and needs dictate. Teams of interested teachers at each of those schools should visit Clarke County or other school divisions using ISTs to talk to teachers about program strengths and implementation concerns.

**FISCAL IMPACT**

Estimated costs for sending a team of five (teachers, principals, and/or guidance counselors) from two schools and the Supervisor of Special Education include the use of two division cars or mileage for two cars at \$.445 per mile x 353 miles roundtrip between Covington and Berryville for a total cost of \$314 for two cars. A maximum cost for meals for 11 people of \$32/day would total \$352, but would likely be less since it could easily be a day trip. If substitute teachers were required, an estimated six would be needed for classroom teachers involved. The average daily pay for substitutes in ACPS is \$70 per day for an estimated cost of \$420 (\$70/substitute x 6 teachers). Total estimated costs are \$1,086.

<b>Recommendation</b>	<b>2007-08</b>	<b>2008-09</b>	<b>2009-10</b>	<b>2010-11</b>	<b>2011-12</b>
Pay Mileage	(\$314)	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Pay Meals for 11 ACPS Staff	(\$352)	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Hire Substitutes	(\$420)	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
<b>Total Costs</b>	<b>(\$1,086)</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$0</b>

**FINDING**

Medicaid is a federal entitlement program that finances medical services and specified educational services to eligible children. 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. Although it appears from interviews that Medicaid funds are used to supplement the programs that generate them, there do not appear to be processes in place for the Supervisor of Special Education to routinely receive accountings so that she is aware of those funds as sources for student needs. One of its uses of Medicaid funds has been for laptop computers to enable special education teachers to complete IEPs online. ACPS personnel state that the Medicaid contact person from the Virginia Department of Education (VDOE) has met with them in the past to discuss maximizing potential revenues, but not recently.

The Nursing Coordinator, who is employed jointly by Covington City Public Schools and Allegheny County Public Schools, is responsible for filing for reimbursement of funds for students who are eligible for Medicaid and who receive services in the school system that are also eligible for billing for Medicaid funds. At the beginning of the year, the Nursing Coordinator identifies Medicaid eligible students who are receiving speech, occupational therapy and skilled nursing services. Therapists then write a plan for services and submit therapy notes every four to six weeks for billing. Eligible services for Medicaid reimbursement in Virginia currently include physical and occupational therapy, speech and language pathology, and psychological and skilled nursing services.

**Exhibit 5-14** shows that the division currently bills for all eligible services. This exhibit also shows that the division has been increasing its revenues for the past three years for services for which it is billing, close to, or more than, doubling each year. The division also bills for administrative costs, although records of revenues were not provided. In anticipation of state approval to bill for the services of health assistants and transportation, ACPS has also been documenting those services for some time so they will be prepared to bill when they are approved.

**Exhibit 5-14  
ACPS Medicaid Revenues  
2003-04 through 2005-06 School Years**

Therapy	Amount Received		
	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06
Speech	\$15,032.15	\$25,507.72	\$67,725.42
Occupational Therapy	\$6,481.02	\$11,789.07	\$33,433.40
Physical Therapy	\$4,939.41	\$7,475.32	\$8,401.90
Nursing	\$858.88	\$3,553.80	\$3,060.32
Psychological Services	\$0	\$1,988.58	\$1,693.14
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$27,311.46</b>	<b>\$50,314.49</b>	<b>\$114,314.18</b>

*Source: Allegheny County Public Schools, Office of the Assistant Superintendent, 2006.*

**COMMENDATION**

**Allegheny County Public Schools is commended for aggressively seeking all eligible Medicaid reimbursement funds and being prepared for expansion of the Commonwealth’s Medicaid Program.**



## **5.4 PARENT INVOLVEMENT**

Research shows that as much as 50 to 85 percent of variance in achievement scores, IQ, or verbal ability, can be attributed to parent, family, and home environment variables. Furthermore, research schools finds that children with high achievement scores have parents with high expectations for them, who respond to and interact with them frequently, and who see themselves as their children’s teachers. Parent education programs, especially those that train low-income parents to work with their children, improve how well children use language skills, perform on tests, and behave in school. Most effective parent involvement programs emphasize the importance of the parent, and the need for a close relationship between the home and the school. They also provide structured, concrete tasks for parents, and take a long-term approach to parent involvement. Many studies have found that when parents become involved in school activities, not only do their attitudes improve, but also that of their children.

Studies have shown that teachers involving parents in learning activities at home has a positive and significant influence on improved student reading achievement. Developing programs of teacher-initiated parent involvement activities has been demonstrated to have as positive an effect on reading achievement among low-income parents as those with higher educational backgrounds who traditionally help their children.

### **FINDING**

The Parent Liaison for ACPS is extremely involved in outreach to parents and supporting children’s literacy with the First Books Program. All Title I students receive a book a month to take home as their own. AHS students built each child their own bookshelf for their books to decorate and take home.

The Parent Coordinator conducts four workshops a year for the parents of each school, although parents in all schools are invited to all training sessions. Testimony shows that the training is very interactive and appropriate for parents. Generally, the training focuses on how parents can work with their children with a particular book that they will receive that night. One example of the turnout at a parenting event was a pizza dinner which 200 parents attended. ACPS also purchases a dictionary for students so that they all have one by the end of third grade.

### **COMMENDATION**

**Alleghany County Public Schools is commended for its integration of student literacy with parental involvement activities.**

### **FINDING**

The median community household income is \$38,545, below both the state (\$46,677) and national (\$41,994) median incomes. The area has one of the highest unemployment rates in the Commonwealth. Consequently, often parents have more pressing survival-related priorities than spending time learning how to read in order to assist their children with their school work. Several interviewees noted that students need additional instruction and support in reading, but that teachers are often so focused on providing instruction related to testing that intensive reading



instruction is not as much of a priority. Personnel stated that the community college has a reading program for adults, but that the school systems do not offer reading instruction in the community. An organization, Total Action Against Poverty, offers parenting programs, too, and the ACPS Title I Program provides reading nights periodically. In many cases, however, transportation and/or child care are impediments to parents attending either parenting workshops or literacy classes whether they are in centralized places or those that are far from their neighborhoods.

Interviewees, including a representative of the community college, stated that the college and the division have a strong working relationship. The Community College President and the Superintendent meet regularly for lunch to discuss potential collaborative endeavors. Such topics should include parent literacy initiatives.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

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

**Extend partnerships with the community college and community organizations to provide reading instruction for parents at sites within the community.**

In school divisions where parenting activities are offered in local communities, more parents attend and more consistently participate in parenting events. The same is true of adult educational opportunities. When activities are offered in venues that are easily accessible and comfortable for people, they are more likely to take advantage of them. Improving the literacy rate of people in the community benefits the entire area in addition to its positive impact on student learning. Churches have been used in other areas as sites for adult enrichment activities, since many parents who are hesitant to go to school events for many reasons, do attend church and feel comfortable in that environment.

## **FISCAL IMPACT**

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources by offering parenting activities at student home schools or nearby community locations in partnership with other agencies.

## **5.5 GIFTED AND TALENTED PROGRAM**

*Regulations Governing the Educational Program for Gifted Students* mandates differentiated instructional opportunities for gifted students in Virginia’s K-12 educational programs. Divisions are required to establish uniform procedures with common criteria for screening and identification that permit referral from school staff, parents, peers, students, and others. Eight criteria are included in Virginia Administrative Code of which each division must include four or more.

One component of the Commonwealth’s comprehensive approach to meeting the needs of gifted students is the Virginia Governor’s School Program. Although the various forms of Governor’s Schools (Academic-Year, Summer Residential, and Summer Regional) provide unique opportunities tailored within regions of the state, divisions are also expected to offer options for



gifted students who choose not to attend Governor’s School Programs. The Governor’s Schools offer both students and teachers opportunities to enrich and broaden their educational experiences.

**FINDING**

Testimony from division staff revealed that the division’s current approach to meeting the needs of students with exceptional abilities focuses on those with intellectual strengths, but does not include provisions for students with specific talents. One interviewee noted that discussions of expanding the ACPS program to include talented students had occurred, although there has not yet been inordinate interest from parents for program expansion. Course differentiation begins in eighth grade. At that time, students may take a foreign language, algebra, or geometry for high school credit. Other opportunities for secondary students include Advanced Placement courses, the year-long Governor’s School, a summer Governor’s School, or a summer regional school in ecology.

**Exhibit 5-15** shows the survey results from teachers and administrators in ACPS and other school districts regarding the effectiveness of Honors and Gifted/Talented Programs. The exhibit shows a higher level of dissatisfaction among ACPS administrators than those in other districts and a somewhat lower degree of satisfaction among ACPS teachers than in other districts.

**Exhibit 5-15**  
**Evergreen Survey Results**  
**Effectiveness of Honors/Gifted and Talented Programs**  
**ACPS and Districts in Evergreen’s Survey Database**

Survey Statement	Alleghany County Public Schools		Comparison Districts in Evergreen’s Survey Database	
	Strongly Agree/Agree	Strongly Disagree/Disagree	Strongly Agree/Agree	Strongly Disagree/Disagree
The division has effective special programs for Honors/Gifted and Talented Education.				
<b>Administrators</b>	66.7%	23.8%	73.9%	8.5%
<b>Teachers</b>	53.8%	14.7%	62.0%	24.3%

*Source: Evergreen Solutions Survey Results, 2006.*

The identification of students for the current program begins in kindergarten. The local plan states that the program model serving K-7 students is a pull-out of approximately 90 minutes per week. The K-7 Explorer’s Program serves potentially gifted students in grades K-3. The ASPIRE (Alleghany Schools Program in Independent Research and Enrichment) serves identified gifted students in grades 4-7. One teacher serves 75 sixth and seventh grade students at Mountain View and Clifton Middle School for two days a week at each school. The other teacher serves 49 students in four elementary schools one day a week at each school. The fifth day, teachers test referred students. Students in grades 8-12 have options from a continuum of services ranging from advanced courses, distance learning, independent study, mentorships, and/or the Jackson River Governor’s School for Science, Math, and Technology.



Division administrators expressed grave concerns regarding the number of ACPS students attending the Governor’s School for the dollars that the division contributes to the program and noted that they were likely going to discontinue offering it to their students. Data in **Exhibit 5-16**, on the Jackson River Governor’s School, show a dramatic decline in enrollment of students. Reasons that students gave for not returning for their senior years were:

- not liking to spend one-half day away from home high school;
- not enough time for sports and social life; and
- grades hurt GPA, don’t want to take any more math and science.

**Exhibit 5-16**  
**Allegheny County Public School Enrollment**  
**Jackson River Governor’s School**  
**2000-01 through 2006-07 School Years**

2000-01		2001-02		2002-03		2003-04		2004-05		2005-06		2006-07	
Juniors	Seniors												
11	8	1	12	9	3	4	9	5	3	15	8	3	2

Source: Jackson River Governor’s School, October 2006 Report.

A strong infrastructure exists in the division for expanding the Gifted Program to enrich the education of its talented students. The division has strong art and music programs with personnel who could focus their own talents more concertedly on cultivating the abilities of talented students. Over 25 percent of AHS students are in marching band. The AHS One-Act Play won first place for three consecutive years in the Blue Ridge District. The AHS Art Instructor was named the 2004 Virginia Art Education Association Southwest Region Teacher of the Year. And, finally, the Superintendent was named the 2004 Virginia Music Education Association Outstanding Administrator for 2004-05.

The division has also been revising the gifted curriculum to ensure consistency division-wide. ACPS direction has been for the curriculum to be SOL-related and an enrichment of instruction provided in regular classrooms. The division’s plan reflects an expectation that instruction will be differentiated by classroom teachers at all grade levels, and the plan includes details of staff development on differentiation available for division teachers through the University of Virginia (UVA). Gifted teachers plan with each other and are also required to go into regular classrooms to work with teachers any time they have no direct contact with groups of identified students. Their stated goal is to be in each grade level at least once a month.

**RECOMMENDATION**

**Recommendation 5-11:**

**Expand the ACPS Gifted Program to include elements to nurture student talents and include principals in plan development.**

The division’s commitment to enhanced educational opportunities for students is apparent in its Local Gifted Plan. ACPS has very thoughtfully planned for and implemented growth of the



program and its availability to underserved populations. Extending those plans to include students who have talents would further its current efforts. Principals who will be responsible for making the program work at their schools must be included early in the planning stages.

### **FISCAL IMPACT**

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources by making a concerted effort to identify students with talents early and recruit them into arts and other existing programs with the division's talented staff and programs as a first step. In this way, the division, parents, and students will be certain that students are being fully developed to their potential early and throughout their school careers. As more students are identified, the division can identify areas to expand existing programs to serve its talented students and budget accordingly.

## **5.6 INSTRUCTIONAL TECHNOLOGY**

Technology within the division, including instructional technology, is primarily discussed in **Chapter 8** of this report. However, implications for teaching and learning are discussed in this section. When used appropriately, instructional technology serves as a means to an end, not generally as a separate subject for students to be taught. It should be an integral part of teaching as well as student demonstration of learning. It takes many forms in today's classes and offers both students and teachers many opportunities to become engaged in the teaching and learning enterprise.

The Commonwealth of Virginia recognizes the power that technology, used correctly, has to enrich student educational experiences in its Standards of Quality requirement that divisions provide one Technology Resource Teacher (TRT) for each 1,000 students. Those TRT positions are provided to enhance teacher technology skills through professional development, student use of technology, and by teachers learning from TRT class instruction.

### **FINDING**

ACPS employs two TRTs to serve its seven schools. The TRTs are assigned to schools, but because there are only two, they do not provide regularly scheduled support and training. They are currently scheduled according to a work order process with principals and instructional personnel having the option of scheduling individual or group training sessions at any time in addition to summer training. This leaves the potential for their expertise not being fully capitalized on as was substantiated in interviews.

One principal stated that she encouraged teachers to take advantage of the TRT time when the TRT is at this principal's school. This principal has also consulted with the TRT about possible teacher needs. The school has also established processes whereby teachers can sign up ahead of time for TRT assistance. However, the principal feels that teachers still do not fully use the TRT. When asked about the degree of infusion of technology into division classrooms, answers were mixed, with the majority of teachers apparently not routinely using technology for instruction or student demonstration of learning. Walks through division schools largely confirmed that testimony.



The division has committed funds to replace outdated computers for every school. Several principals noted that teachers were extremely enthusiastic about training they have received and that it has prompted broader use than before the training. Some interviewees also stated that existing technology would be used more widely if more teachers were more comfortable and conversant in its use. The ACPS consolidated federal application outlines goals for use of TRTs are to train and model the use of instructional technology for all ACPS teachers, lesson plans reflecting integration, and student demonstrated technology literacy skills. TRTs have the potential to bridge that divide and facilitate meeting those goals, and are reported to be willing to respond to any request. However, they are not being systematically used to their full potential.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

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

**Identify training priorities and develop schedules at each school for specific training to be conducted when Technology Resource Teachers (TRTs) are present.**

ACPS educators want more infusion of technology into instruction. With the current approach to use of limited TRT time, though, a system is not in place to ensure that all teachers have more than the Commonwealth's minimum requirements for technology knowledge. Once the division implements this recommendation, the technology that it has invested in will be better utilized for student achievement, as will the investment the division has made in the TRT positions. TRTs will then be more purposefully used for the intentions that the Commonwealth had in introducing the positions.

## **FISCAL IMPACT**

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

## **FINDING**

Two principals reported that the technology training that was held the last day of the site visit had been enthusiastically received and their teachers were anxious to use their new knowledge. One other principal estimated that 65 to 70 percent of teachers were technology literate and use technology in their classes. However, technology support impediments stand in the way of more frequent use of the resources that are available to ACPS teachers. Comments from the public forum reinforced the need for the division to "improve at implementing new and upcoming technologies into the classroom."

The division has "resident experts" in each school who serve as the "first line of defense" for hardware problems and then ETC has a priority protocol for hardware and infrastructure problems, based on each division's time allocation. However, principals cited instances of having the technology support person making the drive to their schools (sometimes approximately 30 minutes from the Education Technology Center at the JRTC), address one technology issue and then leave, even though over a dozen computers needing to be set up remained un-used with software uninstalled and a work order having been submitted. Two principals also stated that their teachers had received training in a new Harcourt-Brace Math Program at the beginning of the year. However, similar tech support issues still stand as barriers



to the use of the technology components of the math program. Teachers lose the benefit of the training with disuse over such a lengthy period of time. One observed that a person with the technical knowledge to install software and set up computers is housed at the school, but that they are not allowed to do so, leaving the computers unusable for their intended purposes.

**Exhibit 5-17** shows teacher and administrator responses related to various aspects of technology in ACPS and districts in Evergreen’s survey database. The exhibit reflects the division’s commitment of resources to technology, more so than comparison districts in the survey sample, and shows fairly universal agreement about the expectation to integrate technology into instruction. Teachers were almost evenly split in their belief about equitable access (44.0% *strongly agree/agree* and 44.6% *strongly disagree/disagree*). However, there is a notable gap between the perceptions of ACPS administrators and teachers regarding the promptness of technological support for instruction. Almost half as many teachers responded that they receive quick assistance when they have a computer problem as compared to administrators. Although the gap is wide in comparison districts, it is not as wide as in ACPS. This gap has the potential to be a barrier in realizing the goal of technological and curricular integration in ACPS classrooms for the benefit of its students.

**Exhibit 5-17**  
**Evergreen Survey Results**  
**Satisfaction with Technology**  
**ACPS and Districts in Evergreen’s Survey Database**

Survey Statement	Allegheny County Public Schools		Comparison Districts in Evergreen’s Survey Database	
	Strongly Agree/Agree	Strongly Disagree/Disagree	Strongly Agree/Agree	Strongly Disagree/Disagree
All schools have equal access to educational materials such as computers, television monitors, and science labs.				
Administrators	85.7%	14.3%	59.8%	26.1%
Teachers	44.0%	44.6%	40.2%	38.0%
Teachers are expected to integrate technology into the classroom.				
Administrators	95.2%	0%	85.7%	10.7%
Teachers	94.0%	2.2%	70.8%	14.2%
I get assistance quickly when I have a computer problem.				
Administrators	90.5%	4.8%	85.7%	10.7%
Teachers	47.8%	44.6%	52.7%	39.8%

Source: *Evergreen Solutions Survey Results, 2006.*

**RECOMMENDATION**

**Recommendation 5-13:**

**Create guidelines that expedite the use of instructional technology and related software with the ETC staff and Covington City Public Schools.**

With the shortage of technology support personnel in the division, individuals with the skills and knowledge at schools should be able to support teachers to implement educational programs the division has purchased. Furthermore, creating a list of work orders by site for technology



support persons to address in one visit, rather than several, will better utilize their time, reduce division travel expenses, and expedite the use of available technology. Technical issues should not be allowed to stand in the way of the division's achieving its intended instructional and assessment purposes. Education Technology Center personnel should develop guidelines for software installation by school "resident experts" and other less technical instructional technology tasks to increase access and minimize the times that technology impedes student learning.

## **FISCAL IMPACT**

The guidelines can be developed with existing resources. Should the guidelines necessitate additional involvement of the "resident experts," then an annual stipend of about \$1,000 per school may be needed.

## **5.7 CAREER AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION**

A November 2006 *Chicago Times* article notes:

*In the past, vocational education was seen as a second-class education, the path for students who planned to skip college and head directly into the workforce. But a national focus on academic accountability and a high-tech economy that demands more highly skilled workers has forced a change: Vocational education is now for college-bound students.*

Formerly perceived lax standards for "vocational" courses have been replaced with rigor and reinforced relevance.

In infusing career and technical (CTE) programs with rigor and relevance, districts around the country are integrating standards from academic programs into activities and expectations for CTE courses. It is even more imperative that districts offering CTE programs look at labor-market trends to identify growth areas to match applicants for jobs with qualified high school candidates. School personnel must also prepare CTE graduates for success in related programs at postsecondary institutions. Many districts are forming partnerships with external entities to reinvigorate their vocational programs. By reaching out to businesses which have the vacancies and understand the preparatory needs, schools are using corporate knowledge and tapping into their resources to strengthen their programs. In many instances, businesses are investing in CTE programs with materials, equipment, and work experiences and internships. Such partnerships serve the needs of both the schools and the business community.

## **SEE RECOMMENDATIONS 10-7 AND 10-22 IN CHAPTER 10 RELATED TO CAREER TECHNICAL EDUCATION**



## 5.8 ENGLISH FOR SPEAKERS OF OTHER LANGUAGES

*No Child Left Behind* requires that all children will be academically proficient by the 2013-14 school year. The law leaves no doubt that students who are not native language English speakers are included in those expectations. Yet, when such students enter school in America, they come with a variety of language proficiencies in English and their native language(s), and in their academic preparation, experiences, and expectations. Many students are further inhibited by parents who are not fluent in English. These differences place many of them at a disadvantage academically. Students with limited formal education and who are below grade level in English literacy are particularly at risk of failing. This makes finding effective instructional approaches that both educate them in English and in content areas imperative.

### FINDING

The number of students whose native language is not English in ACPS presents challenges to the division in meeting their instructional needs in two ways:

- There are not enough students to support sufficient personnel to provide a level of service that the division would like for all of its students.
- Such small numbers and languages present educational challenges for both students and their families in a small, marginally diverse rural community. Despite the small numbers, students and families have pervasive survival needs that go beyond language and directly affect academic achievement.

During the 2005-06 school year, ACPS had nine Limited English Proficient (LEP) students. Of those, six were at the high school, two at Mountain View Elementary, and one at Clifton Middle School. Due to their varied needs, they were served either by Title I personnel funded with either Part A or D dollars, foreign language teachers, or content teachers. Staff used Rosetta Stone software to supplement instruction.

Many school systems around the country use the Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol (SIOP) Model which was developed to provide teachers with a well-articulated, practical model of sheltered instruction. The model's intent is to facilitate high quality instruction for these students in content area teaching. The SIOP Model can be viewed as an umbrella under which other programs developed for improving instruction can reside. In today's schools, administrators and teachers alike are continually bombarded with new approaches to instruction, reform efforts, and practices that sometimes seem to be in competition with one another. Often what is lacking in schools is coherence, or a plan for pulling together sound practices (Goldenberg, 2004). The SIOP Model is not another "add on" program, but rather it is a framework that can bring together a school's instructional program by organizing methods and techniques, and ensuring that effective practices are implemented and quantifiable.



## **RECOMMENDATION**

### **Recommendation 5-14:**

#### **Devise ways to incorporate English Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) students and their families into division and community activities.**

Many strategies that are simply sound educational practices have been shown specifically to benefit non-English proficient students. The school and classroom attributes found most effective in benefiting all students, but especially English language learners identified by the National Research Council are:

- a supportive but challenging schoolwide climate (including aligning teacher, student, and family beliefs, assumptions, and expectations toward high academic achievement);
- strong instructional leadership at the school level;
- customized learning environment, adapted to meet the identified instructional needs of students;
- articulation and coordination of programs and practices within and between schools;
- use of native language and valuing of home cultures as resources to be built upon, rather than liabilities to remediate (students and/or their family members could be used as resources to help other students learn about cultures different than their own);
- curriculum that balances basic and higher-order skills;
- explicit skills instruction for certain tasks, particularly in acquiring basic skills and learning strategies;
- opportunities for student-directed activities (small group work on conceptual tasks, peer tutoring), particularly in using language to make sense or create meaning;
- instructional strategies that enhance comprehension (sheltered instructional approaches, calling attention to language while using it, providing background knowledge and building on previous knowledge);
- opportunities for practice (built-in redundancy, extended dialog and instructional conversation);
- systematic student assessment to adjust instruction to student needs and improve program practices in a timely way;
- high-quality, sustained staff development that improves classroom practice; and
- family involvement to build supportive environments at home and home-school connections.



By addressing family needs and thinking inclusively in all aspects of division operations, ACPS will enlist community organizations to address family needs that support student educational needs. This approach will strengthen families and integrate them more holistically into the community. Strategies some districts with growing ESL populations have used successfully for parents and ESL students include:

- creating citizenship classes, job skills, and child care for attendees (Note: This could be done in ACPS in conjunction with the local adult education program at JRTC);
- hiring or assigning parent liaisons; and
- partnerships with community agencies so that parents can take care of many needs in one place for all aspects of intake and referral to local family support organizations (school registration, student language testing and related paperwork, student placement). This also minimizes the need for bilingual personnel at all schools for those purposes.

### **FISCAL IMPACT**

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources. The list of potential ideas included above was intended to provide ACPS with some alternatives, and can not be quantified unless finite strategies are selected and implemented.

**ALSO SEE RECOMMENDATIONS 10-7, 10-11, 10-12, 10-13, AND 10-22 IN CHAPTER 10**



***CHAPTER 6:  
FACILITIES USE AND MANAGEMENT***



## *Chapter 6*

# ***FACILITIES USE AND MANAGEMENT***

This chapter presents the review of facilities use and management in Allegheny County Public Schools (ACPS). The six sections in this chapter are:

- 6.1 Organizational Structure
- 6.2 Capital Planning and Facilities Use
- 6.3 Facilities Maintenance
- 6.4 Custodial Services
- 6.5 Energy Management
- 6.6 Community Use of Facilities

Well-planned facilities are based on the educational program and on accurate student enrollment projections. The design process should have input from all stakeholders, including administrators, principals, teachers, security specialists, parents, students, and maintenance and operations staff. The selection of building materials, interior finishes, hardware, mechanical, electrical, and plumbing systems, and of other major building components, should be made according to life-cycle cost analyses for an optimum total cost of construction, operations, and maintenance. The maintenance and operation of the facilities must be accomplished in an efficient and effective manner in order to provide a safe and secure environment that supports the educational program, and efficiently uses the school district's resources. Efficiencies and economies of maintenance and operation are critical to ensuring that resources for direct instruction are maximized. On the other hand, extreme actions to reduce the cost of maintenance and operations can result in higher than acceptable costs of repair and replacement in the years to come. Consequently, a balance must be achieved between reasonable economies and unreasonable cost slashing.

### **CHAPTER SUMMARY**

Facilities use and management for Allegheny County Public Schools is the primary responsibility of the Director of Administrative Services and the Maintenance Manager. The Director reports to the Superintendent, and the Maintenance Manager reports to the Director. All school buildings and ancillary facilities are well-maintained and clean. No neglect or deferred maintenance are in evidence on any of the facilities.

The only school facility requiring immediate attention is Allegheny High School. Built in 1962, the facility is in need of updating and renovation to serve as a contemporary high school. Because the building is located in a flood plain and has been subject to several devastating water intrusions, a decision must be made whether to install flood mitigation devices on the site, or to build a new school in a less flood-prone location either as an ACPS-only facility or in cooperation with the Covington City Public Schools. Major energy efficiencies have been implemented beginning in 2002, having saved ACPS nearly \$500,000 since that time.



Most prominent among the recommendations are:

- Re-establish the Ad Hoc Committee and charge it with generating a definitive and firm resolution of the Allegheny High School and related facilities needs on or before October 1, 2007.
- Employ life-cycle cost analysis as an official procedure in the selection of equipment and materials for new schools, additions, and renovations.
- Hire additional maintenance mechanics and helpers as may be required.
- Reallocate custodians throughout all Allegheny County school buildings.
- Hire a Custodial Manager.
- Use the LEED Green Building Rating System in all future new construction, major renovations, and existing building operations.
- Install special lighting control devices in all new or renovated school facilities to save on electric utility costs.

## **6.1 ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE**

A comprehensive facilities management program is responsible for the physical resources of a school district to ensure the most efficient and economical operation. The administration of the program effectively integrates facilities planning with the other aspects of school division planning, including identified division priorities. To be effective, facility planners and managers should be involved in the school district's overall strategic planning activities.

As a best practice, all aspects of facilities planning, design, construction, maintenance and custodial activities should be under one single supervisory position. **Exhibit 6-1** shows this supervisory position in ACPS to be the Director of Administrative Services, who reports directly to the Superintendent.

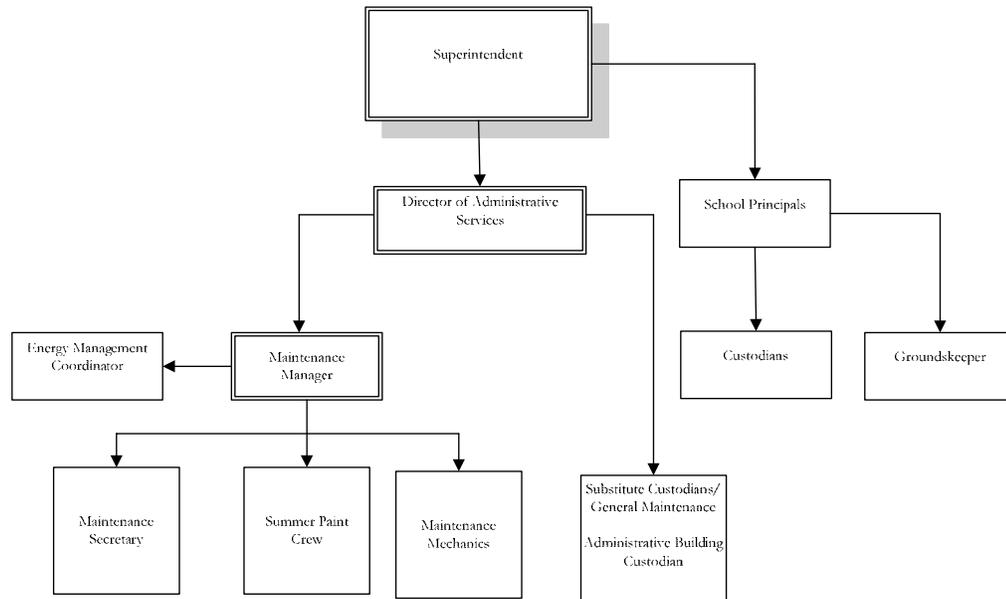
The ACPS Facilities Department is responsible for the operation and maintenance of seven schools, one administrative complex, one maintenance/bus shop, and several miscellaneous buildings used primarily for supply storage. The total gross square footage is 528,397.

The Director of Administrative Services is responsible for the overall supervision of the facilities function, including:

- direct management of capital improvement projects and new construction;
- supervision for food service, transportation, procurement, and records management, in addition to facilities;
- “Active consultation” to school principals and others in maintenance, groundskeeping, and custodial services; and
- staff training, policy/procedure development, and safety/regulatory compliance.



**Exhibit 6-1**  
**Facilities Organizational Structure for**  
**Alleghany County Public Schools**



Source: Created by Evergreen Solutions from information provided by Alleghany County Public Schools, 2006.

The Maintenance Manager provides daily, hands-on supervision for facilities maintenance, grounds, energy management, supply receiving/distribution, third-party vendors, regulatory compliance, staff training, safety, custodial supplies and equipment, central office custodial services, and management of the substitute custodian pool.

The Systems Manager is responsible for daily energy management, SchoolDude work request system administration, Boiling Spring Elementary School water plant operation, statistical information relating to square footage/space utilization, asset inventory, and safety procedures.

## FINDING

The current organizational structure for facilities within the ACPS shows a best practice organization. All of the following facilities-related functions are organizationally directly under the Director of Administrative Services:

- capital projects planning;
- capital projects design;
- construction of new buildings, major additions, and renovations;
- facilities maintenance; and
- custodial services.

Under this arrangement, there are no conflicting bottom line goals. The entire unit's goal is the achievement of the lowest overall total cost of construction, utilities, maintenance, and cleaning over the life of all facilities owned and operated by the Alleghany County Public Schools. This life-cycle cost orientation benefits the overall fiscal health of the division.



The simultaneous and careful attention to short- and long-term costs is not only important to ACPS, but also to the taxpayers who will receive good value for their tax dollars.

### COMMENDATION

**Allegheny County Public Schools is commended for its organization of all facilities functions under a single, prominent school district administrator to achieve optimum ownership and operational costs.**

### FINDING

The ACPS has a best practice organization for its custodial staff.

The custodians are assigned to specific schools and report directly to their respective principals. At the same time, the custodians report to the Maintenance Manager who provides staff training, coordinates the distribution of custodial supplies and equipment, and arranges for the assignment of substitute custodians.

### COMMENDATION

**Allegheny County Public Schools is commended for its best practice organization of its custodial staff.**

## **6.2 CAPITAL PLANNING AND FACILITIES USE**

Engaging in planning for facilities is one of the most important activities of a school board and administration. The essential activities of a facilities planning process include:

- the development of facilities plans that are responsive to the educational needs of the students and of related educational programs;
- plans for the optimum utilization of existing facilities to ensure that overbuilding does not occur;
- accurate student demographic information that ensures new facilities are located in appropriate geographic areas of the school district, are designed to the optimum capacity, and are expandable if necessary; and
- a clear understanding of the safety and security needs of the contemporary educational setting.

A new combination elementary school and middle school (Mountain View Elementary/ Clifton Middle) was occupied in 2001, and major renovations (including energy efficiency) have been completed in three other elementary schools.

According to Evergreen survey results of administrators, 90.5 percent of respondents *strongly agree* or *agree* with the statement “Parents, citizens, students, faculty, staff and the Board



provide input into facility planning”; only 9.5 percent *disagree*. The teacher responses to the same question were 56.5 percent *strongly agree* or *agree*, 17.9 percent had no opinion, and 25.6 percent *disagree* or *strongly disagree*. It is clear that stakeholder consultation in facility planning is important and must continue to be practiced. **Exhibit 6-2** shows the responses of ACPS administrators and teachers compared to responses from districts in Evergreen’s survey database.

**Exhibit 6-2**  
**Administrators and Teacher Survey Results on Input to Facility Planning in the Allegheny County Public Schools and Districts in Evergreen’s Survey Database**

Survey Statement	ACPS Administrators		Administrators in Evergreen’s Survey Database		ACPS Teachers		Teachers in Evergreen’s Survey Database	
	Strongly Agree/ Agree	Strongly Disagree/ Disagree	Strongly Agree/ Agree	Strongly Disagree/ Disagree	Strongly Agree/ Agree	Strongly Disagree/ Disagree	Strongly Agree/ Agree	Strongly Disagree/ Disagree
Parents, citizens, students, faculty, staff and the board provide input into facility planning.	90.5%	9.5%	61.3%	16.6%	56.5%	25.6%	36.9%	30.7%

Source: Evergreen Solutions Survey Results, 2006.

Another survey statement, “Our schools have sufficient space and facilities to support the instructional programs,” had administrators respond 47.6 percent *agree* or *strongly agree*, and 52.4 percent *disagree* or *strongly disagree*. Teacher responses to that same statement were 25.6 percent *agree* or *strongly agree*, 2.7 percent no opinion, and 71.7 percent *disagree* or *strongly disagree*. The strongly negative responses are no doubt a reflection on the high school’s current poor condition. **Exhibit 6-3** shows the responses of ACPS administrators and teachers compared to responses from districts in Evergreen’s survey database.

**Exhibit 6-3**  
**Administrators and Teacher Survey Results on Sufficiency of Space in the Allegheny County Public Schools and Districts in Evergreen’s Survey Database**

Survey Statement	ACPS Administrators		Administrators in Evergreen’s Survey Database		ACPS Teachers		Teachers in Evergreen’s Survey Database	
	Strongly Agree/ Agree	Strongly Disagree/ Disagree	Strongly Agree/ Agree	Strongly Disagree/ Disagree	Strongly Agree/ Agree	Strongly Disagree/ Disagree	Strongly Agree/ Agree	Strongly Disagree/ Disagree
Our schools have sufficient space and facilities to support the instructional programs.	47.6%	52.4%	57.6%	37.9%	25.6%	71.7%	47.0%	40.1%

Source: Evergreen Solutions Survey Results, 2006.

**FINDING**

ACPS faces a major facilities planning decision: how to deal with the future of Allegheny High School in such a manner that the best possible solution is found to the current problem. But the matter has not been easy, as told by a participant in the recent open forum held by Evergreen Solutions on November 8, 2006 at the JRTC. The participant noted that when her daughter was a



toddler, someone asked her to which high school she wanted to send her. She replied that it was a moot question, since by then there would surely be a combined high school for Covington and Alleghany County. That was 20 years ago, and her daughter is now a college graduate.

The problem of Alleghany High School appears easily defined, but only on the surface. Alleghany High School is outdated and insufficient as a state-of-the-art high school. It also is subject to periodic flooding.

Yet the best solution is much less easily captured. The following options are heard most prominently:

- Build a new high school.
- Flood-proof the site and renovate/expand the existing school.
- Add a new high school building to the existing Covington High School, and run it cooperatively as a combined County-City High School.
- Build a new high school jointly between CCPS and ACPS, and run it cooperatively as a combined County-City High School.

Unfortunately, these options have remained only examples of ideas, not of solutions.

Facilities ideas that appear to generate interest must be studied so that their cost, educational merits, social and political acceptability, and influence on the future of the community can be better understood and then compared. Only when they have been examined carefully, impartially, and professionally do ideas become potential solutions. The above ideas have been the subject of largely fruitless debate, because such debate has been mostly uninformed. Only after being studied can informed debate be conducted, leading to potentially informed decision making. But progress is being made in finding the best solution.

While the four options provided above are mentioned predominantly, other ideas have been advanced by well-intentioned citizens at public forums and in letters to the editor of the local newspapers. These additional ideas reinforce that the Alleghany High School issue can—and perhaps should—involve an examination of school facilities use in general across the County and the City:

- Convert Covington High School to a 6-8 middle school for the western part of the City and the County, construct a new joint high school for grades 9-12, and convert all elementary schools including Jeter-Watson to K-5.
- Have Covington maintain a K-8 system using Covington High School and Jeter-Watson, and close Edgemont. Then Covington could contract with Alleghany County for grades 9-12 in a new Alleghany High School.
- Build no new schools. In a jointly operated school division, use an expanded Covington High School as the combined high school in grades 10-12, expand Clifton Middle



School, expand Jeter-Watson as a middle school, and realign elementary school boundaries for more even occupancy.

The above three ideas have been effectively eliminated by the CCPS Board because of strong, conclusive evidence based on earlier studies conducted on behalf of CCPS. Jeter-Watson Middle School and Edgemont Elementary School are not in sufficient condition for continued use as school facilities. Several in-depth studies completed between 2001 and 2005 have found that Jeter-Watson and Edgemont do not meet current standards, codes, and accessibility requirements. It appears questionable that Jeter-Watson and Edgemont can remain in service as schools even with radical renovation and expansion. CCPS has on the basis of this information proceeded with plans for a new middle school and a new elementary school on a new site, possibly in the shared services model used successfully by ACPS in its new Mountain View Elementary/Clifton Middle School.

In addition, ACPS reports significant success with its K-5/6-8/9-12 model. Student performance and test scores have risen dramatically since ACPS settled on this grade configuration, according to ACPS administrators. Thus, any ideas requiring ACPS to modify its current grade structure would meet with stiff resistance.

The work on careful study of the prominent options is proceeding. Currently, one study has been completed, and another is under way.

The first is an engineering study of what is required to flood-mitigate the existing site, conducted by the firm of Engineering Concepts, Inc., of Fincastle, Virginia. It was completed in September 2005. According to ACPS officials, the firm has designed a levy and floodgate, along with suitable drainage and pumping systems to manage a 500 year flood. At a cost in current dollars of approximately \$760,000, the AHS building can be protected up to the 500 year flood level, but not beyond. The adjacent football field is not included in this protection. For these reasons, ACPS officials point out carefully that it provides for flood mitigation, but not for flood-proofing. The full details of this flood mitigation study have been made public.

The other current study is examining the feasibility of a combined high school in the location of the current Covington High School. The firm of Oliver, Webb, Pappas and Rhudy, Inc., Architects and Engineers (OWPR) has been hired with funds from the Allegheny Foundation on behalf of ACPS and CCPS to conduct this study. According to ACPS officials, both School Boards agreed on November 29, 2006 (with verbal consensus achieved on December 4, 2006) to proceed with this joint architectural study of Covington High School. The Allegheny Foundation approved the re-allocation of funds to support the study, and the architectural firm of OWPR has been authorized to proceed. The task will be to determine what renovations and expansion would be necessary in order to have Covington High School serve as a 21<sup>st</sup> Century comprehensive Group AA high school for all students in the City and County in grades 9-12. It also will include a projected cost for such a project.

Educational program development meetings were conducted with department chairs from both high schools on January 3 and February 14, 2007. A forum for parent representatives from all K-12 city and county PTAs, PTO and booster clubs was conducted on January 18, 2007. The architect was scheduled to present his report and preliminary design options during a joint



meeting of the two school boards on February 21, 2007. The outcome of the presentation was not available at the time this report was published.

The Oliver, Webb, Pappas and Rhudy firm has served as the CCPS architect for some time, and must therefore exercise extra diligence to conduct an objective and fair feasibility assessment that is not beholden to either school division.

In addition, the Allegheny County School Board approved a resolution on December 11, 2006 that maintained its commitment to studying merger options, but which also directed the Superintendent to bring forth by October 2007 recommendations associated with the possible construction of a new (county-only) high school. These recommendations are to include the following actions:

- purchase property;
- employ an architect; and
- collaborate with the County administrator to prepare a financial plan to support a possible new high school.

The studies will no doubt contribute to a better understanding and help to identify solutions. Some preliminary investigations have also been done as to the cost of a new Allegheny High School, and the potential cost of renovating the existing Allegheny High School. These investigations are not yet sufficiently thorough to give more than mere cost ranges: \$45 to \$51 million for a new school and \$34 to \$40 million for a renovation of the existing school. Final decisions cannot be based on information with such a large uncertainty and margin of error. County officials have raised concerns that Allegheny County may simply be unable to afford a new high school. This concern cannot be answered until more reliable cost figures are available. For example, if \$45 million for a new school is unaffordable, why would \$40 million for a renovated existing school be in the affordability range?

It should be assumed that if the two school boards decide to proceed with the expansions and renovations to Covington High School, the Allegheny County School Board's resolution of December 11, 2006 will be rescinded. However, if plans for the combined high school are abandoned, it is important to stress that the Allegheny County School Board resolution of December 11<sup>th</sup> will need to be implemented. This implementation can only be meaningful if it is done with the same care, diligence, and level of detail as the current study of the combined high school.

One difficulty is that the entire matter is at a crossroads of the hard and soft sciences of architecture, engineering, and enrollment projections, on the one hand, and politics, sociology, and mass psychology on the other. Thus a flood-proofing engineering study will not answer the advisability of keeping separate high schools. Nor will a feasibility study of a combined high school assess the tenacity of a traditional football rivalry. Yet all dimensions – hard and soft – must be considered with care.

Another difficulty is that the future of Allegheny High School is not the concern of ACPS alone. The entire question of consolidation of the schools, and even of the two governments, is also at the core of this issue. Thus CCPS, as well as the City and County Governments are stakeholders.



The Ad Hoc Committee, comprised of representatives of both school divisions and both governments, is evidence that the fact of being in this together has been recognized and formalized. Unfortunately, the Ad Hoc Committee was discontinued in November 2006. The two school boards have instead agreed to meet jointly in open session to complete the facilities planning process. While it is feasible to have a jointly operated high school without a consolidated school division, it is unclear whether or not consolidation is viewed by some as a prerequisite to a combined high school, and yet by others as a non-acceptable condition. In some circles, talk of consolidation appears to be a genuine taboo. Proponents of consolidation automatically assume that such a move will save administrative costs. Proponents of a jointly operated school division assume the same.

It is not surprising, and no accident, that decades have passed, and a decision on the future of Alleghany High School is still in question. It is probably fortunate that no decision has been made up to this point because it would have been based more heavily on emotion rather than a weighing of factual alternatives. Yet some voices in the community say “We don’t need more studies! Just look at the old high school, and it’s clear we need a new one.” Until more understanding is gained of the facts, emotions will dominate.

Much of the public input at Evergreen’s open forum of November 8, 2006 shows the emotions and frustrations revolving around this issue. The following comments made by participants were often prepared in haste, and may not be always grammatically and syntactically correct:

- *Alleghany High School is to be replaced. Band room needs to be larger, classroom air conditioning, more up to date.*
- *Alleghany High needs to be REPLACED! No more studies – all you have to do is tour the facility.*
- *Please don’t rely on consolidation to move forward on this issue – we are in DIRE STRAITS with this building we need a new high school now. Do we really need to bring the City of Covington with us???*
- *REPLACE Alleghany High School – No expensive “Band Aid” – we need a good facility/mold, rodent and roach free, in which our children can learn without fear of flooding and having to endure the Contingency Plan – The band room is small, no air conditioning. (adequate) when 25+ percent of students body in the band – THIS NEEDS OUR SUPPORT!*
- *Please replace Alleghany High School – We need a new school!*
- *This County is headstrong that they are going to build a \$60M High School, while the City is thinking about building a \$15M lower level school. We also have a \$35M project for a sewage treatment plant.*
- *County is a blighted area, student populations are on the decrease in both divisions.*
- *One proposed solution:*



- *Take CHS and spend \$30M to build an addition; they have the land and they have the facility.*
- *\$5-\$8M to renovate air conditioning and electrical in CHS.*
- *Take JRTC and remodel it for \$10M — make it a K-8 school.*
- *Leave us with one high school in the center of the city, and have it be a center of economic development.*
- *Why destroy a viable commercial section and build a high school?*
- *If we merge, there will be a problem with teacher salaries — but it will only cost \$1-2M for the first year or two — retirements will take care of it.*
- *If we merge the two, we get a brand new high school.*
- *Anyone who comes to the high school will buy hot dogs, gas, and go shopping.*
- *We have the best football stadium in southwest Virginia; we have the best sports complex as well.*
- *When True Value leaves across the street from high school, we can buy that and build a vocational center.*
- *County trying to force consolidation down the city's throats.*
- *The Superintendent has just requested \$300k to study the high school from an architecture perspective.*
- *Alleghany High School facility is in poor condition, both physically and in services (Internet, etc). With this said, the teachers and administrators do an outstanding job preparing students for college and other careers. Alleghany High School students can compete on any level with students from any other school division in Virginia.*
- *Air conditioning is not available in the high school causing high temperatures which in turn cause lack of focus among students and also many dress code issues. Also the current condition of the school does not allow for proper extermination of the cockroaches. Another major issue is mold in almost all classrooms which causes many allergy problems among students and facility alike.*
- *A band aid on Alleghany High School is not an answer! We must have a new high school. Dumping good money into the existing school is crazy! Let's give our children a place to be comfortable and proud and offer opportunities to compete in academics, sports and technology.*



- *The duct work in the high school has to be filled with dust. What are the teachers/students breathing? Please give us a new school!*
- *Replace Allegheny High School (new facility). Do not waste more time waiting for consolidation issues to be resolved.*
- *Security issues at current facility need to be addressed.*
- *There is no doubt that Allegheny High School is way past gone physically, and no longer can accommodate the size of classes or instructional needs. Covington High School is the same, but why build two schools when our joint venture system will fix the problem. A bigger school could be built for less money than two. Maintenance costs would decrease, class size would increase, making our joint venture school system available to receive additional funding for school divisions to use for better programs, services, and less burden on taxpayers.*
- *You are fooling yourselves if you believe you can update Allegheny High School. It will be a waste of funds. The solution is simple – combine Covington High School and Allegheny High School. It won't be easy – but doing the right thing often is not.*
- *Allegheny High School must be replaced. The building is crumbling. Student and facility deserve climate control and space to learn/teach.*
- *I think we need a new high school! The exposed wires, sagging ceilings, buckling floors, cracking foundation, cockroaches, etc. Cannot be an effective learning environment. Imagine the expanded educational opportunities our children could have if they felt secure in the learning environment. Forget Covington High School!!! If they do not wish to consolidate, then we need to move forward without them. Put pressure on our Board of Supervisors.*
- *No doubt we need a new high school. Our kids (elementary) are taking a step backwards coming from Clifton Middle School to Allegheny High School.*
- *We aren't able to compete like Blue Ridge District. Our gym is so small, it's absolutely needed; there are only 2 restrooms (women) when a game is going on.*
- *Allegheny High School – no air conditioning, the building is in bad shape. Something needs to be done soon so our elementary school kids go forward to high school not take a step back.*
- *Facilities cannot support the arts talent that the students have. Their abilities far exceed the stage to perform.*

The conditions for making an informed decision about Allegheny High School, along with possible related effects entailed with other facilities in ACPS and CCPS, are reaching fruition. The entire process is moving rapidly from the idea generation stage to the careful study and weighing of these ideas. Even though it will take time to study and discuss the hard and soft



science pros and cons of these ideas, a decision-making deadline needs to be established. Hard work lies ahead, but it cannot be allowed to go on indefinitely.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

### **Recommendation 6-1:**

**Re-establish the Ad Hoc Committee and charge it with generating a definitive and firm resolution of the Allegheny High School and related facilities needs on or before October 1, 2007.**

To this end, the Ad Hoc Committee should be re-constituted immediately. The Committee should pursue a diligent and deliberate course to study all major Allegheny High School ideas carefully, impartially, and professionally, leading to informed decision making about the future of Allegheny High School and other County and City school facilities. If necessary, a third-party consultant should be hired to facilitate the actions of the Committee.

It is recommended that the re-constituted Ad Hoc Committee, consisting of representatives from both school divisions and from both governments, be designated by the City and County governments to serve as the official leadership group to move the process of study and analysis along to the point of informed decision making. It is further recommended that the Ad Hoc Committee use a structured problem-solving process, such as the flow chart originally developed for this purpose. This chart should be embellished to contain all aspects the Committee wants to pursue. Once the chart is satisfactory to Committee members, it should be adopted as the official, formal process.

Several key rules and principles should be observed:

- Ideas are important and valuable, but they are not potential solutions until they have been studied carefully, and important facts are fully developed and understood.
- It is a virtue to champion an idea, but not on the basis of mere conjecture and assumptions – facts are the tools of true idea champions.
- Emotions are acceptable in debate and discussion, but they are not useful when informed decisions must be reached.
- Ideas should be implemented with deliberate speed once incontrovertible facts have been developed to justify such action.
- The research scope and protocol need to be pursued professionally, competently, and efficiently.
- It is acceptable to reject one or two ideas from the start, provided all stakeholders agree not to debate or consider the idea as part of the process.
- Studies of each idea chosen for further scrutiny should seek the information needed for decision making, and be objective, impartial, and professional.



- Attempts to advance an idea by means of a deliberately skewed or faulty investigation with predetermined results corrupt the process seriously, and perpetrators should be removed permanently from further participation.
- It is hard to unbuild—when a structure has been built in a specific location and to a particular configuration, it generates a nearly irreversible commitment to that decision; hence, that decision should have the strongest possible foundation.

Examples of the types of studies that should be done of the selected options are:

- educational specifications prepared by a school architect for the most likely of the scenarios: a new high school (County only, or combined County and City), a renovated and perhaps expanded existing high school, and an addition to the existing Covington High School (Note: Such work is most often part of the scope of services of architects when they are hired to develop the pre-design analysis of the requirements of a new building or major addition, and should thus not require any extraordinary costs);
- more detailed preliminary facility construction and renovation cost estimates based on reliable cost data (example, R.S. Means Company) performed by an established cost consultant (The cost of such work may range from about \$20,000 - \$30,000);
- updates of demographic and geographic population patterns and trends influencing school divisions and redistricting options costing in the range of \$15,000 - \$25,000;
- updates of analyses of potential savings in administrative costs to determine the amount of savings that would be realized from consolidation or joint operation in the \$10,000 - \$2,000 range; and
- if deemed advisable, any appropriate sociopolitical and socioeconomic analyses related to selected options (The cost of such studies could range from \$10,000 - 50,000).

## **FISCAL IMPACT**

This exact fiscal impact can not be determined at this time. However, the estimated cost ranges noted above provide a general order of magnitude of the funding requirements of such studies.

## **FINDING**

ACPS has shown itself to be sensitive to the need for balancing the initial cost of construction with long-term operating and maintenance costs. The school division should now establish a firm policy to use life- cycle costing in all new construction, additions, and renovations.

Life-cycle cost analyses are not a matter of official policy with ACPS when the division is contemplating major selections of building materials and components during the design of new buildings, building additions, or renovations. This opens up the possibility that only the lowest first cost might be used as the selection criterion. In that case, the division faces an increased risk



of unacceptably high maintenance and operating costs. Architects should therefore be instructed to perform life-cycle cost analyses for all major building components and materials.

Life-cycle cost analyses are typically performed by the architects and engineers hired to design new facilities. In addition, some life-cycle cost analyses are performed to reach decisions on future new and replacement floor finishes, especially for school corridors and other common circulation areas. For example, although porcelain tile and terrazzo are significantly higher in initial cost than vinyl composition tile (VCT), they both have a significantly longer life span than VCT. A lower cost but longer life floor finish is colored concrete with epoxy sealant.

VCT requires constant multiple-layer waxing in order to keep it serviceable, whereas porcelain tile, terrazzo and sealed concrete require significantly less upkeep. For example, terrazzo and porcelain tile are cleaned typically with soap and water and a squeegee. As a result, VCT begins to lose ground against terrazzo and porcelain tile in a life-cycle cost analysis when the constant expenses of labor and materials for VCT waxing and stripping are added. Moreover, VCT is generally replaced on a seven-year cycle, while the lifespan of terrazzo or porcelain tile floors can be up to hundreds of years. Old school buildings attest to this situation.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

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

#### **Employ life-cycle cost analysis as official procedure in the selection of equipment and materials for new schools, additions, and renovations.**

ACPS should select equipment and materials that favor long-term savings in energy use, maintenance labor and material, and custodial labor and materials.

As was noted in the commendation on the overall organization favoring life-cycle costing, the Facilities Department headed by the Director of Administrative Services is an example of a best practice. To take advantage of this best practice organization, a formal commitment to life-cycle costing should be made immediately. Careful life-cycle cost studies should then be conducted of such major items as the following:

- roofing systems - sloped, standing seam metal versus architectural asphalt shingles, versus low slope multiple ply;
- two pipe versus four pipe heating and cooling systems;
- flooring – terrazzo versus porcelain or ceramic tile, versus vinyl composition tile, versus integral color or stained concrete; and
- any other system or product such as flush valves (manual versus automatic), light fixtures, occupancy sensors, boilers, and chillers.



## FISCAL IMPACT

In school districts where no life-cycle cost analysis is practiced at all, maintenance and operating cost savings from the implementation of life-cycle costing, along with energy savings, can amount to more than ten percent of maintenance and custodial labor and materials, as well as ten percent or more of energy cost. Since ACPS does have a significant energy management program and an informal life-cycle cost analysis program, Evergreen expects the likely savings to be about five percent.

The annual budget for operations and maintenance at ACPS is \$2,763,720 of which five percent is an annual net savings of about \$138,000. The cost of conducting the life-cycle cost analyses will be included in the design professional fees, and are not subtracted from the projected net savings of about \$138,000. Since new construction, additions and renovations are not planned at this time, the cost savings can not be quantified until a plan is generated.

## FINDING

ACPS, like many older school divisions, has a variety of buildings constructed at different times in its inventory. Typically, these buildings contain many different types of interior finish materials and equipment. This variety requires maintaining numerous different repair or replacement items, including, but not limited to:

- floor and ceiling tiles;
- light fixtures, light bulbs and fluorescent tubes;
- plumbing fixtures; and
- mechanical equipment.

In addition to the requirement for a varied inventory, two other factors influence cost: maintenance staff and custodians must spend extra time to learn to work with many different items, and the school division cannot save money by buying many items in bulk.

## RECOMMENDATION

### Recommendation 6-3:

#### **Limit the variety of equipment and materials during future new construction, additions, and renovations.**

As new buildings are constructed and existing ones are renovated, ACPS should strive to ask its architects to create a narrow list of equipment and materials. This action should be taken especially in the following areas:

- Interior finish materials should be limited to a small number of types, patterns and colors. Included are floor, wall and ceiling finishes, and perhaps door hardware and keying systems. This simplifies repairs, and keeps the number of replacement parts under control. In addition, it reduces the number of tools and chemicals needed to clean them.



- Light fixtures should be standardized to not more than four different types. This action makes it easier for electricians to know the various fixtures, requires fewer replacement lamp or bulb types to be kept on hand. In addition, preventive maintenance schedules can be simplified.
- Plumbing fixtures should be standardized as much as possible, preferably to one flush valve, one or two sets of faucets, etc. This action makes it easier for plumbers to know the various fixtures, and requires fewer types of replacement parts. In addition, preventive maintenance schedules can be simplified.
- Boilers, chillers, and other HVAC equipment should be standardized as much as possible so that maintenance mechanics can know the equipment more easily, and preventive maintenance schedules can be simplified.

**FISCAL IMPACT**

This recommendation will not have a major fiscal impact. Rather, it will streamline operations. The savings impact achieved by this recommendation will be gradual, as greater uniformity is achieved. The timeline below shows no impact during the first three years, an impact of one percent of one half of the maintenance and operating budget of \$2,763,720, or \$13,800. As the desired level of uniformity is achieved, perhaps within ten years, an annual savings impact of about \$25,000 may be reached, mainly due to savings from pre-purchasing in larger, more uniform quantities.

Recommendation	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12
Limit Variety of Equipment and Materials	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$13,800	\$13,800

**6.3 FACILITIES MAINTENANCE**

Maintenance protects the investment made in facilities. If the facilities were constructed with materials and systems that are easy and inexpensive to maintain, then true life-cycle costing was practiced. If a sufficient maintenance workforce has been hired to complete all work orders in a timely manner and without a backlog, then the buildings can last and perform satisfactorily for decades, even centuries, to come.

When responding to the following statement, “Schools are well-maintained,” 85.7 percent of administrators *agree* or *strongly agree*, while only 14.3 percent *disagree*. Teachers responding to the same question had 50.6 percent *agree* or *strongly agree*, while 40.7 percent *disagree* or *strongly disagree* 8.7 percent had no opinion.

Administrators responding to “Repairs are made in a timely manner,” *agree* or *strongly agree* at 81 percent, and *disagree* at 19 percent. For teachers, the response was 36.4 percent *agree* or *strongly agree*, and 53.3 percent *disagree* or *strongly disagree*, while 10.3 percent had *no opinion*.



“Emergency maintenance is handled promptly,” received a 95.2 percent *agree* or *strongly agree* from administrators, with 4.8 percent *disagree*. Teachers responding to the same statement had 63.6 percent *agree* or *strongly agree*, 14.7 percent *disagree* or *strongly disagree*, with 21.7 percent having *no opinion*.

**Exhibit 6-4** shows the responses of ACPS administrators and teachers compared to responses from peers.

**Exhibit 6-4  
Administrators and Teachers Survey Results on Maintenance Issues in the Allegheny County Public Schools and Districts in Evergreen’s Survey Database**

Survey Statement	ACPS Administrators		Administrators in Evergreen’s Survey Database		ACPS Teachers		Teachers in Evergreen’s Survey Database	
	Strongly Agree/ Agree	Strongly Disagree/ Disagree	Strongly Agree/ Agree	Strongly Disagree/ Disagree	Strongly Agree/ Agree	Strongly Disagree/ Disagree	Strongly Agree/ Agree	Strongly Disagree/ Disagree
Schools are well-maintained	85.7%	14.3%	78.6%	17.9%	50.6%	40.7%	56.6%	35.4%
Repairs are made in a timely manner	81.0%	19.0%	60.5%	31.1%	36.4%	53.3%	48.1%	43.0%
Emergency maintenance is handled promptly	95.2%	4.8%	77.4%	12.4%	63.6%	14.7%	66.2%	16.9%

Source: *Evergreen Solutions Survey Results, 2006.*

**FINDING**

Although the crew of maintenance mechanics at ACPS is composed of highly competent and dedicated troubleshooters, they lack the assistance of helpers in the various trades of electrician, plumber, HVAC, and carpenter. Currently, five maintenance mechanics are assigned to facilities with a gross square footage of 535,789, a ratio of one mechanic per 107,000 square feet. ACPS relies on the APPA standard of 85,000 square feet per mechanic. A best practice ratio of 45,000 square feet per mechanic is advanced by the Florida Center for Community Design and Research in its Report 77 for the Florida Department of Education. By hiring helpers who can eventually advance to being mechanics, an opportunity for succession can be developed.

**RECOMMENDATION**

**Recommendation 6-4:**

**Hire additional maintenance mechanics and helpers as may be required.**

The recently hired Director of Administrative Services is implementing a detailed facilities maintenance schedule that intends to list all major maintenance items, together with clear schedules for routine maintenance, major maintenance services, and eventual replacement. Once this schedule is fully implemented, the Director of Administrative Services and the Maintenance Manager should monitor if the current complement of mechanics on staff is adequate to the tasks in that schedule. In addition, they should examine if any specific work should be outsourced.



Additional maintenance mechanics should be hired only as may be required to complete all scheduled and emergency maintenance work.

Currently, one maintenance mechanic’s position is occupied by a groundskeeper assigned to the new Mountain View Elementary School /Clifton Middle School facility. This position should be shifted for maintenance. A new groundskeeper position should be created.

Based on current skills needed, two additional maintenance mechanics should be hired—one with HVAC skills, the other in plumbing. This would increase the number of mechanics from five to seven, and reduce the per-square-foot ratio from 107,000 to 76,500. Later, at least three helpers should also be hired: one each in electrical, plumbing and HVAC. These three areas are most in need of having two persons assigned to a job.

**FISCAL IMPACT**

The hiring should be done gradually to avoid an abrupt increase in the maintenance budget. The following hiring sequence is suggested:

- FY 2007-08: Hire additional HVAC mechanic. Reclaim mechanic’s line currently used for groundskeeper, and establish a new groundskeeper line. New groundskeeper line is estimated at \$25,000 annually plus 36 percent benefits, equaling \$34,000.
- FY 2008-09: Hire additional plumber at \$35,000 annually, plus 36 percent equals \$47,600.
- FY 2009-10: Hire three helpers in HVAC, plumbing, and electrical at \$19,000 plus 36 percent equals \$25,840 times three equals \$77,520.

Recommendation	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12
Hire Additional Mechanics and Helpers	(\$34,000)	(\$81,600)	(\$159,120)	(\$159,120)	(\$159,120)

**FINDING**

ACPS has recently purchased the SchoolDude automated work order processing software and is in the process of implementing it at this time. Maintenance software and online services are now well-developed. They are designed to be easily adapted to each K-12 school’s particular needs and circumstances. SchoolDude is an example of a company offering such software/service ([www.schooldude.com](http://www.schooldude.com)).

The use of automated work order software is appropriate. At ACPS, a single person work order processing staff in maintenance would have to grow significantly without the software. With the software or online service, each person would become significantly more capable to handle the tasks as they arise.



An automated work order management program offers significant advantages, including:

- superior record-keeping for the scheduling of personnel for maintenance calls, the timely ordering of required parts and tools, and the coordination with outside maintenance contractors, as may be required (Other items that can be monitored include work order cost, and the speed of work order fulfillment.);
- analysis of work order history, to determine the nature of the most frequent work orders, and the identification – and possible removal – of “weak spots” in the school facilities; and
- analysis of work order history, to forecast the types of maintenance jobs likely to arise. This information can be used to pre-order parts, or to develop a preventive maintenance schedule.

**COMMENDATION**

**Allegheny County Public Schools is commended for its commitment to implement a state-of-the-art work order processing and monitoring system.**

**6.4 CUSTODIAL SERVICES**

Safe, clean, and sanitary facilities are essential elements in today’s educational environment. School systems vary in how these functions are delivered. Typically, school boards either outsource custodial and other services, or organize a comprehensive in-house system of services. Personnel may be employed by either the Board or the outsource company. Management responsibility, if the program is totally in-house, may reside either partially or wholly with the central office or the individual school or cost center. The decision to determine the desired structure is usually based on a number of criteria, including minimizing costs to the school district, improving services to schools, and reducing the span of control of district or school administrators.

In response to the survey statement “Schools are clean, ” 95.2 percent of administrators responded *strongly agree* or *agree*, and only 4.8 percent *disagree*. On the teacher survey, responses to the same question were 60.9 percent *agree* or *strongly agree*, 7.1 percent *no opinion*, and 32 percent *disagree* or *strongly disagree*. **Exhibit 6-5** shows the responses of ACPS administrators and teachers compared to responses from districts in Evergreen’s survey database.

**Exhibit 6-5  
Administrators and Teachers Survey Results on Facilities Cleanliness in the Allegheny County Public Schools and School Districts in Evergreen’s Survey Database**

Survey Statement	ACPS Administrators		Administrators in Evergreen’s Survey Database		ACPS Teachers		Teachers in Evergreen’s Survey Database	
	Strongly Agree/ Agree	Strongly Disagree/ Disagree	Strongly Agree/ Agree	Strongly Disagree/ Disagree	Strongly Agree/ Agree	Strongly Disagree/ Disagree	Strongly Agree/ Agree	Strongly Disagree/ Disagree
Schools are clean	95.2%	4.8%	86.9%	9.3%	60.9%	32%	58.5%	30.9%

Source: Evergreen Solutions Survey Results, 2006.



**Exhibit 6-6** shows the ratio of square footage to custodians in ACPS and in peer districts. Although no officially accepted standard exists, the following definition from the *Planning Guide for Maintaining School Facilities* (Association of School Business Officials, February 2003) is pertinent:

### **ESTABLISHING EXPECTATIONS FOR CUSTODIAL EFFORTS**

*Planners, administrators, and community members must agree on what constitutes “cleanliness.” While there is not a nationwide standard for describing standards of cleanliness, a five-tiered system of expectations is emerging to help guide decision making:*

***Level 1** cleaning results in a “spotless” building, as might normally be found in a hospital environment or corporate suite. At this level, a custodian with proper supplies and tools can clean approximately 10,000 to 11,000 square feet in an eight-hour period.*

***Level 2** cleaning is the uppermost standard for most school cleaning, and is generally reserved for restrooms, special education areas, kindergarten areas, or food service areas. A custodian can clean approximately 18,000 to 20,000 square feet in an eight-hour shift.*

***Level 3** cleaning is the norm for most school facilities. It is acceptable to most stakeholders and does not pose any health issues. A custodian can clean approximately 28,000 to 31,000 square feet in eight hours.*

***Level 4** cleaning is not normally acceptable in a school environment. Classrooms would be cleaned every other day, carpets would be vacuumed every third day, and dusting would occur once a month. At this level, a custodian can clean 45,000 to 50,000 square feet in eight hours.*

***Level 5** cleaning can very rapidly lead to an unhealthy situation. Trash cans might be emptied and carpets vacuumed on a weekly basis. One custodian can clean 85,000 to 90,000 square feet in an eight-hour period.*

*The figures above are estimates. The actual number of square feet per shift a custodian can clean will depend on additional variables, including the type of flooring and wall covers.*

**Exhibit 6-6  
Ratio of Square Feet Per Custodian  
Fiscal Year 2005**

<b>School Division</b>	<b>Ratio of Square Feet per Custodian</b>
Prince Edward County	29,023
Patrick County	26,815
<b>Allegheny County</b>	<b>22,016</b>
Dickenson County	21,889
Nottoway County	17,467
Southampton County	15,685
<b>Peer Division Average</b>	<b>22,175</b>

*Source: Prepared by Evergreen Solutions from information supplied by peer districts, 2006.*



## FINDING

A total of 24 custodians serve a gross square foot area of 528,397, for a ratio of 22,016 square feet per custodian. This ratio is well within acceptable standards as previously discussed. One of these custodians is assigned to the new Central Administrative Annex in Low Moor; the remaining custodians are assigned to individual schools.

ACPS custodial staff appear to be adequate in number, but custodians are not assigned uniformly to schools. **Exhibit 6-7** shows this discrepancy. Clinton Middle School and Mountain View Elementary School do not appear to have sufficient custodial staff assigned, while more than needed staff appears to be assigned to Boiling Spring, Callaghan, and Sharon Elementary Schools.

### Exhibit 6-7 Existing Cleaning Requirements Summary 2006-07 School Year

School	Square Feet to Be Cleaned	Number of 12-Month Staff Assigned	Number of 10-Month Staff Assigned	Approximate Square Feet Per FTE
Allegheny High	123,640	5.0	1.0	20,600
Boiling Spring Elementary	26,500	1.0	1.0	13,250
Callaghan Elementary	45,000	2.0	1.0	15,000
Clifton Middle	118,519	3.5	0	33,862
Falling Spring Elementary	35,700	1.0	1.0	17,850
Mountain View Elementary	89,545	2.5	1.0	25,584
Sharon Elementary	43,000	2.0	1.0	14,333
Central Administration	46,493	1.0	0	46,493*
<b>Total/Average</b>	<b>528,397</b>	<b>18.0</b>	<b>6.0</b>	<b>23,371</b>

*Source: Allegheny County Public Schools, Office of Administrative Services, 2006.*

\*More than half of this facility is leased to others.

## RECOMMENDATION

### Recommendation 6-5:

**Reallocate custodians throughout schools in Allegheny County Public Schools.**

**Exhibit 6-8** shows one possible reallocation of custodial positions for a more even distribution. Other reallocations are also feasible.

## FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.



**Exhibit 6-8**  
**Reallocated Cleaning Requirements Summary**  
**2006-07 School Year**

School	Square Feet to Be Cleaned	Number of 12-Month Staff Assigned	Number of 10-Month Staff Assigned	Square Feet Per FTE
Allegheny High	123,640	5.0	1.0	20,600
Boiling Spring Elementary	26,500	1.5	0	17,666
Callaghan Elementary	45,000	1.0	1.0	22,500
Clinton Middle	118,519	4.0	1.0	23,703
Falling Spring Elementary	35,700	1.0	1.0	17,850
Mountain View Elementary	89,545	2.5	2.0	19,898
Sharon Elementary	43,000	2.0	0	21,500
Central Administration	46,493	1.0	0	46,493*
<b>Total Custodians</b>		<b>18.0</b>	<b>6</b>	

*Source: Created by Evergreen Solutions from information provided by the ACPS Office of Administrative Services, 2006.*

\*More than half of this facility is leased to others.

## FINDING

As described previously in this chapter, the Director of Administrative Services provides “active consultation” to school principals and others in maintenance, groundskeeping, training, and custodial services. In addition, the Maintenance Manager provides daily, hands-on supervision for facilities maintenance, grounds, energy management, supply receiving/distribution, third-party vendors, regulatory compliance, safety, custodial supplies and equipment, central office custodial services, and management of the substitute custodian pool.

While it is an acceptable reporting function for the Director of Administrative Services to be responsible overall for the satisfaction of the principals with custodial services, it is an overload for the Maintenance Manager to have direct hands-on managerial responsibility for custodial management, custodial supplies and equipment, central office custodial services, and management of the substitute custodian pool. A separate person should be given responsibility for custodial management.

## RECOMMENDATION

### Recommendation 6-6:

#### Hire a Custodial Manager.

While all custodians properly report to the principals of the schools to which they have been assigned, a second reporting position of Custodial Manager should be established for uniform custodial performance. This position should be at the same level as the Maintenance Manager. It should report directly to the Director of Administrative Services. The position should be filled preferably from among the current ACPS custodial staff, with appropriate management training



provided as necessary. If no one on the existing staff is qualified, a search for the position should be conducted.

The new position should be responsible for the following:

- hands-on supervision/coordination of custodial staff in support of the building principals;
- custodial staff training;
- custodial supplies and equipment;
- custodial service; and
- management of the substitute custodian pool.

**FISCAL IMPACT**

This position should be created and filled not later than the 2008-09 fiscal year. A net cost of \$47,600 (\$35,000 annually plus 36 percent benefits) is shown in the timeline. This cost is not based on a shared services arrangement.

CCPS could consider having its custodial staff participate in training activities conducted by the ACPS Custodial Manager. Such action would save money by eliminating a duplication of effort. CCPS could pay a proportionate share of the ACPS Custodial Manager’s salary, or pay a fee per CCPS custodian trained.

<b>Recommendation</b>	<b>2007-08</b>	<b>2008-09</b>	<b>2009-10</b>	<b>2010-11</b>	<b>2011-12</b>
Hire Custodial Manager	\$0	(\$47,600)	(\$47,600)	(\$47,600)	(\$47,600)

**FINDING**

ACPS has three substitute custodians. These substitutes fill in whenever a custodian is absent due to illness or other reasons. This situation avoids custodial work from falling behind. It is rare when substitute custodians are not needed to fill in for an absent worker. On those rare occasions, the substitute is used to help with special cleaning needs, assist maintenance workers, or perform other miscellaneous duties.

**COMMENDATION**

**Allegheny County Public Schools is commended for keeping its custodial functions as uninterrupted as possible with the use of substitute custodians.**

**6.5 ENERGY MANAGEMENT**

The school buildings and other facilities of a school division consume significant amounts of energy that often appears to be an ever-growing and sometimes unpredictable component of the overall annual budget. With the advent of increased costs for energy to provide fuels for HVAC systems, transportation vehicles, food service operations, and other related activities, school



systems have established numerous and varied policies, procedures, and methods for increasing efficiencies in energy consumption and reducing operating costs. Policies typically describe a Board’s specific desire to ensure that maximum resources are available for instructional purposes and charge the administration with developing related procedures.

Procedures generally prescribe a range of measures and activities to be implemented and a specific means for computing the results. Some school boards develop incentive systems to reward employees for actions or recommendations that have resulted in substantial savings or improvement in the performance of energy consuming equipment.

Energy management methods range from sophisticated, centralized, computer controls over HVAC systems and other energy consumption devices to simple manual procedures for turning thermostats down and lights off during periods of minimal building or room utilization. In Evergreen’s survey, 90.5 percent of administrators *agree* or *strongly agree* that “The division has an effective energy management program;” 9.5 percent *disagree*. Among teachers, 69.6 percent *agree* or *strongly agree*, 13 percent have *no opinion*, and 17.4 percent *disagree* or *strongly disagree*.

**Exhibit 6-9** shows the responses of ACPS administrators and teachers compared to responses from districts in Evergreen’s survey database.

**Exhibit 6-9**  
**Administrators and Teachers Survey Results on Energy Management in the Allegheny County Public Schools and Districts in Evergreen’s Survey Database**

Survey Statement	ACPS Administrators		Administrators in Evergreen’s Survey Database		ACPS Teachers		Teachers in Evergreen’s Survey Database	
	Strongly Agree/ Agree	Strongly Disagree/ Disagree	Strongly Agree/ Agree	Strongly Disagree/ Disagree	Strongly Agree/ Agree	Strongly Disagree/ Disagree	Strongly Agree/ Agree	Strongly Disagree/ Disagree
The division has an effective energy management program.	90.5%	9.5%	46.4%	25.0%	69.6%	17.4%	32.3%	27.0%

Source: *Evergreen Solutions Survey Results, 2006.*

**FINDING**

ACPS has an energy management policy and energy conservation guidelines. The policy and guidelines are aimed at behavioral energy conservation, such as the switching off lights when spaces are unoccupied, having PCs programmed for energy saver mode, and removing unnecessary appliances from schools. Teachers are required to cooperate, and custodians are responsible for shutdown when the facility is closed for the evening. Energy management is a part of each principal’s annual evaluation. The guidelines also contain specific instructions for heating and cooling equipment, cafeterias and kitchens, and require each principal to develop an energy conservation program tailored specifically to his or her school. **Exhibit 6-10** shows the percent reductions achieved in electrical and fuel oil consumption over the base year of 2002-03. As can be seen, a total cost savings in electrical and fuel oil use of \$482,191 was achieved during the past three fiscal years.



**Exhibit 6-10**  
**Building Energy Consumption**  
**Comparison of Base Year to Managed Years**

Category	Base Year	Managed Years		
	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06
KWH Consumption	5,655,379	4,321,735	4,476,731	4,463,251
<b>% Reduction over base</b>		<b>24%</b>	<b>21%</b>	<b>21%</b>
<b>Cost savings</b>		<b>\$93,355</b>	<b>\$82,505</b>	<b>\$92,985</b>
Fuel Oil Consumption (gal)	196,542	174,797	140,100	125,413
<b>% Reduction over base</b>		<b>11%</b>	<b>29%</b>	<b>36%</b>
<b>Cost savings</b>		<b>\$19,259</b>	<b>\$78,556</b>	<b>\$115,531</b>

Source: Alleghany County Public Schools, Office of Administrative Services, 2006.

## COMMENDATION

**Alleghany County Public Schools is commended for achieving significant energy use reductions, and nearly \$500,000 in cost savings, during the past three fiscal years over the 2002-03 base year by implementing its energy management policy and guidelines.**

## FINDING

ACPS has shown itself to be sensitive to energy conservation in the design and construction of the new Mountain View Elementary School/Clifton Middle School, and in the retrofit of the existing elementary schools. Many aspects of sustainable or green building design have already been incorporated as standard in the ACPS building program. It would therefore be logical for the school division to consider the adoption of a formally recognized and potentially more effective process.

The LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) Green Building Rating System<sup>®</sup> is a voluntary, consensus-based national standard for developing high-performance, sustainable buildings. Members of the U.S. Green Building Council representing all segments of the building industry developed LEED and continue to contribute to its evolution. LEED standards are currently available or under development for:

- new construction and major renovation projects (LEED-NC);
- existing building operations (LEED-EB);
- commercial interiors projects (LEED-CI);
- core and shell projects (LEED-CS);
- homes (LEED-H); and
- neighborhood Development (LEED-ND).



LEED-NC and LEED-EB appear to be the most applicable for ACPS of the available standards. Major building owners, including educational institutions, have made commitments to construct all future buildings under the LEED Green Building Rating System. For example, the University of Florida’s Office of Facilities Design and Construction will build all of its future facilities under the LEED Green Building Rating System. Three LEED rated buildings have already been constructed on the campus, and five more are now in design.

**RECOMMENDATION**

**Recommendation 6-7:**

**Use the LEED Green Building Rating System in all future new construction, major renovations, and existing building operations.**

The LEED system is the next step to the creation of state-of-the-art, energy conscious buildings. ACPS should study this option carefully, and assess to what extent it can achieve even greater savings in operating and maintenance costs than current design and construction approaches.

**FISCAL IMPACT**

If the existing Allegheny High School were to be retrofitted using LEED NC, the annual energy savings (oil and electricity) could average 20 percent of the average consumption over the past four years. In current dollars, this amounts to about \$12,600 in electricity savings annually, plus about \$21,600 in fuel oil savings, for a total of \$34,200. The savings is shown beginning in the 2008-09 fiscal year.

A new high school would potentially double the retrofit savings due to an opportunity for inclusion of deeper energy efficiencies. This projected savings would be \$68,400, but it is not shown in this impact because it would be duplicative of the first row.

The third row shows estimated energy savings from all other buildings after additional energy retrofit work beyond what has already been accomplished. This is estimated at five percent of average annual electricity (\$27,700) and fuel oil (\$12,000) consumption, or a total of approximately \$40,000 per year. This savings is shown beginning in the 2009-10 fiscal year. This cost estimate is included as it can be achieved if either Allegheny County High School is renovated or newly constructed.

<b>Recommendation</b>	<b>2007-08</b>	<b>2008-09</b>	<b>2009-10</b>	<b>2010-11</b>	<b>2011-12</b>
Retrofit Allegheny High School with LEED	\$0	\$34,200	\$34,200	\$34,200	\$34,200
Retrofit Other Buildings with LEED	\$0	\$0	\$40,000	\$40,000	\$40,000
<b>Total Savings</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$34,200</b>	<b>\$74,200</b>	<b>\$74,200</b>	<b>\$74,200</b>



## FINDING

According to the Building Commissioning Association, building commissioning is defined as follows (see <http://www.bcx.org/about/index.shtm> for details):

*The basic purpose of building commissioning is to provide documented confirmation that building systems function in compliance with criteria set forth in the Project Documents to satisfy the owner's operational needs. Commissioning of existing systems may require the development of new functional criteria in order to address the owner's current systems performance requirements.*

This definition is based on the critical understanding that the owner must have some means of verifying that their functional needs are rigorously addressed during design, construction, and acceptance.

Building commissioning promises significant savings in the long-term operating and maintenance costs of buildings. It should therefore become an essential element of all future building design and construction activity in Allegheny County Public Schools.

## RECOMMENDATION

### Recommendation 6-8:

**Integrate building commissioning in the energy management and conservation plan, and in all future new building construction and major renovations.**

The Director of Administrative Services should be responsible for the use of building commissioning in an appropriate and judicious manner.

## FISCAL IMPACT

According to Energy Design Resources “Commissioning a new building typically costs about 30 to 90 cents per square foot. Usually this is offset by reduced energy costs, improved occupant comfort and productivity, and reduced rework costs. On average, the simple payback for building commissioning is about three to four years.” (<http://www.energydesignresources.com/resource/17/>)

## FINDING

As buildings are renovated and new ones constructed, lighting controls should be given careful consideration. Dimmers, timers, photocells, and infrared sensors are effective energy saving tools for electric lighting. Energy savings are not only realized from a reduction in electric lighting use, but secondary savings come from lower summer heat loads and reduced HVAC use.

Dimmers are especially effective at extending electric lamp life. One common rule-of-thumb is that lamps operated at 90 percent of their rated voltage will have a doubled service life. Similar stunning life-extensions are possible for dimmed fluorescent and HID lamps. Dimmers can be



installed in areas where teachers and students are not expected to exercise control and should be designed for keyed manipulation by maintenance and custodial staff only.

Timers are useful in areas where the need for lighting can be predicted (e.g. school schedule) and thus regulated by a timer device. However, preferable alternatives to timers are often photocells and infrared sensors. Photocells sense available daylight. They are designed to turn off supplemental electric light when sufficient daylight is available, and to turn electric lights on when needed. These devices are useful not only in outdoor installations, but also at the periphery of building interiors. Some interior lights can often be turned off during the presence of daylight to save energy and money. Photocells can also be combined with a dimmer, thus allowing electric light to fade out/fade in as needed to work with available daylight.

Infrared and other types of heat sensors are commonly installed to pick up the presence of people. When conference rooms, classrooms, and similar spaces are unoccupied, these sensors will turn off the lights. As soon as people enter the space, the sensor will activate the lights and keep them on.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

### **Recommendation 6-9:**

**Install special lighting control devices in all new or renovated school facilities to save on electric utility costs.**

Special lighting control devices can save a minimum of 10 percent, and up to 50 percent or more, of the electricity cost for electric lighting. ACPS should enlist the help of its local electric utility company, and a LEED Accredited Professional Electrical Engineer, to prepare a plan for adding lighting control devices in appropriate locations to all school facilities when they are newly constructed or undergoing major renovations. For a broad overview of essential concepts and possible strategies and energy savings potentials, visit <http://www.wbdg.org/design/resource.php?cn=0&rp=12>

## **FISCAL IMPACT**

An exact estimate of initial costs, cost savings, and payback period can only be made when new facilities and major renovations are planned. The initial cost for engineering fees and installation of the devices is liberally estimated as 7 percent of the installation cost for engineering services, and 20 cents per square foot for installation. Payback ranges commonly from three to seven years. The cost of local utility assistance is generally without additional charge. The cost of a LEED AP electrical engineer is included in the 7 percent figured noted above.

## **FINDING**

Allegheny County Public Schools operates two proprietary energy management systems. The purpose of these systems is to monitor and control the operation of all major building systems in order to optimize energy efficiency.



Mountain View Elementary School /Clifton Middle School system have a proprietary TRANE product called Tracer Summit. Sharon, Callaghan and Falling Spring Elementary Schools are connected to Metasys, a Johnson Controls product. Alleghany High School, and Boiling Spring Elementary School, and the central office are not connected to an energy management system.

## **COMMENDATION**

**Alleghany County Public Schools is commended for managing most of its facilities using two major brand-name energy management systems.**

## **FINDING**

Although the use of energy management systems is commendable in ACPS, the use of two different systems and the exclusion of the high school, the administrative complex, and one elementary school are not acceptable over the longer term. ACPS must eventually install one system capable of monitoring and controlling energy use in all buildings.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

### **Recommendation 6-10:**

**Purchase and install one single energy management system for all ACPS facilities.**

ACPS should install a division-wide energy management system, in order to control energy use more carefully and specifically. Most ACPS schools are in active use after hours. This installation requires certain areas and spaces to be heated or cooled by overriding the automatic energy controls. It is a best practice to have a well-functioning central energy management system that can be controlled from key computer stations. This will include some home computers or laptops of persons directly in charge, such as the Director of Administrative Services and the Maintenance Manager. In addition, such systems also serve to alert persons in charge of any malfunctions in mechanical equipment, such as variable air volume boxes, air handlers, blowers, chillers, boilers, etc.

The purchase and installation of one single system should be planned once the following events have occurred:

- a new Alleghany High School in one of its likely options is under design; and
- at least one of the two current energy management systems in use by ACPS needs to be replaced or significantly upgraded.

## **FISCAL IMPACT**

An additional annual savings in energy consumption is likely in the range of \$15,000 and will be realized once the recommendation has been implemented (i.e., when the two conditions described above have been met). This savings is in addition to the efficiencies already realized from having two energy management systems in operation.



**6.6 COMMUNITY USE OF FACILITIES**

School districts typically have arrangements that permit community use of facilities to ensure that taxpayers and student support organizations are able to effectively and efficiently provide services. Schools typically adopt policies governing the use of facilities and approve fee schedules designed to recover direct costs such as custodial services and utilities.

Administrators responding to the statement “Division facilities are open for community use,” had 100 percent *agree* or *strongly agree*. With regard to teachers, 80.5 percent of teachers *agree* or *strongly agree*, 12.5 percent had no opinion, and 7 percent *disagree* or *strongly disagree*.

**Exhibit 6-11** shows the responses of ACPS administrators and teachers compared to responses from other district administrators and teachers in Evergreen’s survey database.

**Exhibit 6-11  
Administrators and Teachers Survey Results on Community Use of Facilities in the Allegheny County Public Schools and Districts in Evergreen’s Survey Database**

Survey Statement	ACPS Administrators		Administrators in Evergreen’s Survey Database		ACPS Teachers		Teachers in Evergreen’s Survey Database	
	Strongly Agree/ Agree	Strongly Disagree/ Disagree	Strongly Agree/ Agree	Strongly Disagree/ Disagree	Strongly Agree/ Agree	Strongly Disagree/ Disagree	Strongly Agree/ Agree	Strongly Disagree/ Disagree
Division facilities are open for community use	100%	0%	76.4%	4.0%	80.5%	7%	57.0%	8.5%

Source: Evergreen Solutions Survey Results, 2006.

**FINDING**

ACPS has a clearly stated and well-documented policy governing the community use of its facilities. The policy was adopted originally on November 17, 1997, and most recently amended on June 16, 2003.

The policy covers:

- Application and Approval Procedures
  - Application Form
  
- Rules and Conditions
  - Supervision
  - Liability
  - Fees – Fee Schedule
  - Concessions on School Property
  - Use of School Grounds
  - Public Sales on School Property
  - Public Conduct on School Property
  - Public Nuisance Dogs



**COMMENDATION**

**Alleghany County Public Schools is commended for having developed and for maintaining a detailed and enforceable policy for community use of its facilities.**

**ALSO SEE RECOMMENDATION 10-6 IN CHAPTER 10**



**CHAPTER 7:  
TRANSPORTATION**



## Chapter 7

# TRANSPORTATION

Alleghany County Public Schools (ACPS), under Virginia Code, provides free of charge home-to-school transportation to all eligible students within the student's attendance area. Transportation is also provided between schools and other sponsored events as per division policy.

This chapter assesses the ACPS transportation operation, and is divided into the following five sections:

- 7.1 Organization, Planning, Policies, and Procedures
- 7.2 Training and Safety
- 7.3 Routing and Scheduling
- 7.4 Vehicle Maintenance and Bus Replacement Schedule
- 7.5 State Reporting

Within this chapter, transportation in ACPS is compared to five other peer school divisions in the Commonwealth of Virginia, namely: Dickenson County Schools, Nottoway County Schools, Patrick County Schools, Prince Edward County Schools, and Southampton County Schools.

Comparing transportation statistics among divisions must be done cautiously. Within transportation, divisions rarely if ever operate exactly the same types of systems with the same types of programs and policies. The Commonwealth does not dictate that transportation take place, which leaves the divisions with a higher degree of latitude. This flexibility creates differences among divisions that can drastically affect any of the transportation operating statistics and costs. Unlike standardized tests, where all questions are the same for all test takers, transportation programs can differ greatly, and thus must be viewed and compared with this understanding.

Comparative data presented below were supplied by the Virginia Department of Education and represent the newest available data which are for either the 2004-05 or 2005-06 school years.

**Exhibits 7-1** through **7-6** provide an overview which will be used in the peer transportation analysis.

**Exhibit 7-1** shows that ACPS has the highest number of students per population.

As can be seen in **Exhibit 7-2**, ACPS has the lowest percent of special education students within the comparison group and is 1.4 percentage points below the peer average percentage. Special needs students must be accommodated for and result in a higher than average cost of transportation. Having a lower percentage is helpful in controlling overall transportation costs.



**Exhibit 7-1  
Peer School Division Overview  
2005-06 School Year**

School Division	Cluster Identification	Total Student Population	Student Population Per 1,000 General Population	Total Number of Schools <sup>1</sup>	Total Instructional Staff Per 1,000 Students
<b>Alleghany County</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>2,928.0</b>	<b>175.2</b>	<b>8.0</b>	<b>109.4</b>
Dickenson County	4	2,494.0	153.5	10.0	107.4
Nottoway County	4	2,391.0	153.7	6.0	103.6
Patrick County	4	2,580.0	134.3	7.0	114.0
Prince Edward County	4	2,741.0	134.0	3.0	110.9
Southampton County	4	2,852.0	162.2	7.0	107.2
<b>Peer Division Average</b>		<b>2,611.6</b>	<b>147.5</b>	<b>6.6</b>	<b>108.6</b>

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

<sup>1</sup>Includes Alternative Schools.

**Exhibit 7-2  
Special Needs Students  
2004-05 School Year**

School Division	Total Student Population	Percent Limited English Proficient (LEP)	Percent Special Education Students*
<b>Alleghany County</b>	<b>2,928.0</b>	<b>0.1%</b>	<b>17.0%*</b>
Patrick County	2,580.0	2.8%	17.1%
Nottoway County	2,391.0	0.16%	17.8%
Dickenson County	2,494.0	0.0%	17.9%
Southampton County	2,852.0	0.07%	18.7%
Prince Edward County	2,741.0	0.1%	20.4%
<b>Peer Division Average</b>	<b>2,611.6</b>	<b>0.63%</b>	<b>18.4%</b>

Source: Virginia Department of Education, Web site, 2006.

\*as of December 1, 2005 count.

As can be seen in **Exhibit 7-3**, ACPS has the second lowest transportation cost per pupil among its peers and is 19.5 percent below the peer average. This would indicate that cost controls are in place.

**Exhibit 7-3  
Pupil Transportation Disbursements  
Fiscal Year 2005**

School Division	Pupil Transportation Services	Per Pupil Cost
Nottoway County	\$1,240,363	\$519
<b>Alleghany County</b>	<b>\$1,574,961</b>	<b>\$538</b>
Prince Edward County	\$1,582,180	\$577
Dickenson County	\$1,820,647	\$730
Patrick County	\$1,885,768	\$731
Southampton County	\$2,227,104	\$781
<b>Peer Division Average</b>	<b>\$1,751,212</b>	<b>\$668</b>

Source: Virginia Department of Education, Web site, 2006.



As can be seen in **Exhibit 7-4**, cost per mile ranks third in its peer group and is 6.9 percent lower than the peer average. County systems call for greater than average miles per bus since the geographical area is larger. The larger number of miles help to defray all of the fixed costs and keep the cost per mile under control.

**Exhibit 7-4  
Transportation Cost Per Mile  
Fiscal Year 2005**

School Division	Pupil Transportation Costs	Per Mile Cost
Prince Edward County	\$1,582,180	\$1.60
Nottoway County	\$1,240,363	\$1.87
<b>Allegheny County</b>	<b>\$1,574,961</b>	<b>\$2.17</b>
Patrick County	\$1,885,768	\$2.45
Southampton County	\$2,227,104	\$2.76
Dickenson County	\$1,820,647	\$3.08
<b>Peer Division Average</b>	<b>\$1,751,212</b>	<b>\$2.33</b>

*Source: Virginia Department of Education, Web site, 2006.*

ACPS has the second smallest fleet within its peer group as shown in **Exhibit 7-5**.

**Exhibit 7-5  
Total Route Buses Operated  
Fiscal Year 2005**

School Division	Route Buses
Nottoway County	38
<b>Allegheny County</b>	<b>43</b>
Dickenson County	51
Patrick County	55
Prince Edward County	59
Southampton County	67
<b>Peer Division Average</b>	<b>52</b>

*Source: Virginia Department of Education, Web site 2006.*

**Exhibit 7-6** illustrates that ACPS ranks third in total miles driven and, in light of its fleet size, is averaging 14,781 miles per bus per year, which is exceeded only by those operated in Nottoway County Public Schools.

**Exhibit 7-6  
Total Miles Operated  
Fiscal Year 2005**

School Division	Total Miles
Dickenson County	538,127
Nottoway County	604,918
<b>Allegheny County</b>	<b>635,579</b>
Patrick County	658,982
Southampton County	758,165
Prince Edward County	828,217
<b>Peer Division Average</b>	<b>670,664</b>

*Source: Virginia Department of Education, Web site, 2006.*



In addition to the peer division comparisons, a survey of ACPS administrators, principals, and teachers was conducted as part of this efficiency review. Six questions related directly to transportation. These were answered by scoring in five categories ranging from *strongly agree* to *strongly disagree*. One additional question asked respondents to rate various parts and functions of the school division, including transportation, and to determine whether the function was needed at all, or needed *major improvement*, *needs some improvement*, *is adequate*, or is *outstanding*.

The Evergreen survey results for transportation are shown in **Exhibits 7-7** through **7-10**.

**Exhibit 7-7** reflects ACPS administrator responses. Administrative responses reflect what these staff members perceive transportation to be from their vantage point. In most instances, these staff members do not have a day-to-day direct exposure to the transportation service, but will receive calls and inquires concerning the transportation services. **Exhibit 7-8** provides ACPS teacher responses to the same questions.

**Exhibit 7-7**  
**ACPS Administrator Survey Results**

Survey Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Students are often late arriving to and/or departing from school because buses do not arrive to school on time.	4.8%	4.8%	0%	38.1%	52.4%
There are sufficient buses to meet extracurricular needs of students.	28.6%	38.1%	9.5%	14.3%	9.5%
Buses are often broken down, disrupting services.	4.8%	0%	0%	57.1%	38.1%
The process for requesting a field trip is efficient and effective.	19.0%	81.0%	0%	0%	0%
Bus drivers effectively handle discipline issues on the buses.	9.5%	71.4%	0%	14.3%	4.8%
Students do not feel safe riding school division buses.	0%	4.8%	0%	38.1%	57.1%

School Division Operation	Should Be Eliminated	Needs Major Improvement	Needs Some Improvement	Adequate	Outstanding
Transportation	0%	0%	4.8%	76.2%	19.0

Source: *Evergreen Solutions Survey Results, 2006.*

The timeliness of buses does not appear to be a major factor, but the extracurricular trip scheduling and buses for their use is a major concern along with student discipline issues. It is important that any disparity not be for safety and timeliness issues. These are the two main components of serviceability. If large negative disparities exist in these categories than the overall program should be totally reviewed for effectiveness.

When you look at **Exhibits 7-7** and **7-8**, differences in timeliness of buses is not a major difference, but the extracurricular trip scheduling (shows a difference of 36%) and buses for their use (shows a difference of 22%) is a major difference along with student discipline which shows the largest of all at 50 percent. It is important that any disparity not be for safety and timeliness issues. These are the two main components of serviceability. If large negative disparities exist in these categories then the overall program should be overhauled. This is not the case in ACPS.



**Exhibit 7-8  
ACPS Teacher Survey Results**

Survey Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Students are often late arriving to and/or departing from school because buses do not arrive to school on time	0.5%	4.4%	7.1%	67.9%	20.1%
There are sufficient buses to meet extracurricular needs of students.	4.9%	39.1%	34.8%	18.5%	2.7%
Buses are often broken down, disrupting services.	1.6%	3.8%	23.4%	59.8%	0.4%
The process for requesting a field trip is efficient and effective.	3.8%	60.9%	26.6%	7.6%	1.1%
Bus drivers effectively handle discipline issues on the buses.	1.1%	29.4%	52.7%	13.6%	3.3%
Students do not feel safe riding school division buses.	0.5%	8.7%	35.3%	44.6%	10.9%

School Division Operation	Should Be Eliminated	Needs Major Improvement	Needs Some Improvement	Adequate	Outstanding
Transportation	0%	4.4%	31.5%	63.0%	1.1%

Source: Evergreen Solutions Survey Results, 2006.

**Exhibit 7-9** reflects the disparity between the two groups. The disparity (approximately 30%) between the two groups is not uncommon. At the building level, there are traditionally three main areas of concern:

- timeliness of arriving and departing buses, which cause teachers to have to deal with tardiness of students or buses;
- field or extracurricular trips that are either hard to schedule or cause concerns; and
- drivers handling of student discipline that gets transferred to the building.

**Exhibit 7-9  
Comparison of Administrator and Teachers Overall Responses**

School Division Operation	Should Be Eliminated	Needs Major Improvement	Needs Some Improvement	Adequate	Outstanding
Transportation-Teachers	0%	4.4%	31.5%	63%	1.1%
Transportation-Administrators	0%	0%	4.8%	76.2%	19%

Source: Evergreen Solutions Survey Results, 2006.

In addition to comparing survey results between staff within the division, overall comparisons are also offered between ACPS and survey respondents in Evergreen’s survey database. In looking at these comparisons, keep in mind that the peer group numbers include far more overall staff members than found in ACPS and is thus a larger overall sample. These comparisons can be seen at **Exhibit 7-10**.



**Exhibit 7-10  
ACPS Administrator and Teacher Survey Results Compared to Peer Districts  
in Evergreen’s Survey Database**

Survey Statement	ACPS Administrators		Comparison Administrators in Evergreen’s Survey Database		ACPS Teachers		Comparison Teachers in Evergreen’s Survey Database	
	Strongly Agree/ Agree	Strongly Disagree/ Disagree	Strongly Agree/ Agree	Strongly Disagree/ Disagree	Strongly Agree/ Agree	Strongly Disagree/ Disagree	Strongly Agree/ Agree	Strongly Disagree/ Disagree
Students are often late arriving to and/or departing from school because buses do not arrive to school on time.	9.5%	90.5%	11.4%	53.4%	4.9%	88%	8.6%	66.4%
There are sufficient buses to meet extracurricular needs of students.	66.7%	23.8%	82.1%	14.3%	44%	21.2%	51.8%	31.4%
Buses are often broken down, disrupting services.	4.8%	95.2%	3.6%	96.4%	5.4%	71.2%	7.1%	70.4%
The process for requesting a field trip is efficient and effective.	100%	0%	89.3%	10.7%	64.7%	8.7%	59.3%	22.6%
Bus drivers effectively handle discipline issues on the buses.	81.0%	19.0%	40.0%	32.0%	30.5%	16.9%	24.5%	20.6%
Students do not feel safe riding school division buses.	4.8%	95.2%	14.3%	82.1%	9.2%	55.5%	10.2%	51.3%

Source: Evergreen Solutions Survey Results, 2006.

As can be seen, 37 percent more of the ACPS administrator group believes their buses run on time, 15.4 percent less believe they have sufficient buses for field trips, only 1.2 percent more believe their buses breakdown more often, 10.7 percent more think that field trip requests/scheduling is effective, an overwhelming 41 percent more believe drivers do a good job with student discipline, and 13.1 percent more believe kids are riding on safe buses. Overall, ACPS administrators more positively support their transportation system.

When comparing teachers, it can be seen that 21.6 percent more of the ACPS teachers group believes their buses run on time, 7.8 percent less believe they have sufficient buses for field trips, only .8 percent more believe their buses breakdown more often, and 5.4 percent more believe that field trip requests/ scheduling is effective. In comparison, 41 percent for administrators only 6 percent more believe drivers do a good job with student discipline, and 4.2 percent more believe kids are riding on safe buses. Overall, ACPS teachers believe more positively in their transportation system than teachers in the survey database. In summary, this is a positive comparison for ACPS.

**CHAPTER SUMMARY**

The division encompasses approximately 452 square miles which creates elongated routing challenges. Roads are mixed within the area ranging from normal hard surface city style streets to interstate highways, with a large portion of the non-city thoroughfares being county maintained asphalt/oil based county roads. Some roads must be pre-approved for use based upon the ability to have buses turn around. Routes serve from all points within the division boundary



and are routed to accommodate for centralized high and middle schools as well as a centralized vocational school. Individual elementary schools are scattered throughout Alleghany County.

The ACPS Transportation System provides the transportation services needed within the division (i.e. regular education, special education, vocational, athletics/field trips, etc.). This is a mid-size operation (43 home-to-school bus routes) which does not use any routing or maintenance software to assist in its operational management. Maintenance is achieved by utilization of the County Shop facility within the nearby City of Covington. Driver supply is adequate for this operating year. Management of the system is split between principals having first point of contact with the Director of Administrative Services and his Secretary providing additional support.

No apparent service issues were found. The fleet is in good operating condition and is to be commended for passing a recent surprise inspection. The division enjoys an enviable safety record which can be somewhat attributed to a low driver turnover rate.

Recommendations within this chapter are meant to offer alternative methods of performance, as well as methods to measure performance. Some will provide cost efficiencies while others are targeted towards service improvements. A summary of these recommendations are:

- Begin to reorganize the transportation management structure with a more centralized supervisory function.
- Implement an improved communications process to ensure each driver receives emergency information on medically-related student issues.
- Implement a change in the work hours at the bus maintenance facility to improve support coverage.
- Conduct and maintain an accurate parts and supply inventory.
- Refine routing process by researching and purchasing computerized routing software.
- Actively review current bell schedules at all schools and adjust times to create increased operating efficiencies.
- Ensure all route sheets contain a listing of the students assigned to the bus.
- Implement a system for measuring overall performance within the department.
- Establish routine driver safety meetings.

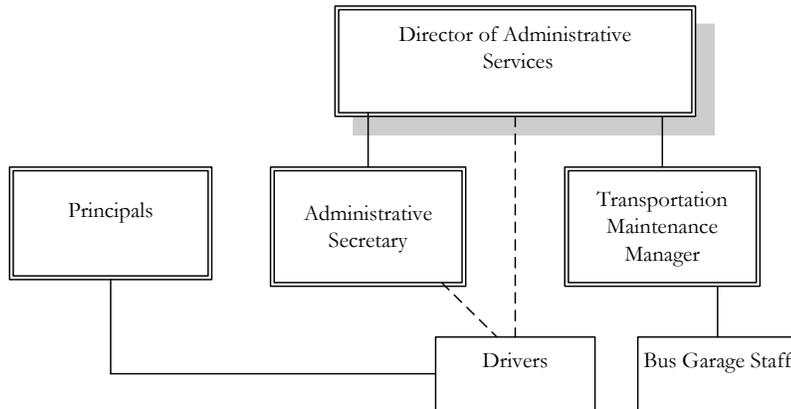


**7.1 ORGANIZATION, PLANNING, POLICIES, AND PROCEDURES**

The organization structure, as shown in **Exhibit 7-11**, includes the following employees.

- Director of Administrative Services(new to the position)
- Administrative Secretary
- Full-time drivers (43) - four are driver trainers
- Full-time aide for special education route (6)
- Substitute drivers (10)
- Transportation Maintenance Manager (shop supervisor function)
- Mechanics (2)
- Secretary (Shop Clerk)

**Exhibit 7-11**  
**Allegheny County Public Schools Transportation Department**  
**Current Organization Current**



Source: Allegheny County Public Schools, Transportation Department, 2006.

Each driver is assigned to a specific home school. The principal of the assigned school becomes that driver’s first point of contact and support, with the principal and building office staff specifically managing submission of driver hours for pay. Based on interviews with drivers, they feel they have three supervisory type positions to work with in getting their work accomplished: principals, the administrative secretary, and the director.

The Administrative Secretary is the most transportation knowledgeable person within the division. This person prepares and helps to keep routes current, answers general complaints and questions, manages vehicle assignments, trip requests, and generally is the primary operational support for the transportation function for drivers and the public. Drivers appreciate having the Administrative Secretary’s assistance and are concerned about this person’s pending retirement. The Director of Administrative Services is new to the division and has been in place less than a year. He is active and involved, and he is gaining knowledge quickly. He handles more difficult complaints, safety issues, driver discipline, budgeting, and certain routing decisions among other



items. Because of his short tenure, he relies on the Administrative Secretary to supply operational history and information which only she possesses.

Full-time drivers are guaranteed six (6) hours each day receive full benefits. Substitute and part-time drivers do not receive benefits. Driver wage and benefits are competitive for the area.

The Transportation Maintenance Manager at the bus garage, and the system that supports his work, will be discussed in the Maintenance Section of this chapter.

Few transportation specific policies exist within the division. Procedures are covered and communicated with the use of a thorough driver's handbook. Planning from year to year appears to be a low priority as things get accomplished on an historical basis. Those who should know the few policies that do exist were not able to comfortably refer to them (i.e. in answering the question of 'who is eligible to ride' the answer was 'everyone' - when in fact the policy is for a 1 mile walk zone for K-5 and a 1.5 mile walk zone for grades 6-12). The system operates safely with little or no major concerns. The department

works with the Finance Department in budget development. Budgets are based on historical past expenses and adjusted from year to year for any known changes.

**FINDING**

Bus driver turnover is a national problem. ACPS has averaged a rate of 5.8 percent over the last three years while the national average is above 18 percent. This statistic translates into increased safety for all concerned as experienced drivers are being retained in Allegheny County Public Schools.

**COMMENDATION**

**Allegheny County Public Schools is commended on its overall driver turnover and driver retention rate.**

**FINDING**

No specific percentage of daily on-time performance was available; however, most staff concur that buses do run on time and are seldom late barring any natural or uncontrolled circumstances. This means students enjoy having a breakfast in the morning and reap the benefits of getting to classes on time. Having a positive start and finish to the normal school day is important.

**COMMENDATION**

**Allegheny County Public Schools is commended on its routinely high on-time performance.**



## FINDING

Building personnel expressed above average satisfaction with the manner in which drivers work cooperatively. Conversely, ACPS bus drivers expressed that building staff (principals, teachers, etc.) are easy to work with and all seem to have a team spirit.

## COMMENDATION

**Allegheny County Public Schools is commended on the excellent cooperation between bus drivers and school staff, and the ability of its driving staff to cooperate and accommodate the needs of the building staff.**

## FINDING

The current organization and reporting structure in ACPS is cumbersome and does not guarantee consistent policy implementation throughout the division. Drivers report to their assigned building principal, the administrative director's secretary, and to the Administrative Services Director. Drivers can become confused about what is proper reporting process and, based on how differing principals treat similar items, results may not be consistent.

## RECOMMENDATION

### **Recommendation 7-1:**

#### **Reorganize the transportation management structure.**

The Administrative Secretary is retiring at the close of the year. With this retirement, ACPS will find itself with a void of experience and historical knowledge that is difficult to replace. The Transportation Department is of sufficient size and should have a dedicated Transportation Supervisor with all transportation staff reporting through this position. Centralizing control will lend itself to better management practices. Currently, drivers are to first report to their assigned principal, then to Office of Administrative Services for additional support. A total of three persons can be involved in the management support function dependent upon the issue. This is cumbersome and can cause payroll, use of buses, routing control, and complaint handling to be disjointed. ACPS should combine the department under one Supervisor of Transportation, who is housed at the garage facility, and reports directly to the Director of Administrative Services. This position, in conjunction with the current Shop Secretary, will relieve much of the functions now completed by the Administrative Secretary at the central office. The current position of Transportation Maintenance Manager can be converted to a lead mechanic position since the new Supervisor can accomplish much of the purchasing and other maintenance scheduling efforts.

## FISCAL IMPACT

A full-time Supervisor's position would add a new position and personnel costs. However, this position would free all time spent by each principal and allow them to concentrate on education, enable the Administrative Secretary to avoid day-to-day operating issues and concentrate on



reports and performance tracking. The altering of the Maintenance Manager position will help offset some of the cost. Industry salary range for this size of operation would be \$45,000 to \$50,000 annually plus benefits of 36 percent.

The impact would be in a range of \$64,000 annually. Offsetting costs are hard to define in terms of dollars, but should be expected in better overtime control, reduction of total number of buses over time as a result of improved routing and bus utilization efforts.

Recommendation	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12
Hire Transportation Supervisor	(\$64,000)	(\$64,000)	(\$64,000)	(\$64,000)	(\$64,000)

**FINDING**

In attempting to determine if the ACPS Transportation Department is delivering adequate levels of service, the factors of on-time performance, accident ratios, and other performance measurements could not be defined. If any operation is to improve and seek efficiencies, it must establish benchmarks from which to operate on a day-to-day basis. The Commonwealth on an annualized basis supplies a great deal of transportation data so that any operation will be able to gage its success against its peers. The state-level information, by itself, is not sufficient to sustain proper planning and procedural changes that may be required.

**RECOMMENDATION**

**Recommendation 7-2:**

**Implement a system for measuring overall performance in the ACPS Transportation Department.**

Based on information provided by building and administrative staff, as well as driver and community input, the existing transportation service appears to be adequate. The lack of concentrated complaints and concerns points to a system that is working at least reasonably well. Driver turnover is tracked and is low, but the only other measurement of success appears to be overall decline in lack of complaints received. It is always good to establish and measure performance benchmarks and then performance can indeed be measured allowing the division to make any needed corrections.

Suggested transportation industry benchmarks should include, but not limited to:

- 99.5 percent on-time percentage;
- no more than one preventable accident per 100,000 miles;
- <3 percent overtime pay to payroll ceiling; and
- <3 percent driver absenteeism.



These benchmarks can be easily measured. Monthly comparisons can be made. Each month, statistics should be shared with staff and drivers with appropriate commendation or improvement action plans implemented.

## **FISCAL IMPACT**

As these benchmarks are set and monitored, the only variable that offers any true fiscal impact is in the area of overtime control and any costs which are avoided as a result of improved safety. Neither of these will have a currently known dollar amount attached to them and are too nebulous to predict. This recommendation is more to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of service than it is to generate savings.

## **7.2 TRAINING AND SAFETY**

As defined above, the ACPS Transportation Department enjoys a very low driver turnover rate, which drastically reduces the overall time and expense for initial training requirements. There are four driver trainers within the system who do all of the initial training. These trainers must renew their certificates every five years. Training is guided by and accomplished via state requirements and training manuals. Training requires 24 classroom hours and 24 “behind the wheel” hours, along with the standard CDL requirements. Inservice training occurs twice per year by having an orientation at the start of the year and one other session within the second semester. The division uses a number of videos as part of its training presentations. Safety incentive programs had been used in the past, but are currently not in place for driving staff.

The ACPS safety record is very good. Accidents are rare both in terms of vehicular as well as workers’ compensation injuries. The longevity and experience level of the driving force pays dividends in the area of safety. Because drivers do not have any specific work area assigned to them (some at school buildings, some at garage, some at home, etc.), safety posters and safety promotion devises were not present on site. It was apparent, through interviews, that drivers have a positive attitude towards safety and the overall requirements related to maintaining a safe program. This is also exemplified by their higher than normal attendance levels.

Student training is confined to two evacuation drills being conducted annually. Student discipline issues were identified as being expressly negative, and drivers felt they had adequate training as well as support in this area.

## **FINDING**

The industry standard on school bus accidents is one preventable accident per 100,000 miles. ACPS has achieved a ratio of .2 preventable accidents per 100,000 miles which is five times better than the industry standard. This ratio shows excellent achievement on the part of ACPS drivers and staff.

## **COMMENDATION**

**Alleghany County Public Schools is commended on its overall bus accident prevention record.**



**FINDING**

Research tells us that 17 percent of all ACPS students are categorized as special education students. Many of these students ride regular education routes. Within HIPPA requirements, the division, through its nurses and special education staff, uses an emergency data sheet on students to inform drivers of any type of fragile or unique condition that drivers should be made aware of. These forms are not used consistently. Drivers have indicated they have been transporting students for some time only to find that the student has one of these fragile conditions. Improvements in this critical area are needed to provide consistency and remain in compliance with HIPPA requirements.

**RECOMMENDATION**

**Recommendation 7-3:**

**Implement an improved communications process to ensure each driver receives the necessary emergency information on all medically fragile or related student conditions.**

Building nurses and/or special education personnel should not only inform drivers of appropriate student frailties, but should answer questions and give necessary instructions to both drivers and aides. Currently, some drivers do not have knowledge of, or how to react to, some student needs. Emergency notices should be copied and distributed to assure all drivers are fully informed of student issues. A checklist of drivers receiving the data sheets should be made to ensure receipt and compliance.

**FISCAL IMPACT**

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

**FINDING**

Accurate and timely information must be communicated when drivers experience some type of emergency. The organizational structure of the department does not lend itself to assuring that drivers know who to contact in an emergency situation. Doing the right thing at the right time during an emergency can help the division avoid potential liability, and it can greatly assist student passengers as well. It was found that many buses did not contain any formal instructions as to how to proceed during emergency situations. Drivers know to use radios to report accidents or incidents and bus breakdowns, but little or no formal information was present describing the process if this occurs after hours or over weekends. Most drivers state that would attempt to radio or call the Administrative Clerk at her residence. A more formal process is needed.

**RECOMMENDATION**

**Recommendation 7-4:**

**Prepare emergency information sheets.**



Ensure each bus is supplied with two important communication items:

- emergency call sheet listing in priority order by name and phone number (to include home and cell numbers) of contacts drivers should notify after hours or on weekends; and
- a simple one-page accident handling instruction sheet in the event of a collision (some buses had a small insurance carrier accident handling card available, while others did not). This sheet provides guidance so that drivers take the necessary and proper steps in handling the accident scene, ensuring students' well being, notifying authorities, and other important initiatives.

Taking the proper steps during an emergency situation is critical, and it is always helpful to have consistent, easily understood instructions.

### **FISCAL IMPACT**

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

### **7.3 ROUTING AND SCHEDULING**

The routing/scheduling function is second only to the safety area in determining the effectiveness of a transportation system. Routing determines the total number of routes, which in combination with, scheduling of bell times for the various schools, dictates the total number of buses required. This total route bus count drives nearly every expense associated with transportation. The better the division routes and schedules the system, the more efficient it becomes.

To this end, **Exhibit 7-12** (RouteYield™), at the end of this chapter, displays the overall efficiency ratings for the current ACPS routing system. This information must be studied to help the ACPS become more efficient as it measures both the utilization of time available as well as available capacity for its transportation operation.

Routing in ACPS is manually completed primarily by the Administrative Secretary. Drivers assist with the routing and stop identification process by updating their routes, at the close of each year. Routes for the new year are based on what is in effect at the end of the proceeding year adjusted for those students moving up to the various schools for the coming year, any known new students, graduations, and other factors. This results in having each route adjusted for students and stops, but no global re-routing of the entire system is accomplished to help ensure that the total system is synchronized.

Allegheny County has 452 square miles with a centralized high, middle, and vocational schools, and regional elementary schools. The routes are arranged geographically and have seen few changes over the years (i.e. they are historical 'transport areas' and change very little). Some routes are quite lengthy and operate longer than an hour.

The general transportation operating parameters found in the Board Policy Manual are:

- **Walk to stop distance:** K-5 1 mile, 6-12 1.5 miles



- **Walk boundary distance:** same as walk to stop above
- **Percent of capacity for Secondary:** 2.0 per seat (80% +/-)
- **Percent of capacity for Elementary:** 3 per seat, 100%
- **Ride time limitations:** None specified, this study assigned and used 75 minutes as a maximum time in order to establish a yardstick.

## FINDING

The results of our RouteYield™ analysis (**Exhibit 7-12**) shows that 43 route buses transport approximately 2,197 students with an 80 percent use of available time and a 68 percent use of total available capacity. The routing scheme consists of a mix of several single-routed elementary school routes along with shared high and middle school routes which are accomplished due to the proximity of the two schools. Some of these shared routes are paired with routes serving an approximate elementary school. These paired routes greatly increase the efficiency of the system. The scheme appears to work rather efficiently under the current circumstances. However, some ride times are longer than one would desire. The 80 percent use of time is at the upper limits considering you must allow for loading time in the afternoon portion of the routes, and some built in bad weather time so the system becomes a time constricted system. The 68 percent use of capacity can be improved with certain changes. It is important to note that when one of the elements of either ‘time’ or ‘capacity’ reach at or above 80 percent then this element becomes the restricting element to improving the other. In this case, the 68 percent utilization of seating capacity is below average, but is controlled by the fact that buses are running out of time to fill all of the remaining seats. Having a high number in either or preferably both elements is desirable. The real challenge for improved efficiency is when both numbers are below 80 percent.

## RECOMMENDATION

### Recommendation 7-5:

**Refine routing process by actively researching and purchasing best-fit computerized routing software.**

Current routes have been in place for some time, and based on geography, some can not be readily changed. However, it has been a very long time since the entire system has been re-routed. Seeking bids for a computerized routing system will ensure the division is doing all it can to maximize use of available time and capacity. This offers the router the ability to view the entire system quickly and accurately, and make necessary adjustments. From start to finish this process normally will take from one to two years to become reliable, but once it is properly linked with student enrollment, the ability to route quickly and concisely should be ongoing. The accuracy of the map, along with the accuracy of the student data maintained within the division, will be the two biggest challenges.

## FISCAL IMPACT

Market routing systems of the size and capacity to serve Allegheny County Public Schools can be purchased with a three license configuration for \$8,000 - \$10,000 along with a \$1,500 to



\$2,000 annual support maintenance agreement. Maintenance is included in the first-year pricing. This fiscal impact must also be weighted against the Recommendation 7-6 below (bell time changes), since this tool will allow the division to totally see each and every route, and make decisions on route lengths and timings.

Recommendation	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12
Purchase Routing Software	(\$8,000)	(\$1,500)	(\$1,500)	(\$1,500)	(\$1,500)

**FINDING**

Current bell schedules allow for combining (sharing) high and middle school routes which is efficient, but this has a built in inconvenience to the schools in the afternoon service period, as they await buses to criss-cross between schools. These schools have the same bell times (8:35 - 3:25). Also, all elementary schools (8:45 - 3:05), other than Mountain View (8:15 – 2:35), start and end at the same time. There is a 20-minute difference in length of school day between secondary and elementary schools. The current bell schedule is quite clustered, and may not offer sufficient opportunities to consolidate routes and better pair some buses between schools.

**RECOMMENDATION**

**Recommendation 7-6:**

**Review current bell schedules at all schools and seek adjusted times allowing for any increased operating efficiency and/or safety enhancements.**

Many ACPS schools open and close at or near the same time. As a general rule, as the amount of time increases between bell schedules, buses have better opportunities to increase their capacity utilization (i.e. adding an extra 10 to 15 minutes in some cases to bell time gaps can greatly increase capacity utilization by allowing for route consolidation and/or improved paring of routes between schools).

ACPS should seriously consider a change of bell times to create a 10-minute (+-) variation between the high and middle schools which would help eliminate some of the current wait time for afternoon loading. This action would help with student management issues as well as increase the safety factor by reducing movement of buses among students. This change would also create a need to adjust times for Mountain View since many of their buses are paired with the secondary schools, and less time between Mountain View and the secondary schools would not be acceptable. Ten minutes between schools can be gained by moving each school five minutes in opposite directions with the largest time difference between current times being five minutes if this is all that is needed. For some divisions, changing bells can be difficult to do but with proper education and communication it is achievable.

Using the RouteYield information as a tool, the division should consider which routes at each school offer opportunities for consolidation. Selecting those that have low ridership and/or remaining time creates opportunities for consolidation. These selected route consolidations may require a change in bell schedules that will help with consolidation efforts. Looking at route lengths and actual ridership is imperative for efficient routing.



To better understand this concept, the RouteYield data tell us that: (1) there are eight of the 23 regular education routes serving the secondary schools, both morning and afternoon, that have some amount of time and capacity remaining within their schedules; (2) there are six (6) of the nine regular routes in the morning and eight of the 12 regular routes in the afternoon at Mountain View that are under utilized in either time or capacity; and (3) outlying elementary schools offer little opportunity for consolidation. Considering the recommended time changes mentioned above, ACPS should consider adding at least 10 to 15 minutes between Mountain View and the secondary schools along with a similar amount of time between the secondary schools and the outlying elementary schools while maintaining the same length of school day. As an example, the outlying elementary schools would move from 8:45 a.m. to 9:00 a.m., the secondary schools split at 8:30 a.m./8:40 a.m., and Mountain View at 8:00 a.m. Extra time will have been gained to help consolidate routes.

This recommendation is designed to both help reduce possible costs as well as improve safety. In combination with the routing software recommendation above, a full study of this possibility can be easily done.

**FISCAL IMPACT**

The current cost per route bus for ACPS based on prior year actual expenses (Pupil Transportation Verification Report) appears to be \$36,627 and after adjusting for fixed overhead becomes ( $\$36,627 \times .90 = \$32,964$  per bus). Based upon the RouteYield data and past experience, it appears that at least two bus routes could be consolidated after bell time adjustments and rerouting was accomplished. The anticipated cost impact would be \$65,928 annually.

Recommendation	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12
Alter Bell Times	\$65,928	\$65,928	\$65,928	\$65,928	\$65,928

**FINDING**

In reviewing the current route sheets we find they consist primarily of bus stops and times. For regular driver and for parents involved, this is sufficient for running the system on time and in a regular manner. However, in the interest of increased safety and security, and for use when substitutes drive, it is best to have each route sheet contain a roster of the students who ride each bus route.

**RECOMMENDATION**

**Recommendation 7-7:**

**Ensure all route sheets contain a list of the students assigned to the bus.**

The current ACPS routes do not contain student rosters. Each building and bus driver should keep current a list of students who are on each bus. Safety and security issues, along with emergency situations, make this a necessity. This action will assist the driver in communicating, creating seating charts, and performing other important functions.



## FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

### **7.4 VEHICLE MAINTENANCE AND BUS REPLACEMENT SCHEDULE**

The ACPS bus fleet appears to be well-maintained. The average age of the fleet is seven years with the oldest route bus purchased in 1992 (14 years old). The fleet has a total of 53 school bus units leaving ten spare buses which is a spare ratio of 1: 5. The spare ratio is quite high and is influenced by the overall size of the service area. In addition to the school bus fleet the division owns 29 other vehicles which are not buses (i.e. sedans, trucks, trailers, and vans) that need to be maintained.

The maintenance of this equipment is performed by the County maintenance garage staff located on the northwest side of Covington City. The County garage stores all fuels, parts, supplies, etc. necessary for the upkeep of the division fleet, plus there is additional fuel located at the high school and at Boiling Springs Elementary School. All fuel is recorded and signed off on by each driver. The purchase of parts and supplies is accomplished at the garage, but is signed off on by the Director of Administrative Services..

Just prior to this efficiency review, the State completed a spot/surprise maintenance inspection which was very favorable. Downtime is at a minimum. All buses are placed onto a maintenance schedule that ensures they are inspected at least once per month and buses have a 180-day (annual) inspection as per state requirements. Non-bus equipment must be individually scheduled for maintenance by the division as they are not on a state schedule. Oil and lubes are done generally every other inspection period or as required (generally at 6,000 and 10,000 miles). Fuel is the only item that is purchased via a bid process. Other items are shopped locally or through the bus manufacturers. The buses are purchased through the state purchasing program as funds are available.

Warranty recovery is done locally for the cost of returned parts only if the warranty is a small item; if not small, the units must be returned to the dealer for bigger repairs whereas all costs will be warranty. No labor is recovered for warranty if done in-house. All maintenance records are manually kept; no computerized maintenance system is used. The County does work with the City garage in a simple exchange of parts from time to time when one of them runs out and replaces the same item when the order is received.

The garage is managed by the Transportation Maintenance Manager who is actually a shop supervisor. The Secretary functions half-time for transportation and half-time for the maintenance, while the other two mechanics work to maintain both fleets. Based on the three mechanics positions, the bus to mechanic ratio is 1:18, which is well within acceptable standards.

A Safety Climate Analysis was conducted on the shop area (which measured the overall use of safety items, MSDS, fuel island, EPA, etc.), and this inspection came back favorable. Overall, bus maintenance system seems to be working with the safety of the fleet being maintained.



**FINDING**

A recent Virginia State school bus spot inspection (surprise) found that all buses inspected had only minor non-safety issues (i.e. missing items in the band-aid box, etc.). The bus fleet was found to be in excellent condition. A spot maintenance inspection of the fleet performed by the review team confirms this finding.

**COMMENDATION**

**Allegheny County Public Schools is commended for the positive results on its recent Virginia State Bus Maintenance Inspection.**

**FINDING**

Drivers would like to be assured that if problems develop with their bus, there is someone to call. As mentioned previously, drivers should receive a list of emergency numbers. This action would include some maintenance staff. However, the current daily garage work schedule runs only to 4:30 p.m. This schedule does not effectively address bus exposure times.

**RECOMMENDATION**

**Recommendation 7-8:**

**Implement a change in the work hours at the bus maintenance facility to improve support coverage.**

Currently, maintenance staff are on duty to 4:30 p.m. At this time, several buses are still closing out their routes or some are still on the road. Adding an additional half hour would give drivers better assurance of any needed assistance, while also allowing minor defects reported in the afternoon to be completed for the following morning.

**FISCAL IMPACT**

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources, if a shift in work schedule for some maintenance staff takes place.

**FINDING**

There is no method in place to maintain the value of the current parts inventory as it relates to buses. An inventory sheet is only maintained for filters and high-use items. The value of the inventory was not known. The targeted inventory amount (that which is on hand at the garage) should be less than \$200 per bus.

**Recommendation 7-9:**

**Set aside a two-day period and conduct a full inventory of all parts and supplies to include part name, number, and value.**



This inventory should be maintained on an ongoing basis with parts being tracked as they are consumed and purchased. Small nuts and bolts, fasteners, etc. need not be inventoried, but all other consumables should be included with items found to be obsolete being returned for credits.

### **FISCAL IMPACT**

No significant long-term monetary impact will occur since the same number of overall parts and supplies will be purchased annually. This recommendation is one that leads to more consistent and wiser purchasing, not necessarily less purchasing.

## **7.5 STATE REPORTING**

Alleghany County Public Schools uses the required daily driver report sheet that contains the number of students transported along with mileage figures. These daily recordings are kept on monthly reports and are given to the appropriate principal who tabulates and forwards to the Administrative Secretary. The Secretary then combines them onto a monthly spreadsheet for the submission to the Virginia Department of Education at the close of the year. The Department relies on the finance staff to record the appropriate costs into the Web-based Pupil Transportation Verification Report.

A review of the past three year-end reports shows overall transportation effort was generally static in terms of services offered (i.e. miles and students remained essentially the same). No reported corrections to the State have had to occur in recent years. Reporting is very straight forward and is not complicated. The only automated portion of the system is the Web-based document on the DOE Web site. ACPS completes data collection manually, but does store these data in a spreadsheet to help ensure the data do not get lost. Since this system has not re-routed itself in some time, the linear density formula is only changed based on change of enrollments from year to year– the same roads seem to be used each year. If enrollments shrink it is unlikely, barring any routing changes, that the division will be able to increase any of their funding for transportation as the density figure is difficult to control. It is hoped that a re-route of the system as indicated in Section 7.3 can create a more favorable linear density calculation.

### **FINDING**

ACPS ranks second lowest in its peer classification as to cost per student. This is 19.5 percent below the peer average and 31 percent below the highest in the peer group. The costs went up 2.2 percent and then another 2.8 percent between the three reporting periods. These cost inflators between the years (covers a period where a drastic increase in fuel costs had occurred) indicate an effort was made to control the overall costs. This statistic indicates that efforts are being made to control costs. This is further evidenced by the less than three percent cost increases shown on the last three Verification Reports during periods of higher than average transportation cost index increases.



**COMMENDATION**

**Alleghany County Public Schools is commended for its cost controls and lower cost per pupil (\$538) when compared to peer school divisions.**

**ALSO SEE RECOMMENDATIONS 10-16 AND 10-18 IN CHAPTER  
10**



## EXPLANATION FOR EXHIBIT 7-12

### RouteYield™ Assessment - What Is It and How Does it Help??

#### General:

- RouteYield™ measures the efficient use of ‘*Time and Capacity*’ for each bus route.
- Drivers record ‘actual’ riders and times for each of their routes on form provided.
- Data are entered into RouteYield™ assessment software which produces easily understood charts and graphs depicting efficiency.
- Findings become the tools by which routers can adjust for improvements.
- The object is to use at least 80 percent of Time available or Capacity- hopefully both.

#### Time:

- Divisions establish a ride time policy stating maximum amount of time they want their students to ride ( This policy was not recorded for ACPS but verbally we know that no one is to be on a bus longer than 75 minutes if possible).
- Software adjusts the amount of time available based on bell time gaps (i.e. if only 45 minutes exists between assigned schools, then the time available is 45 minutes, not 75 minutes).
- For routing of buses in the afternoon, time available is what generally restricts routers.
- If a bus runs out of time before it reaches capacity, that route is time restricted.
- If time is left unused with buses not being productive, they are inefficient.

#### Capacity:

- Capacity parameters are used and in this case it is two (2) per seat secondary and three (3) per seat elementary—ACPS routers try and adhere to these load restrictions, but use common sense as well to help with capacity issues.
- When a bus fills to capacity but still has time remaining, the route becomes “Capacity restricted.”
- For routing purposes, one must know what the typical ‘actual’ ridership is and avoid lightly loaded buses.

#### Efficiency:

- In order for a system to be perfectly efficient every route would fill all available seats and reach school at or under the allotted time limit -- (this never occurs).
- Eighty (80) percent or better efficiency ratios are considered to be acceptable.
- Due to varying factors (weather, driving safety, growth, etc.), every system should contain some ‘slack’ in their routes.
- Efficiency ratings for Time and Capacity exist for each route and for each school and ultimately for the whole system.

#### Interpretation of Data:

- The first page of RouteYield™ is a summary listing comparison of current routes, and a mathematical forecast number of routes that the RouteYield™ system indicates should be used (i.e. the perfect 100% model).



- These figures result from the Route Summary (chart at top of the second page) which calculates the amount of time and number of seats available in the morning and afternoon for each bus and school.
- The system forecasts 10 less routes would be needed versus current if route perfection existed.
- Remember actual route operating times in the afternoon will be 8-10 minutes less due to loading process--time available in the morning is generally longer since students are dropped at schools 15 minutes prior to the first bell -- these loading/drop time figures are accounted for within the morning and afternoon graphs within this report.
- The following graphs are for each school showing the number of routes serving it represented by the vertical bars.
- The gray line at the top of graph with the square dot connectors is the ride time policy or the bell time gap time available and the black line with triangle indicators is the actual amount of time being utilized by each bus.
- The closer these two lines are to one another the more efficient the route - if the actual amount of time (darker line) is above the gray line this means the route is not adhering to the allotted ride time policy and is most likely arriving late to school.
- The lighter area at the upper part of the graphs represents the empty seats while the shaded area represents the number of seats filled- at a glance you can quickly determine the efficiency of each bus relative to Capacity and the Time remaining.
- The manufacturer rated capacity of the bus has been altered within the formulas to reflect the required capacity parameters desired (students per seat rule).

### **What Do I Do With This Information?:**

- Give copy to routers and they must: look at each route at each school to determine cause of any inefficiency, seek consolidations and reduce routes, gain time and/or seats, etc.— not every inefficient route can be fixed due to existing circumstances.
- Things change so re-route entire system at least every three years and for those with computerized routing systems you should re-route every year.
- Study your parameters (i.e. ride times and capacity limits). Are they OK or do you need to look at something different to help increase efficiencies?
- Always collect data that show the ‘actual’ number of students who are riding the buses versus those that were assigned (this is done daily on the drivers reports) and develop a ridership history of what the shrink is and route to that student count (In the case of ACPS nearly all students are eligible to ride due to distance and safety considerations, but only 77 percent of the students actually ride the bus.
- Smart routers will accommodate for this shrink and increase their actual overall ridership counts without creating any overload conditions- this is to be done on a route by route basis.
- Routers should indicate if any tweaking of the bell times will affect their ability to become efficient (i.e. if 10 more minutes were available between schools A and B buses could be reduced- if different bus sizes will help they should also recommend changes).
- Routers should not use anything greater than 90 to 95 percent of the available time – leave slack in the routes to help insure against any route delays and increase the safety factor.



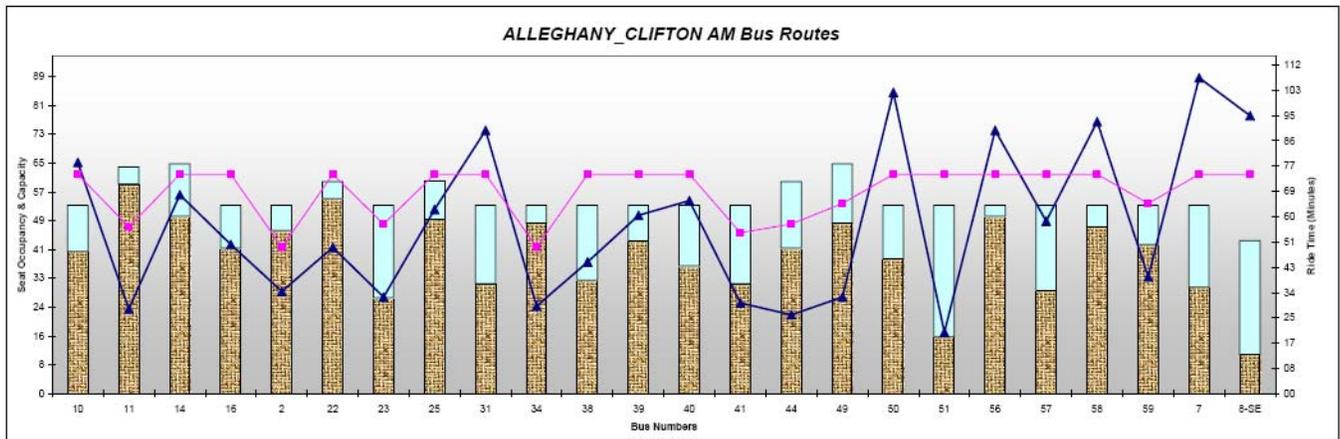
- RouteYield data is a tool to help lead to increased knowledge, and thus efficiencies, but only if it is used in a positive manner to help guide routers to increased success—a change in routing philosophy may have to occur.



## Exhibit 7-12 RouteYield™ Routing Efficiency Analysis

ALLEGHANY PUBLIC SCHOOLS - AM Routes

School	School Type	Data									Forecast Based on Bus Capacity	Forecast Based On Service Minutes	Max Forecast to Actual
		Service Time	Ride Time Avail	Ride Policy	Riders	Empty Seats	Seating Capacity	Average Capacity	Forecast Rts	Actual Routes			
ALLEGHANY_CLIFTON	COM	1400	1658	75	940	379	1319	55	16.92	24	17	19	-5
BOILING SPRING	ES	221	240	60	141	115	256	64	2.20	4	3	4	0
CALLAGHAN	ES	415	360	60	168	131	299	50	8.82	6	9	7	1
FALLING SPRING	ES	230	300	60	207	154	361	72	2.90	5	3	4	-1
MOUNTAIN VIEW	ES	325	600	60	425	238	663	66	6.30	10	7	6	-3
MTN VIEW_CMS_CALL	COM	67	60	60	9	34	43	43	0.21	1	1	2	1
SHARON	ES	183	325	60	173	199	372	62	2.72	6	3	4	-2
<b>Grand Total</b>		<b>2841</b>	<b>3543</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>2063</b>	<b>1250</b>	<b>3313</b>	<b>59</b>	<b>40.07</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>-9</b>



		Statistics																				Grand Total			
Bus #		10	11	14	16	2	22	23	25	31	34	38	39	40	41	44	49	50	51	56	57	58	59	7	8-SE
Seats Occupied		40	59	50	41	46	55	27	49	31	48	32	43	36	31	41	48	38	16	50	29	47	42	30	11
Empty Seats		13	5	15	12	7	5	26	11	22	5	21	10	17	22	19	17	15	37	3	24	6	11	23	32
Total Seat Capacity		53	64	65	53	53	60	53	60	53	53	53	53	53	53	60	65	53	53	53	53	53	53	53	43
Ride Time		79	29	68	51	35	50	33	63	90	30	45	61	66	31	27	33	103	21	90	59	93	40	108	95
Ride Time Available		75	57	75	75	50	75	58	75	75	50	75	75	75	55	58	65	75	75	75	75	75	65	75	75

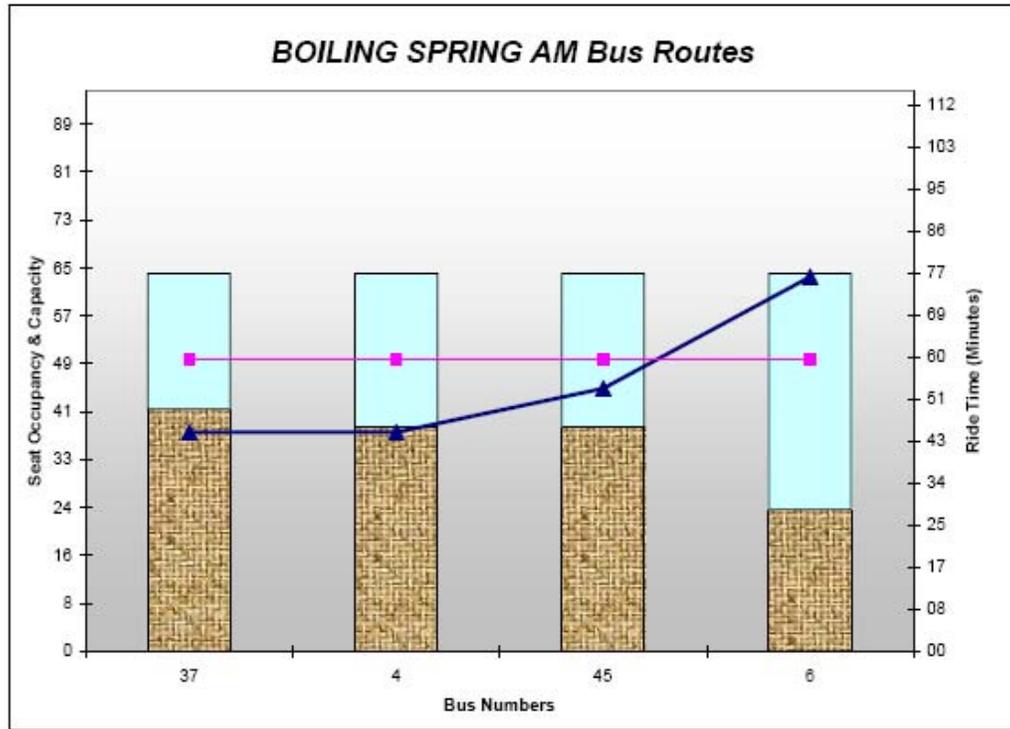
Current Utilization	105%	92%	91%	77%	87%	92%	57%	84%	120%	90%	60%	81%	88%	58%	69%	74%	137%	30%	120%	79%	124%	79%	144%	127%	84%
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Target Utilization: 96%

Time Utilization	105%	51%	91%	68%	70%	67%	57%	84%	120%	60%	60%	81%	88%	56%	47%	51%	137%	28%	120%	79%	124%	62%	144%	127%	84%
Capacity Utilization	75%	92%	77%	77%	87%	92%	51%	82%	58%	90%	60%	81%	68%	58%	69%	74%	72%	30%	94%	55%	88%	79%	56%	25%	71%



**Exhibit 7-12 (Continued)**  
**RouteYield™**  
**Routing Efficiency Analysis**



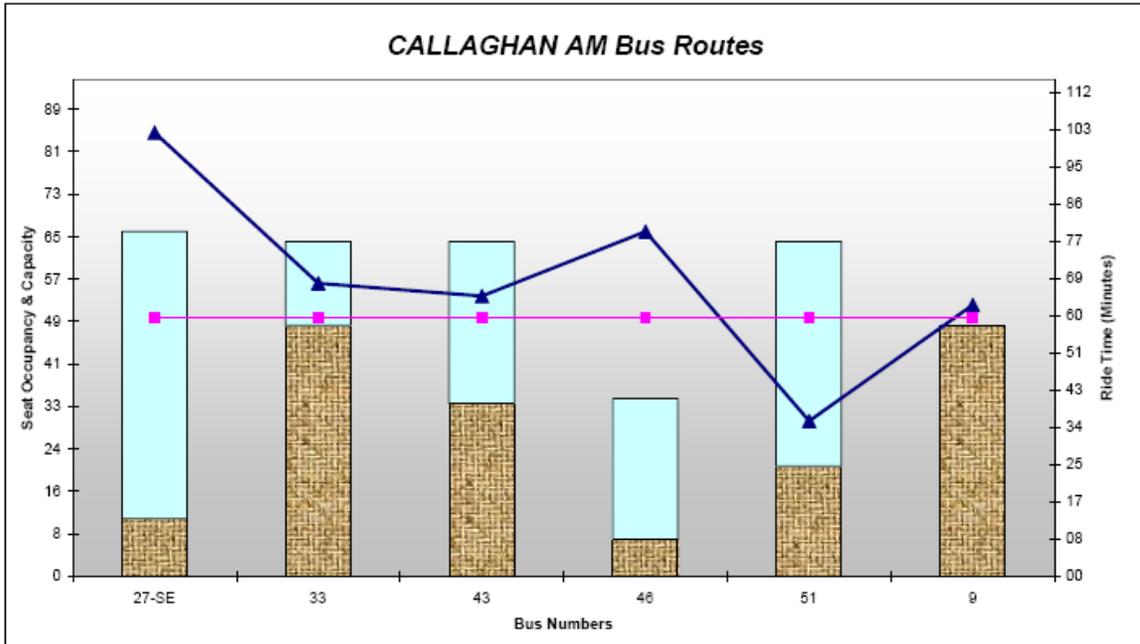
Statistics					
Bus #	37	4	45	6	Grand Total
Seats Occupied	41	38	38	24	141
Empty Seats	23	26	26	40	115
Total Seat Capacity	64	64	64	64	256
Ride Time	45	45	54	77	221
Ride Time Available	60	60	60	60	240
Current Utilization	75%	75%	90%	128%	92%

Target Utilization: 75%

Time Utilization	75%	75%	90%	128%	92%
Capacity Utilization	64%	59%	59%	38%	55%



**Exhibit 7-12 (Continued)  
RouteYield™  
Routing Efficiency Analysis**



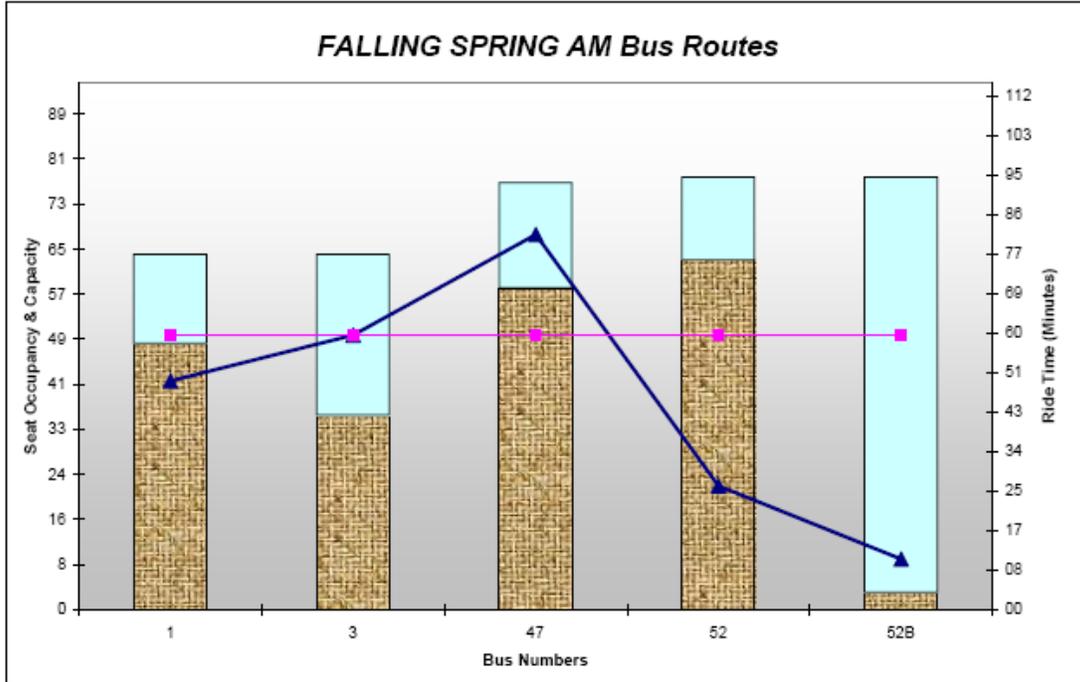
Statistics							
Bus #	27-SE	33	43	46	51	9	Grand Total
Seats Occupied	11	48	33	7	21	48	168
Empty Seats	55	16	31	27	43	-41	131
Total Seat Capacity	66	64	64	34	64	7	299
Ride Time	103	68	65	80	36	63	415
Ride Time Available	60	60	60	60	60	60	360
Current Utilization	172%	113%	108%	133%	60%	686%	115%

Target Utilization: 83%

Time Utilization	172%	113%	108%	133%	60%	105%	115%
Capacity Utilization	17%	75%	52%	21%	33%	686%	56%



**Exhibit 7-12 (Continued)**  
**RouteYield™**  
**Routing Efficiency Analysis**



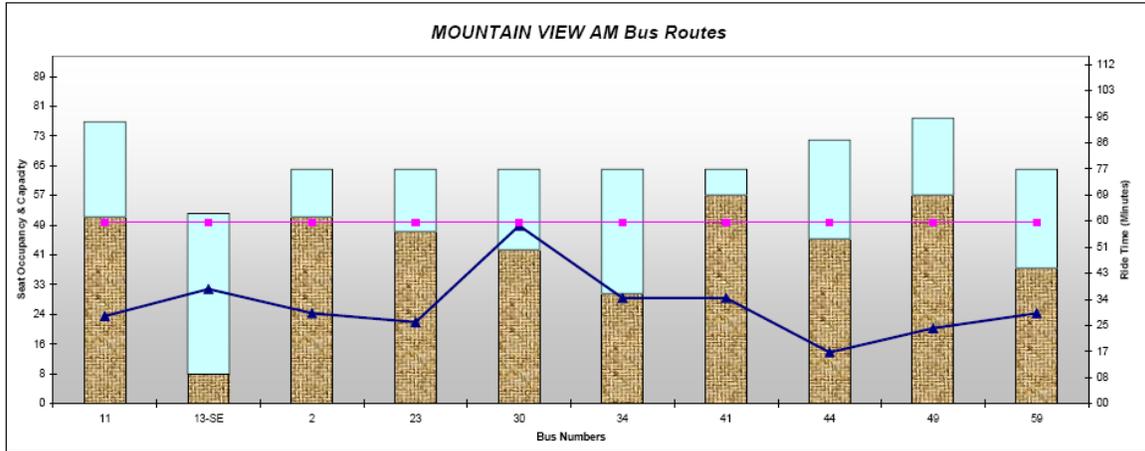
Statistics						
Bus #	1	3	47	52	52B	Grand Total
Seats Occupied	48	35	58	63	3	207
Empty Seats	16	29	19	15	75	154
Total Seat Capacity	64	64	77	78	78	361
Ride Time	50	60	82	27	11	230
Ride Time Available	60	60	60	60	60	300
Current Utilization	83%	100%	137%	81%	18%	77%

Target Utilization: 80%

Time Utilization	83%	100%	137%	45%	18%	77%
Capacity Utilization	75%	55%	75%	81%	4%	57%



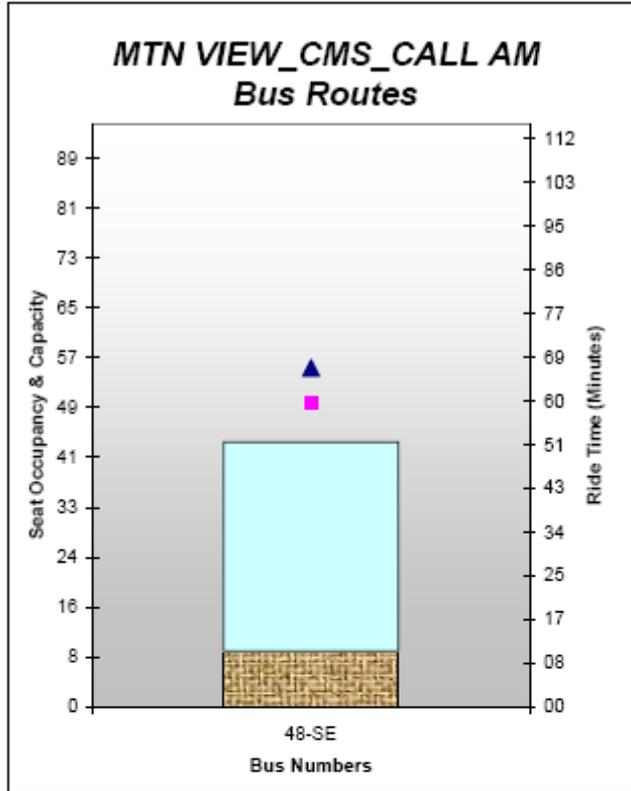
### Exhibit 7-12 (Continued) RouteYield™ Routing Efficiency Analysis



Statistics											
Bus #	11	13-SE	2	23	30	34	41	44	49	59	Grand Total
Seats Occupied	51	8	51	47	42	30	57	45	57	37	425
Empty Seats	26	44	13	17	22	34	7	27	21	27	238
Total Seat Capacity	77	52	64	64	64	64	64	72	78	64	663
Ride Time	29	38	30	27	59	35	35	17	25	30	325
Ride Time Available	60	60	60	60	60	60	60	60	60	60	600
Current Utilization	66%	63%	80%	73%	98%	58%	89%	63%	73%	58%	64%
Target Utilization:	90%										
Time Utilization	48%	63%	50%	45%	98%	58%	58%	28%	42%	50%	54%
Capacity Utilization	66%	15%	80%	73%	66%	47%	89%	63%	73%	58%	64%



**Exhibit 7-12 (Continued)**  
**RouteYield™**  
**Routing Efficiency Analysis**



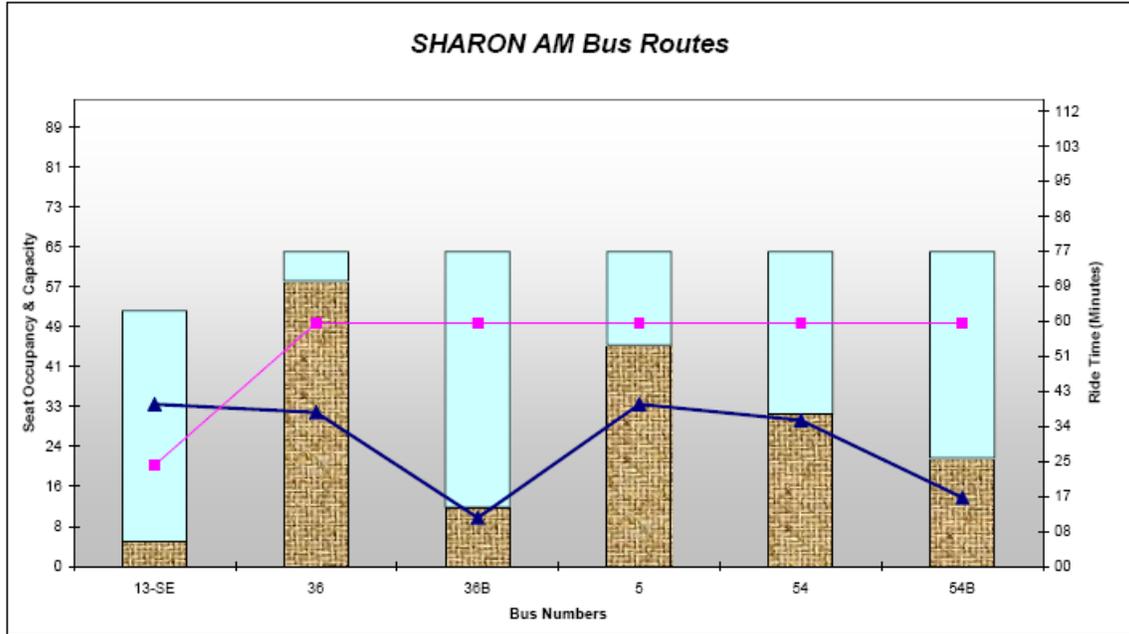
Statistics		
Bus #	48-SE	Grand Total
Seats Occupied	9	9
Empty Seats	34	34
Total Seat Capacity	43	43
Ride Time	67	67
Ride Time Available	60	60

Current Utilization	112%	112%
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Target Utilization:	0%	
Time Utilization	112%	112%
Capacity Utilization	21%	21%



**Exhibit 7-12 (Continued)**  
**RouteYield™**  
**Routing Efficiency Analysis**



Statistics							
Bus #	13-SE	36	36B	5	54	54B	Grand Total
Seats Occupied	5	58	12	45	31	22	173
Empty Seats	47	6	52	19	33	42	199
Total Seat Capacity	52	64	64	64	64	64	372
Ride Time	40	38	12	40	36	17	183
Ride Time Available	25	60	60	60	60	60	325

Current Utilization	160%	91%	20%	70%	60%	34%	56%
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Target Utilization: 83%

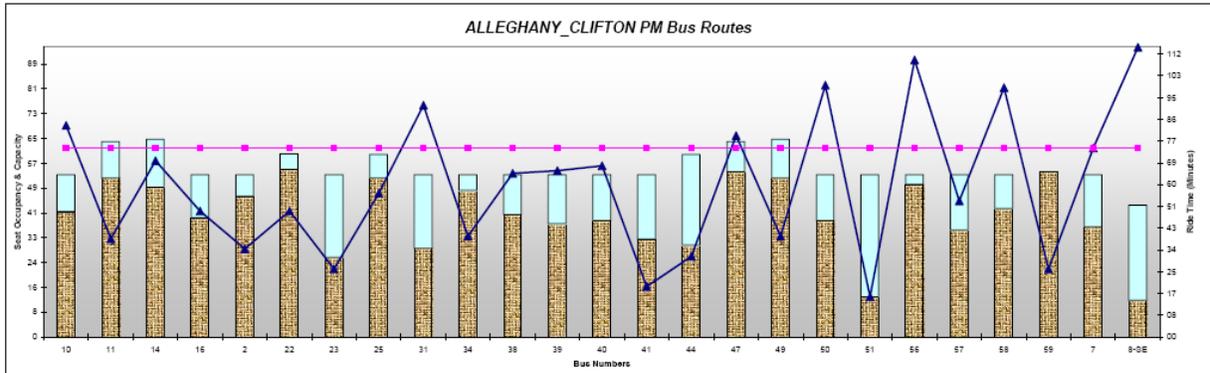
Time Utilization	160%	63%	20%	67%	60%	28%	56%
Capacity Utilization	10%	91%	19%	70%	48%	34%	47%



### Exhibit 7-12 (Continued) RouteYield™ Routing Efficiency Analysis

ALLEGHANY PUBLIC SCHOOLS - PM Routes

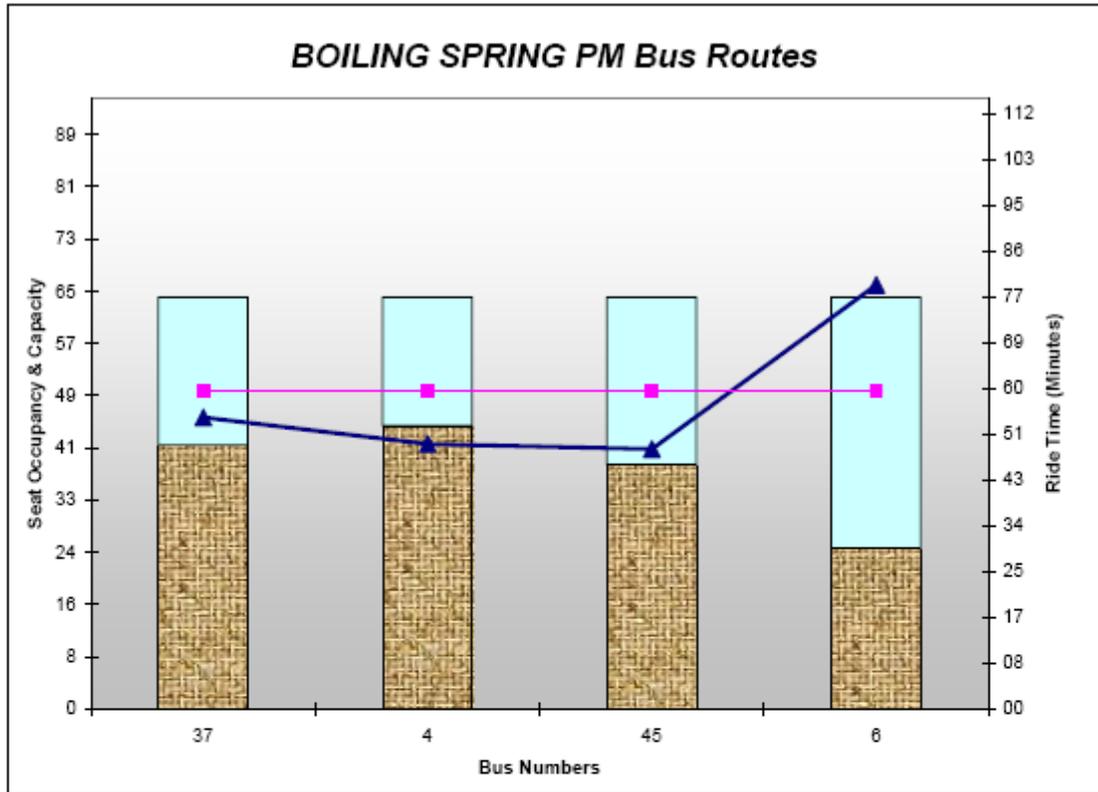
School	School Type	Data										Forecast Based on Bus Capacity	Forecast Based On Service Minutes	Max Forecast to Actual
		Service Time	Ride Time Avail	Ride Policy	Riders	Empty Seats	Seating Capacity	Average Capacity	Forecast Rts	Actual Routes				
ALLEGHANY_CLIFTON	COM	1511	1875	75	1000	383	1383	55	17.91	25	18	1	-6	
BOILING SPRING	ES	234	240	60	148	108	256	64	2.31	4	3	4	0	
CALLAGHAN	ES	354	253	60	186	79	265	53	10.28	5	11	6	1	
FALLING SPRING	ES	191	180	60	145	61	206	69	2.08	3	3	4	1	
MOUNTAIN VIEW	ES	371	583	60	520	343	863	66	7.79	13	8	7	-5	
MTN VIEW_CMS_CALL	COM	70	60	60	9	34	43	43	0.21	1	1	2	1	
SHARON	ES	164	420	60	189	217	406	58	3.04	7	4	3	-3	
<b>Grand Total</b>		<b>2895</b>	<b>3611</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>2197</b>	<b>1225</b>	<b>3422</b>	<b>59</b>	<b>43.62</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>-11</b>	



Bus #	Statistics																												Grand Total
	10	11	14	16	2	22	23	25	31	34	38	39	40	41	44	47	49	50	51	56	57	58	59	7	8-SE				
Seats Occupied	41	52	49	39	46	55	26	52	29	48	40	37	38	32	30	54	52	38	13	50	35	42	54	36	12	1000			
Empty Seats	12	12	16	14	7	5	27	8	24	5	13	16	15	21	30	10	13	15	40	3	18	11	-1	17	31	383			
Total Seat Capacity	53	64	65	53	53	60	53	60	53	53	53	53	53	53	60	64	65	53	53	53	53	53	53	53	43	1383			
Ride Time	84	39	70	50	35	50	27	57	92	40	65	66	68	20	32	80	40	100	16	110	54	99	27	75	115	1511			
Ride Time Available	75	75	75	75	75	75	75	75	75	75	75	75	75	75	75	75	75	75	75	75	75	75	75	75	75	1875			
Current Utilization	112%	81%	93%	73%	87%	92%	49%	87%	123%	90%	87%	88%	91%	60%	50%	107%	80%	133%	24%	147%	72%	132%	102%	100%	153%	81%			
Target Utilization:	96%																												
Time Utilization	112%	52%	93%	67%	47%	67%	36%	76%	123%	53%	87%	88%	91%	27%	43%	107%	53%	133%	21%	147%	72%	132%	36%	100%	153%	81%			
Capacity Utilization	77%	81%	76%	73%	87%	92%	49%	87%	55%	90%	75%	70%	72%	60%	50%	84%	80%	72%	24%	94%	66%	79%	102%	68%	28%	72%			



**Exhibit 7-12 (Continued)**  
**RouteYield™**  
**Routing Efficiency Analysis**



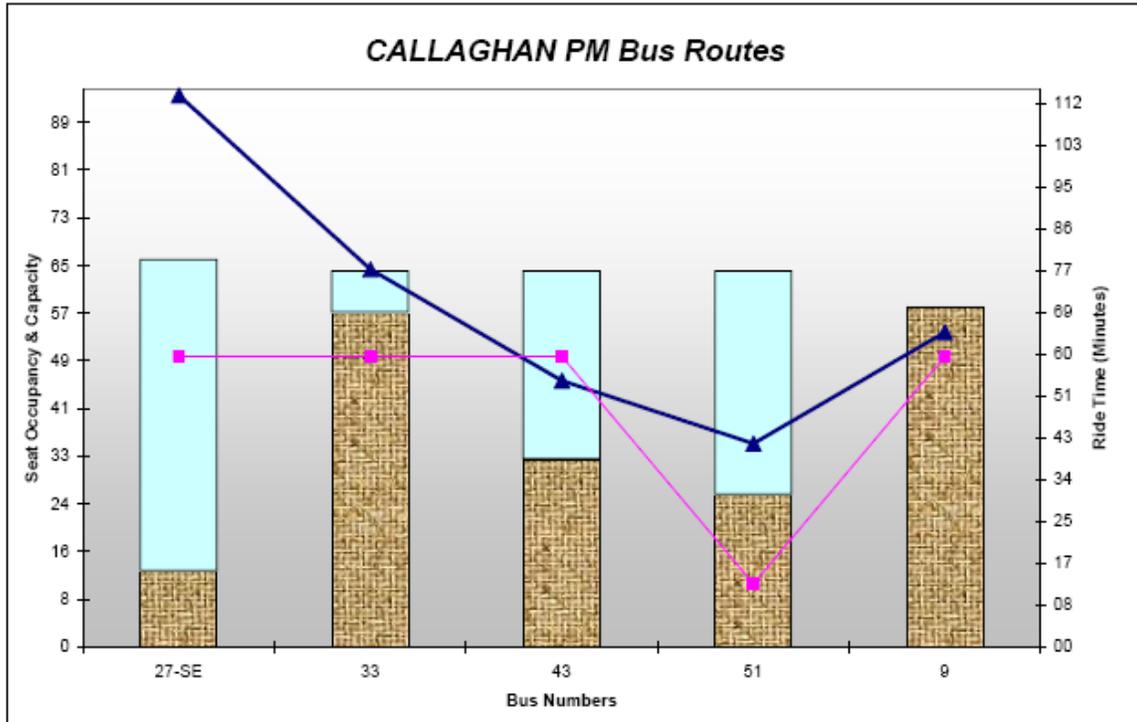
Statistics					
Bus #	37	4	45	6	Grand Total
Seats Occupied	41	44	38	25	148
Empty Seats	23	20	26	39	108
Total Seat Capacity	64	64	64	64	256
Ride Time	55	50	49	80	234
Ride Time Available	60	60	60	60	240
Current Utilization	92%	83%	82%	133%	98%

Target Utilization: 75%

Time Utilization	92%	83%	82%	133%	98%
Capacity Utilization	64%	69%	59%	39%	58%



**Exhibit 7-12 (Continued)**  
**RouteYield™**  
**Routing Efficiency Analysis**



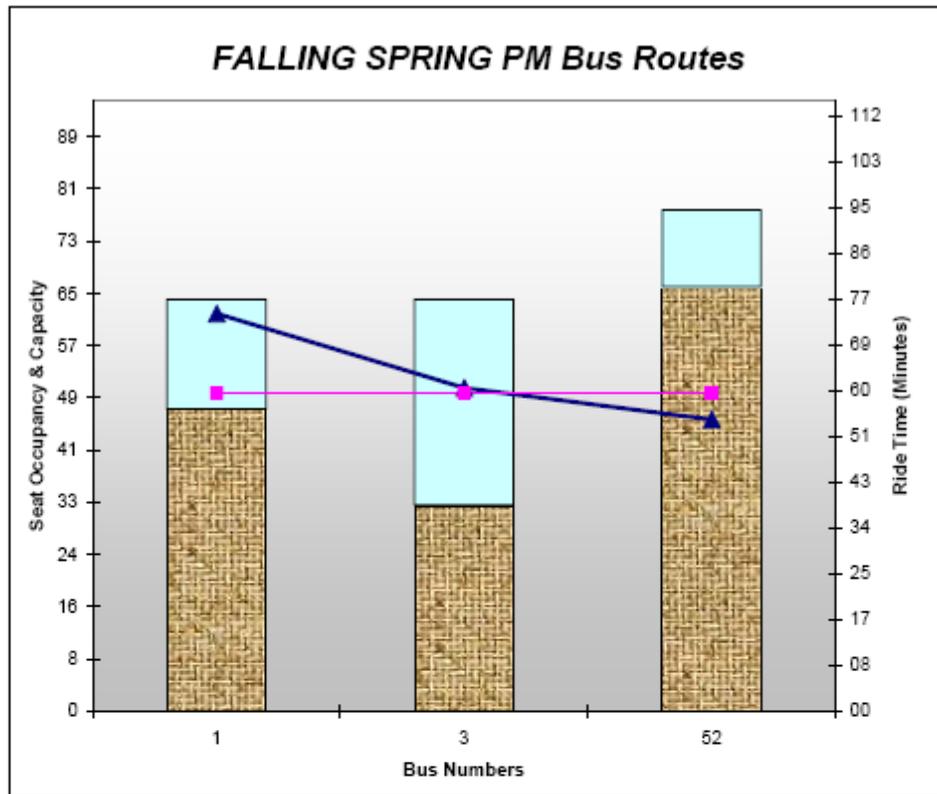
Statistics						
Bus #	27-SE	33	43	51	9	Grand Total
Seats Occupied	13	57	32	26	58	186
Empty Seats	53	7	32	38	-51	79
Total Seat Capacity	66	64	64	64	7	265
Ride Time	114	78	55	42	65	354
Ride Time Available	60	60	60	13	60	253

Current Utilization	190%	130%	92%	323%	829%	140%
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Target Utilization:	80%					
Time Utilization	190%	130%	92%	323%	108%	140%
Capacity Utilization	20%	89%	50%	41%	829%	70%



**Exhibit 7-12 (Continued)**  
**RouteYield™**  
**Routing Efficiency Analysis**



Statistics				
Bus #	1	3	52	Grand Total
Seats Occupied	47	32	66	145
Empty Seats	17	32	12	61
Total Seat Capacity	64	64	78	206
Ride Time	75	61	55	191
Ride Time Available	60	60	60	180

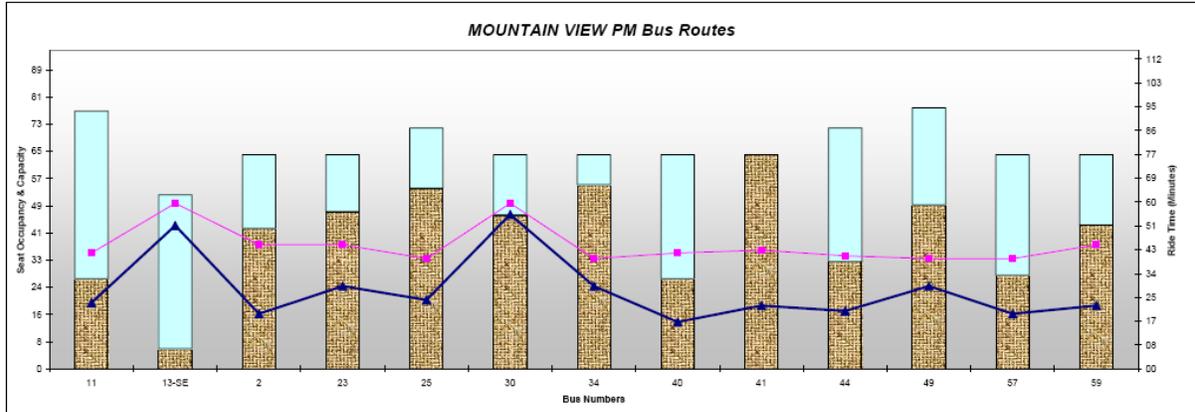
Current Utilization	125%	102%	92%	106%
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Target Utilization: 67%

Time Utilization	125%	102%	92%	106%
Capacity Utilization	73%	50%	85%	70%



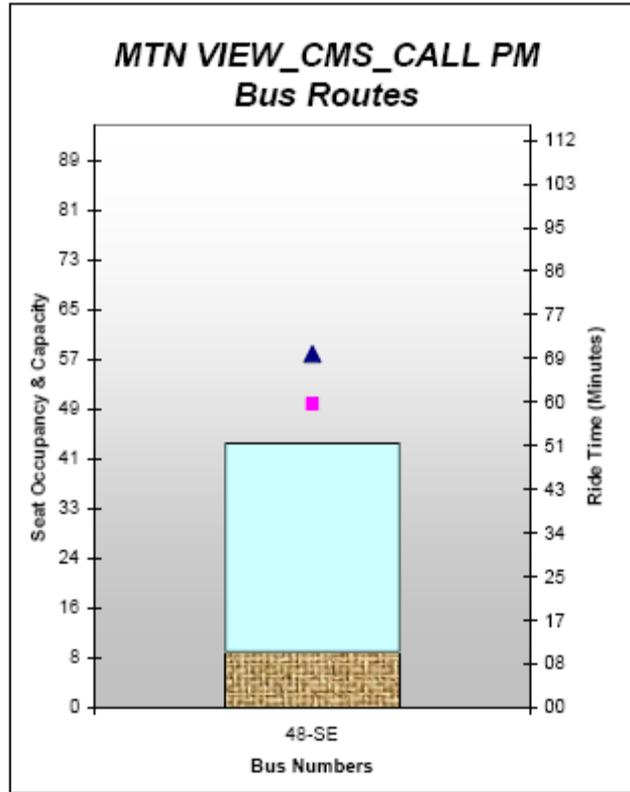
### Exhibit 7-12 (Continued) RouteYield™ Routing Efficiency Analysis



Statistics														
Bus #	11	13-SE	2	23	25	30	34	40	41	44	49	57	59	Grand Total
Seats Occupied	27	6	42	47	54	46	55	27	64	32	49	28	43	520
Empty Seats	50	46	22	17	18	18	9	37	0	40	29	36	21	343
Total Seat Capacity	77	52	64	64	72	64	64	64	64	72	78	64	64	863
Ride Time	24	52	20	30	25	56	30	17	23	21	30	20	23	371
Ride Time Available	42	60	45	45	40	60	40	42	43	41	40	40	45	583
Current Utilization	57%	87%	66%	73%	75%	93%	86%	42%	100%	51%	75%	50%	67%	64%
Target Utilization:	92%													
Time Utilization	57%	87%	44%	67%	63%	93%	75%	40%	53%	51%	75%	50%	51%	64%
Capacity Utilization	35%	12%	66%	73%	75%	72%	86%	42%	100%	44%	63%	44%	67%	60%



**Exhibit 7-12 (Continued)**  
**RouteYield™**  
**Routing Efficiency Analysis**



Statistics		
Bus #	48-SE	Grand Total
Seats Occupied	9	9
Empty Seats	34	34
Total Seat Capacity	43	43
Ride Time	70	70
Ride Time Available	60	60
Current Utilization	117%	117%

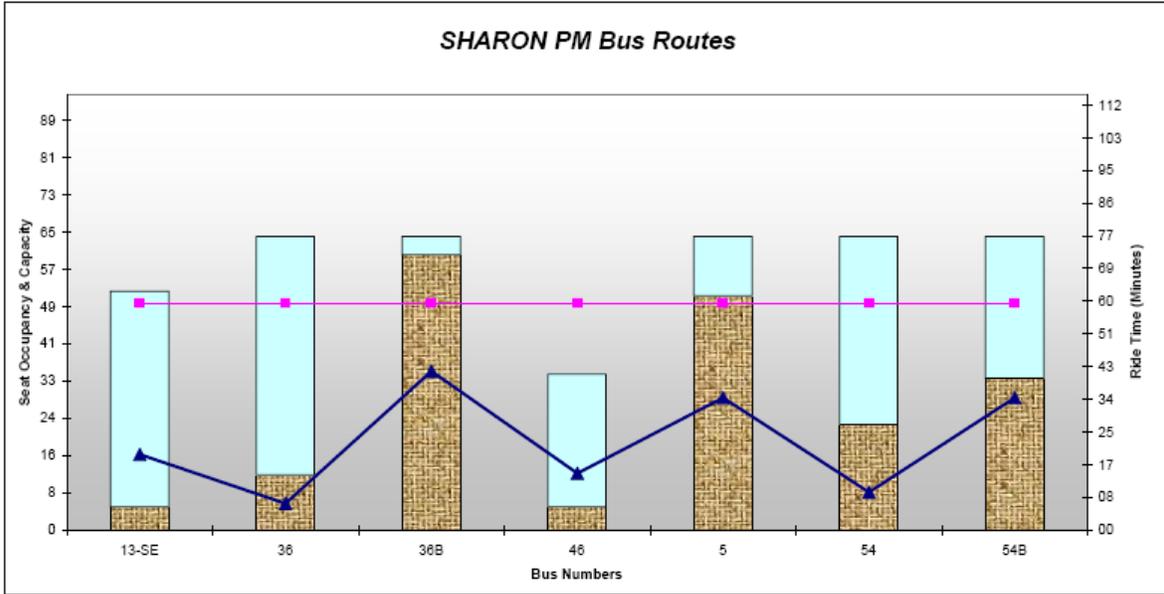
Target Utilization: 0%

Time Utilization 117% 117%

Capacity Utilization 21% 21%



### Exhibit 7-12 (Continued) RouteYield™ Routing Efficiency Analysis



Statistics								
Bus #	13-SE	36	36B	46	5	54	54B	Grand Total
Seats Occupied	5	12	60	5	51	23	33	189
Empty Seats	47	52	4	29	13	41	31	217
Total Seat Capacity	52	64	64	34	64	64	64	406
Ride Time	20	07	42	15	35	10	35	164
Ride Time Available	60	60	60	60	60	60	60	420

Current Utilization	33%	19%	94%	25%	80%	36%	58%	47%
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Target Utilization: 86%

Time Utilization	33%	12%	70%	25%	58%	17%	58%	39%
Capacity Utilization	10%	19%	94%	15%	80%	36%	52%	47%



**CHAPTER 8:  
TECHNOLOGY MANAGEMENT**



Chapter 8

**TECHNOLOGY MANAGEMENT**

This chapter reviews staffing and organization related to administrative and instructional technology in Alleghany County Public Schools (ACPS) and includes five major sections:

- 8.1 Technology Planning and Management
- 8.2 Organization and Staffing
- 8.3 Infrastructure and Web Development
- 8.4 Software and Hardware
- 8.5 Staff Development

A little over a decade ago, technology was seen as an add-on in a school district, indeed in many organizations, including private businesses. Now, technology is a foundational aspect of almost every organization. Technology drives efficiencies and analysis in school districts. The requirements of the *No Child Left Behind* Act include that divisions make data-driven decisions, that students achieve technological literacy before 9<sup>th</sup> grade, and that teachers effectively integrate technology into the classroom. Meeting these mandates depends heavily on a district’s technology implementation. *Education Week’s* annual Technology Counts survey for 2006 recently graded Virginia with an A- on its state technology report card. Although Virginia overall earned an A in access to technology and an A- in use of technology, it received a B in capacity to use technology. **Exhibit 8-1** compares the Virginia school technology environment with national averages.

**Exhibit 8-1  
Overall Virginia School Technology Environment Compared Nationally**

Technology Environment	Virginia Average	National Average
<b>Access to Technology</b>		
Number of students per instructional computer	3.1	3.8
Number of students per instructional computer in a classroom	6.3	7.6
Number of students per high-speed Internet-connected computer	3.0	3.9
Number of students per Internet-connected computer in a classroom	6.5	8.0
<b>Use of Technology</b>		
Student standards include technology	Yes	48 states
State tests students on technology	No	4 states
State has established a virtual school	Yes	22 states
State offers computer-based assessments	Yes	22 states
<b>Capacity to Use Technology</b>		
State includes technology in its teacher standards	Yes	40 states
State includes technology in its administrator standards	Yes	33 states
State includes technology in its initial teacher license requirements	Yes	21 states
State includes technology in its initial administrator license requirements	Yes	9 states
State includes technology in its teacher recertification requirements	No	9 states
State includes technology in its administrator recertification requirements	No	6 states

Source: *Editorial Projects in Education Research Center, www.edweek.org, 2006.*



Evergreen's survey included several questions related to the division's technology. The results for two questions, asked of ACPS administrators and teachers, are shown in **Exhibit 8-2**. The ACPS responses are compared to responses provided by administrators and teachers in other school districts where Evergreen has collected data. Both ACPS administrators and teachers were as or more positive regarding instructional technology in comparison to peer groups. In both cases, a majority of ACPS respondents rated instructional technology as *adequate* or *outstanding*. Both ACPS groups were also more positive than peers regarding administrative technology. Two-thirds or more of ACPS administrators and teachers rated administrative technology as *adequate* or *outstanding*.

**Exhibit 8-2**  
**Administrators and Teachers Survey Results on District Technology in the Allegheny County Public Schools and Districts in Evergreen's Survey Database**

Survey Statement	ACPS Administrators		Administrators in Evergreen's Survey Database		ACPS Teachers		Teachers in Evergreen's Survey Database	
	Need Major/Some Improvement	Adequate / Outstanding	Need Major/Some Improvement	Adequate / Outstanding	Need Major/Some Improvement	Adequate / Outstanding	Need Major/Some Improvement	Adequate / Outstanding
Instructional Technology	12.5%	59.2%	33.3%	61.1%	4.8%	95.2%	27.3%	60.6%
Administrative Technology	4.9%	66.3%	18.9%	54.4%	0%	100%	25.8%	65.2%

Source: *Evergreen Solutions Survey Results, 2006.*

## **CHAPTER SUMMARY**

ACPS is operating technology at a commendable level in a number of areas. The division has developed a highly detailed technology plan that provides strategic direction for both instructional and administrative technology in the division from 2003 through 2009. Through the shared Educational Technology Center, the division is supporting a best practices organizational structure to obtain high-quality technical support. ACPS maintains an outstanding Web site.

Evergreen's seven recommendations for improvement are:

- review and update the Technology Plan on at least an annual basis;
- increase technical staffing levels;
- adopt paperless flows for some processes;
- adopt a computer replacement policy;
- develop procedures to assess technology usage, satisfaction, and instructional integration;
- seek an agreement to co-host the Covington City Public Schools Technology Expo; and
- develop rigorous technology expectations for teachers and staff.

### **8.1 TECHNOLOGY PLANNING AND MANAGEMENT**

Successful technology planning is the foundation for successful technology implementation and development. School division technology is not just a stand alone project; it is a long-term ongoing effort that affects every aspect of school division operations. The technology planning



process is complicated. There are many factors to consider, including instructional integration, legislated data reporting, funding, training, and staffing for support.

Technology plans should cover between three to six years. By analyzing current trends in division demographics and available technology, planners can predict what the needs of the division will be and what technology will be available to fill those needs. Technology, however, is the fastest changing segment of our society, so frequent updates and revisions of any technology plan will be necessary. The Virginia Department of Education (VDOE) has made technology planning a requirement of every school division.

## FINDING

Allegheny County Public Schools has developed and adopted a detailed technology plan that is based on a needs assessment and is long-range in nature.

The ACPS Six-Year Comprehensive Improvement Plan (2006-2012) was approved by the School Board in December 2005. It includes three objectives related to division technology.

They are shown in

### Exhibit 8-3.

**Exhibit 8-3**  
**Allegheny County Public Schools**  
**Six-Year Comprehensive Improvement Plan (2006-2012)**  
**Objectives Related to Technology**

Goal	Objectives
<p><b>Goal I: Student Achievement</b> All students shall achieve the highest possible standards academically, and in terms of career and technical education</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Refine technology-based programs to assist students at all grade levels who may be at risk of failing to meet graduation requirements.</li> <li>• Maintain up-to-date applications of technology for integration by teachers and students throughout the core curriculum.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Goal IV: Parent and Community</b> Parents and members of the community will be actively involved in all schools.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Refine the school division Web site in order to it to serve as a tool for assisting parents with a variety of needs associated with their children's education, and for expanding upon community participation.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Goal V: Capital Improvement</b> Facility, equipment and/or vehicle maintenance, upgrade and/or renovation will enhance safety, security, and performance of students and employees</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maintain necessary infrastructure and support for technology in our schools.</li> <li>• Implement a plan for consistent replacement of obsolete technology.</li> </ul>

*Source: ACPS Six-Year Comprehensive Improvement Plan, 2006-2012.*

The Allegheny County Public Schools Technology Plan (2003-09) is a state-required companion document to the Improvement Plan and was approved by the School Board in December 2003. In developing the Technology Plan, the division's Technology Committee surveyed teachers and students. On this 2003 survey conducted by the division, less than one-fifth of ACPS teachers stated they "naturally use" technology in their classrooms. Similarly, 17.9 percent of Allegheny High School students indicated that technology is "almost never" used in their classes.



The ACPS Technology Plan is quite detailed, beginning with a needs assessment that reflects customer-based research and committee review. The plan includes five different goal areas and numerous targets per goal, as shown in **Exhibit 8-4**. Each goal/target has numerous specific activities. The plan identifies the person responsible for each activity, the time frame for completion, the method of assessment, and the funds to be budgeted towards each goal.

The National Center for Educational Statistics released the National Education Technology Plan in January 2005. This plan outlines seven action steps divisions should take to prepare today's students for the technology challenges of tomorrow. These action steps are:

1. Strengthen Leadership
2. Consider Innovative Budgeting
3. Improve Teacher Training
4. Support E-Learning and Virtual Schools
5. Encourage Broadband Access
6. Move Toward Digital Content
7. Integrate Data Systems

All of these steps are supported and informed by a division technology plan that is long-range, realistic, and strategic in nature. In divisions operating at a best practices level, the division technology plan is integrally tied to the division's overall strategic plan.

## **COMMENDATION**

**Allegheny County Public Schools has adopted a commendable Technology Plan to guide technology development from 2003 through 2009.**

## **FINDING**

Despite a commendable Technology Plan, the division is not using that plan as a living document to guide decisions and provide vision.

In staff interviews, several noted that, once completed, they have not again referred to the Technology Plan, either to assess progress or to review the plan for continuing utility. Staff reports that the Technology Committee has not reconvened since completing the plan. Thus, while there are numerous activities ongoing in the division related to technology, there is no regular mechanism for reviewing all those activities in light of the overall Technology Plan, assessing progress in the plan, and adjusting the plan as needed. As a best practice, this reporting mechanism is typically highly specific. For example, it would include a list of all the action items from the plan, who was specifically responsible for each, the anticipated completion timeline, whether or not it had been completed, resources allocated to the item, any obstacles encountered, and any necessary next steps. While the ACPS plan itself is commendable (and was commended in this chapter), there is no documentation to support that the plan is in regular use and referred to consistently. In interviews, several staff pointedly stated that once completed, no one in the division had looked at the technology plan again.



**Exhibit 8-4  
Allegheny County Public Schools Technology Plan (2003-2009)**

Area	Goal	Targets
Integration	Improve teaching and learning through the appropriate use of technology.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Administrators have a vision and plan for technology use and integration.</li> <li>• School leaders supply support for integration of technology into instruction.</li> <li>• Leaders can effectively evaluate instructional uses of educational technology.</li> <li>• Technology integration partnerships are established among educational technology stakeholders.</li> <li>• Teachers effectively integrate instructional technology.</li> <li>• Teachers collaborate to improve and enrich instruction using technology.</li> <li>• Teachers use technology based intervention strategies to improve student achievement.</li> <li>• Teachers understand and model the acceptable use of technology in teaching and learning.</li> <li>• Students routinely use technology in a variety of learning activities across the curriculum.</li> <li>• Student will have information literacy skills.</li> <li>• Students' learning and achievement will be enhanced through the effective integration of technology.</li> <li>• Student learning and achievement will be enhanced through the use of advanced technologies.</li> <li>• Computer/Technology Standards of Learning (SOL) are fully integrated across all curriculum areas.</li> <li>• Instructional personnel meet Technology Standards for Instructional Personnel (TSIP).</li> </ul>
Integration	Improve division-wide equity in the implementation of technology enhanced teaching and learning.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Educators and students have access to technology to support instructional goals.</li> <li>• Appropriate technology based instructional strategies are used for students with unique needs.</li> </ul>
Professional Development	Establish partnerships for identifying and delivering effective technology training to assist educators as they help students achieve high academic standards.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A variety of classes, training, and resources pertaining to integrating technology effectively are available for staff development.</li> <li>• Technology related staff development offered by various entities is provided in a variety of topics and delivery methods.</li> <li>• Technology leadership activities are provided to K-12 educational technology stakeholders.</li> </ul>
Professional Development	Administer grant programs and financial assistance initiatives that support implementation of education technology integration.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Grant programs and alternative sources of funding that support educational technology are administered.</li> <li>• Teacher education institutions, businesses, organizations, and private entities become partners in the implementation of technology-related grants focusing on technology integration.</li> </ul>
Professional Development	Establish and maintain instructional technologists (including site-based technology resource teachers) in school divisions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Site-based instructional technologists are available to all schools.</li> <li>• Staff development models and activities that are designed for site-based instructional technologists are available for all K-12 schools.</li> </ul>
Connectivity	Ensure that all schools have access to integrated instructional and administrative services across interoperable high-speed networks.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Every instructional and administrative area in every school has a sufficient number of network connections to support the bandwidth of current and future instructional and administrative applications.</li> <li>• All schools and the central office are connected through a wide area network with sufficient bandwidth to accommodate instructional and administrative needs.</li> <li>• Each school local area network has reliable high-speed access to the Internet, capable of supporting instructional and administrative applications and initiatives.</li> <li>• An integrated suite of instructional and administrative applications supported by a standards-based enterprise architecture for K-12 schools is in place.</li> </ul>

**Exhibit 8-4 (Continued)**  
**Allegheny County Public Schools Technology Plan (2003-2009)**

Area	Goal	Targets
Connectivity	Ensure sufficient support for ongoing, reliable network operations.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Adequate support personnel are in place to operate and support K-12 school technology infrastructure.</li> <li>• Support personnel for K-12 school infrastructure have appropriate technical skills.</li> <li>• A customer support system is in place to address technical problems in a timely and efficient manner.</li> <li>• The total cost of ownership (TCO) for Allegheny County Schools is reviewed annually.</li> </ul>
Connectivity	Provide leadership and resources to promote efficient procurement of emerging technologies.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Technology procurement process is efficient and cost effective.</li> <li>• School division staff is regularly informed about emerging technologies for instruction and administration.</li> </ul>
Connectivity	Allegheny County Public Schools has in place network security, filtering, and disaster recovery plans.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Policies, procedures, and technologies are in place to ensure that computing resources are secure and recoverable.</li> <li>• Allegheny has an up-to-date <i>Acceptable Use Policy</i> in place.</li> <li>• Allegheny County Public Schools provides network filtering for all school division computers.</li> <li>• Appropriate and effective network and data security policies and systems are in place.</li> </ul>
Educational Applications	Improve teaching and learning through the appropriate use of network-accessible educational applications.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teaching and learning resources that effectively support the Virginia Standards of Learning (SOL) have been identified, communicated, and developed.</li> </ul>
Educational Applications	Promote and develop Web-based applications, services, and resources.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All schools are participating successfully in the Virginia Web-based SOL Technology Initiative.</li> <li>• Allegheny County Public Schools use Web-based applications for state data collection, warehousing, and reporting.</li> <li>• Use Virginia data definitions.</li> <li>• Every school has an efficient automated library media center connected to the Internet and networked to appropriate learning areas.</li> <li>• The community will have access to school-based technology and applications.</li> </ul>
Educational Applications	Offer digital learning opportunities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Web-based courses and staff development activities are provided.</li> <li>• Schools are able to receive digital television broadcast signals and effectively utilize the enhanced capabilities.</li> </ul>
Accountability	Assess the value that information technology adds to teaching and learning environments.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify elements of technology integration that benefit the teaching and learning environment.</li> <li>• Readiness to integrate technology into teaching and learning has been assessed for each school.</li> <li>• Integrate instructional technology and assess the level of integration of IT in each classroom.</li> <li>• Technology-rich environments and effective technology-based instructional strategies will support student learning.</li> </ul>
Accountability	Provide appropriate decision support capabilities for all stakeholders.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Information systems provide comprehensive information about student learning progress.</li> <li>• Information systems interface to provide staff members the ability to use appropriate and effective data to make decisions.</li> </ul>
Accountability	Assess information technology literacy.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All students are technology literate.</li> <li>• All instructional personnel are technology literate.</li> <li>• All support staff members are technology literate.</li> </ul>
Accountability	Ensure that local technology plans are consistent with the state technology plan.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Allegheny County Public Schools Technology Plan be consistent with the Commonwealth of Virginia Technology Plan.</li> <li>• Each school technology plan will be consistent with the Allegheny County Public Schools Technology Plan.</li> <li>• All technology plans will be reviewed annually.</li> </ul>

Source: Allegheny County Public Schools Technology Plan, 2003-2009.

It may be that the plan, with 119 specific activities associated with the 57 targets, is overly ambitious in some areas. Many activities themselves are large projects, such as upgrading the technology infrastructure at four schools as part of the capital improvement plan, submitting proposals for technology grants, or identifying a system for assessing the level of technology integration in K-12 instruction. While it would not be impossible to complete all of the activities outlined in the plan, it would require a focused effort that, in turn, would require at least an annual review of the Technology Plan. In fact, many of the activities require annual review, according to the plan.

A further concern with the Technology Plan is its lack of transparent connection to the overall Comprehensive Improvement Plan. The Improvement Plan has just five objectives that explicitly tie to technology activities. There is no obvious crosswalk between the Technology Plan goals and those in the Improvement Plan.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

### **Recommendation 8-1:**

#### **Review and update the Technology Plan on at least an annual basis.**

The Assistant Superintendent for Instruction should ensure that the Technology Plan is reviewed and updated annually. An annual update of the technology plan will communicate the importance of the planning process. ACPS should also tie its technology plan with its overall improvement plan and its budgeting process in a transparent way. A well-established link between the plans and the budgeting process is essential for sound financial management, as well as the ultimate achievement of all plan goals.

## **FISCAL IMPACT**

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

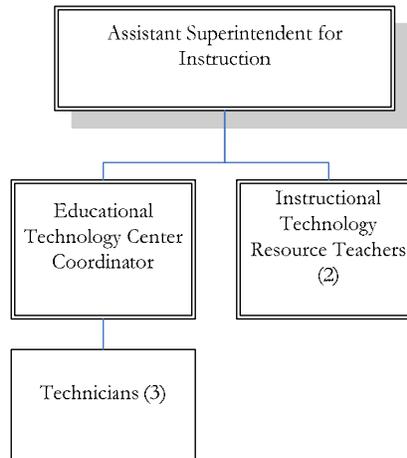
## **8.2 ORGANIZATION AND STAFFING**

Ideally, technology is one area of a school division that supports all administrative and instructional personnel in a positive manner. Organizing technology resources to effectively achieve this outcome can be challenging.

The current organization structure for supporting technology is shown in **Exhibit 8-5**. ACPS currently receives the majority of its non-instructional technology support from the Educational Technical Center (ETC), a joint endeavor between ACPS, Covington City Public Schools (CCPS), and the Jackson River Technical Center. The Jackson River Technical Center is the jointly-run vocational-technical center for students from both divisions. The ACPS Instructional Technology Resource Teachers are housed at Mountain View Elementary School. One is responsible solely for the elementary schools; the other is responsible for the middle and high schools.



### Exhibit 8-5 ACPS Technology Organization



*Source: Allegheny County Public Schools, 2006.*

## FINDING

By jointly supporting the Educational Technical Center (ETC), ACPS receives higher quality technical services than it likely could for the same dollar expenditure.

The ETC was created in 1998, with original funding through the Allegheny Foundation. Initially, the funding purchased vans and basic tools for a staff of two technicians. Today, the ETC is comprised of a coordinator and a staff of three. It is jointly funded, with ACPS paying 63 percent of total costs, Covington City Public Schools paying 20 percent, and the JRTC paying the remaining 17 percent. The ETC Coordinator reports to the ACPS Assistant Superintendent for Instruction for matters specific to the division and works with the ACPS Instructional Technology Resource Teachers on a regular basis. All three funding entities have representatives on the ETC Committee, which works to coordinate overarching technology concerns and projects.

By participating in a joint organization like the ETC, ACPS is able to reap the benefits of four staff with varying areas of expertise at just 63 percent of the total cost. Were the division to instead create its own separate technology support infrastructure, at the current level of funding, it would only be able to hire 2.5 FTE. Together, these 2.5 FTE would likely have less breadth of expertise than the current 4.0 FTE in the ETC. Moreover, the ETC can leverage purchases among the three entities it supports.

The International Society for Technology in Education (ISTE), an internationally recognized non-profit organization dedicated to advancing the effective use of technology in K-12 education, has developed a Technology Support Index rubric to assist school districts in determining their needs in a variety of technology support areas. In the most recent release of the Index (Version 2.4), school districts are ranked into one of four categories for various aspects of technology usage and support. These categories are:

- low efficiency - a strategy or domain that needs attention and improvement;



- moderate efficiency - these strategies address major technical support issues, but with incomplete implementation or inadequate resources;
- satisfactory efficiency - these strategies are generally effective in sustaining the technology infrastructure and promoting the integration of technology in teaching and learning; and
- high efficiency - these strategies make the most of available technology support resources, emergent problems are rapidly detected, solutions are quickly implemented, and problem sources are identified and corrected.

The complete Index can be found at <http://tsi.iste.org/techsupport/> and provides expectations for four areas of technology support:

- equipment standards;
- staffing and processes;
- professional development; and
- enterprise management.

The ISTE Technology Support Index identifies divisions functioning at high efficiency as those with an organizational structure where all of the technology functions report through the same unit in the organization, providing for a logical chain of command and communication structures. The ETC organizational structure meets this definition.

## COMMENDATION

**Allegheny County Public Schools is participating in and supporting a best practices organization structure to obtain high-quality technical support.**

## FINDING

The division is not sufficiently supporting technology through adequate staffing. Although the division meets state minimums in instructional technology staffing, its overall technical staffing level is low.

The ACPS-specific technology staff consists of two Instructional Technology Resource Teachers and one teacher designated at each school to provide front-line troubleshooting.

**Exhibit 8-6** compares the ACPS ratio of technology instructors per 1,000 students to those of its peers. As the exhibit shows, ACPS is above the peer and state averages.

The Virginia Standards of Quality (SOQ) Technology Staffing Standards for the 2004-2006 Biennium implemented policy changes recommended by the Virginia Board of Education. One of the provisions of the SOQ is that, by July 1, 2006, divisions must have one instructional technology FTE position per 1,000 students. From the Virginia Superintendent's memo #1 (January 14, 2005), these teacher positions "are intended to serve as resources to classroom teachers, but are not intended to serve as classroom teachers."



**Exhibit 8-6**  
**Technology Instructors Per 1,000 Students**  
**Fiscal Year 2005**

School Division	Total Technology Instructors Per 1,000 Students
Allegheny County <sup>1</sup>	2
Dickenson County	0
Nottoway County	0
Patrick County	3.01
Prince Edward County	0.73
Southampton County	0
<b>Peer Division Average</b>	<b>0.7</b>
<b>State Average</b>	<b>0.75</b>

*Source: Virginia Department of Education, Web site, 2006.*

ACPS, which created its two Instructional Technology Resource Teacher positions in 2004-05, barely meets the SOQ requirement. With a student population of 2,928, the division is close to needing a third position. A designated teacher in each school provides some assistance in technology troubleshooting and may provide some additional resources to fellow teachers. However, these teachers do not have a reduced teaching load, nor do they receive a stipend for serving as a troubleshooter.

The ETC is primarily tasked with infrastructure and hardware installation and support. In total, the staff of four support approximately 2,000 devices spread among ACPS, CCPS, and the JRTC. Since ACPS funds 63 percent of the ETC, which has a staff of four, this translates into 2.52 FTE devoted to the division. This yields a total of 4.52 FTE positions devoted exclusively to technology and technical support.

The ISTE Technology Support Index includes a rubric for determining staffing needs for information technology technicians. **Exhibit 8-7** shows the ISTE Index for two areas in staffing. Roughly 1,500 of the 2,000 computers belong to ACPS, yielding a current staffing ratio of 332 school computers per on-site technician, assuming the Instructional Technology Resource Teachers devote all of their time to troubleshooting, which they do not. Moreover, neither ETC nor ACPS employs a staffing formula to determine necessary technician staffing levels.

The ETC Coordinator has done an admirable job of using technology tools to increase the effective capacity of the technicians. However, even with these tools, it is difficult for the organization to support all technical needs at a high level.

Adequate, on-site, and readily available technical support for all of the division's technology will ultimately support better integrated instruction in the classroom. Teachers are more likely to use technology in the classroom if they know they can get immediate support if something goes wrong.

<sup>1</sup> The VA DOE data report zero for Allegheny County, however, the two Instructional Technology Resource Teachers began in 2004-05, so the data have been corrected.



**Exhibit 8-7  
ISTE Technology Support Index Rubric for Staffing**

Index Area	Efficiency of Technology			
	Low	Moderate	Satisfactory	High
Technician Staffing to Computer Ratio (# of computers : technician)	250:1	150:1 to 250:1	75:1 to 150:1	Less than 75:1
Formula-Driven Technology Staffing (e.g., W computers + X network drops + Y applications divided by Z = # of required technicians)	Staffing formulas aren't used or considered.	Formulas for staffing are considered but are limited in scope and aren't used to drive staffing.	Comprehensive formulas have been developed, considering multiple dimensions of the environment, but are only used as a guide and don't drive staffing.	Comprehensive formulas have been developed and drive staffing as a normal part of operations. Formulas include multiple dimensions of the environment.

Source: [www.iste.org](http://www.iste.org), 2006.

The finding provides documentation on the need for both a 0.5 technology resource teacher and increased technical staffing in the ETC. Evergreen has recommended that CCPS also fund one additional FTE to the ETC. Based on conversations with ETC leadership, the JRTC likely needs less than the current 17 percent share. Assuming ACPS and CCPS each fund their recommended additional position, the ratio of support for ACPS, CCPS, and JRTC would shift from 63-20-17 to 58-28-11. ACPS would go from funding an effective 2.52 FTE to funding an effective 3.48 FTE. Overall, both divisions demonstrate a need for increased technical staffing.

**RECOMMENDATION**

**Recommendation 8-2:**

**Increase technical staff.**

ACPS should increase its funding to the ETC to add at least one additional technician. It should also increase its Instructional Technology Resource Teacher staffing by at least 0.5 FTE.

**FISCAL IMPACT**

Evergreen estimates that adding an additional technician to the ETC staff will require \$43,890 per year, including benefits (\$33,000 in salary x 1.33). It is important to note that this increased funding is not intended to hire a specific technician who will focus only ACPS needs. Rather, the division would be providing ETC with additional funding to be able to receive the equivalent of one additional full-time technician.

Hiring an additional 0.5 FTE Instructional Technology Resource Teacher would cost approximately \$23,000 in salary, plus in 36 percent benefits, for a total of \$31,280.



Recommendation	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12
Increase Technical Staff	(\$75,170)	(\$75,170)	(\$75,170)	(\$75,170)	(\$75,170)

### 8.3 INFRASTRUCTURE AND WEB DEVELOPMENT

Infrastructure is the underlying system of cabling, phone lines, hubs, switches, and routers that connects the various parts of a computer network. It is similar in nature to a human skeleton or a country's road network—it accomplishes no work on its own, but rather enables other systems to perform their functions.

Of all technology resources, infrastructure is probably the most important. If a sound infrastructure is in place, most users will have a means of accessing people and information throughout their organization and beyond, greatly facilitating their ability to accomplish the responsibilities of their job. Increased efficiency and effectiveness will be the result.

The current ACPS system architecture includes eight local area networks (LANs), one at each school (Clifton Middle School and Mountain View are co-located and share a LAN), one at the bus/maintenance building, and one at the central office. With the exception of the high school, all network cabling was installed within the last five years. The division's wide area network (WAN) infrastructure became operable in September 2006. Its Internet pipeline is now 10 Mbps.

The staff of the ETC manages the ACPS networks. Network devices are monitored in real time and ETC staff can remotely access any computer or network device from their offices at JRTC.

#### FINDING

Allegheny County Public Schools maintains an outstanding, up-to-date Web site.

The ACPS Web site is maintained by one of the division's Instructional Technology Resource Teachers. Each school's Web site is maintained by a staff member of the school or one of the Instructional Technology Resource Teachers.

As of the 2003 needs assessment conducted in developing the division's Technology Plan, 76 percent of high school students at that time indicated they have Internet access at home. Recent statistics on the Web site show that it is used frequently by community members. For the one-year period from October 2005 through October 2006, the ACPS Web site had more than two million hits and more than 250,000 visits. On average, the Web site was visited 685 times per day. Visitors spent an average of two minutes and 47 seconds on the Web site per visit.

On Evergreen's survey, ACPS administrators and teachers had more positive opinions regarding their division Web site than did respondents in other school districts. **Exhibit 8-8** shows the responses.



**Exhibit 8-8**  
**Administrators and Teachers Survey Results Related to the Web Site in the Allegheny County Public Schools and Districts in Evergreen’s Survey Database**

Survey Statement	ACPS Administrators		Administrators in Evergreen’s Survey Database		ACPS Teachers		Teachers in Evergreen’s Survey Database	
	Strongly Agree & Agree	Strongly Disagree & Disagree	Strongly Agree & Agree	Strongly Disagree & Disagree	Strongly Agree & Agree	Strongly Disagree & Disagree	Strongly Agree & Agree	Strongly Disagree & Disagree
	The division Web site is a useful tool.	90.5%	4.8%	60.7%	25.0%	72.9%	10.9%	57.5%

Source: Evergreen Solutions Survey Results, 2006.

**Exhibit 8-9** compares the features of the ACPS Web site with those of its peer divisions. With the exception of Prince Edward County, whose Web site was not accessible at the time of the review, all divisions have active sites that were updated in the current month. In comparing the Web sites, Evergreen found that the ACPS Web site is generally more robust and engaging than its peers. The only area in which the ACPS Web site was not superior was in its policy manual; one peer division has made its policy manual available online, while ACPS has not.

**Exhibit 8-9**  
**Comparison of Division Web Sites**  
**As of November 2006**

Division	Major Features
Allegheny County	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• School Calendar</li> <li>• Lunch menu</li> <li>• Employment vacancies</li> <li>• Individual school Web sites</li> <li>• Detailed information on staff with contact information</li> <li>• Board agendas, minutes, and summaries</li> <li>• Comprehensive Improvement Plan</li> <li>• Technology Plan</li> <li>• Technology resources</li> <li>• Photos of schools and staff</li> <li>• Bus schedule</li> </ul>
Dickenson County	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• School calendar</li> <li>• Lunch menu</li> <li>• Employment vacancies</li> <li>• Contact information for staff and some photos</li> <li>• Policy manual</li> </ul>
Nottoway County	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• School calendar</li> <li>• Employment vacancies</li> <li>• Individual school Web sites</li> <li>• Contact information for staff</li> </ul>
Patrick County	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• School calendar</li> <li>• Lunch menus (off school sites)</li> <li>• Employment vacancies</li> <li>• Individual school Web sites</li> <li>• Contact information for staff</li> </ul>
Prince Edward County	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Web site inoperative at time of review</li> </ul>

Source: Evergreen Review of Division Web sites, 2006.



As part of this review, Evergreen solicited public input through the division's Web site. Evergreen received more than 60 separate messages in this manner, related to the ACPS Efficiency Review and the companion study for Covington City Public Schools. Given the smaller size of the community, this level of technical sophistication and willingness to interact with the division in this manner is quite high. This finding increases the importance of the division's Web site as a communications and feedback tool.

A division's Web site should serve as a public relations tool, an educational resource for students, and a communications forum for all district stakeholders.

## COMMENDATION

### **Alleghany County Public Schools maintains an outstanding Web site.**

As a communications tool, the division could improve the current Web site by adding access to its Board policies. In line with one of the objectives in its Comprehensive Improvement Plan, the division could also provide the community an avenue to give input on division matters through the Web site.

## FINDING

The division could improve its implementation of technical work order processing and requests for instructional technology assistance. In addition, many other administrative processes are still paper-based, despite a robust network accessible by all staff.

Alleghany County Public Schools has developed a number of online forms for use by staff members, including forms for:

- certificate of absence;
- ETC work order;
- expense/travel statement;
- field trip form;
- request to attend conference;
- request for leave;
- tuition payment;
- weekly time sheet; and
- nine different forms related to pay and insurance, such as a W-4.

**Exhibit 8-10** provides a copy of the ETC Work Order form. All of the forms can be completed online. However, in most cases, staff who access these forms cannot save them for electronic routing, but must instead print out the form to initiate the desired process. One exception is the Word-based document that allows teachers to request assistance from the division's instructional technology teachers—that form can be completed online, saved, and routed to the appropriate administrator for review and approval.



### Exhibit 8-10 Online ETC Work Order Request Form

Educational Technology Center  
Work Order

For Office Use Only  
A- \_\_\_\_\_

Repair/Troubleshoot                       Install/Upgrade                       Other

**Name of person reporting problem:** \_\_\_\_\_

**School/Location:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Room:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date and Time:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Computer make/model:** \_\_\_\_\_

Instructions: Please complete ALL items below. Be as descriptive as possible. This helps us complete repairs in a timely manner. When finished, place this form in the appropriate administrator's box in the office.

Description of problem (Please check all that apply):

<input type="checkbox"/> Machine will not boot	<input type="checkbox"/> Machine crashes (locks up) often	<input type="checkbox"/> Monitor Problem	<input type="checkbox"/> Outlook Problem
<input type="checkbox"/> 3 1/2" (A:) Disk Drive	<input type="checkbox"/> CD-ROM Drive Problem	<input type="checkbox"/> Printer Problem	<input type="checkbox"/> Unblock Website
<input type="checkbox"/> Network Problems	<input type="checkbox"/> Sound Problem	<input type="checkbox"/> Scanner Problem	<input type="checkbox"/> Acc Reader Problem
<input type="checkbox"/> Mouse Problems	<input type="checkbox"/> Keyboard Problem	<input type="checkbox"/> Software Problem	<input type="checkbox"/> Other

Please explain request or describe problem in detail; include error message(s) if possible: (Attach additional sheets if necessary.)

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

What has been done to fix the problem? \_\_\_\_\_

Who worked on it? \_\_\_\_\_

---

**For Office Use Only**

School Principal or Designee: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Central Office Approval: \_\_\_\_\_ Priority: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Coordinator: \_\_\_\_\_ Date Received: \_\_\_\_\_

Assigned to: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Technology Specialist Report: \_\_\_\_\_ Initials: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

*Source: Alleghany County Public Schools, Web site, 2006.*

In the case of an ETC work order request, the teacher or staff member can access the online form, fill it out on the computer, print it out, and then give it to the principal or supervisor for review and signature. The paper form is then forwarded to the central office for review and signature. Once completed, it is forwarded to the ETC. Once it reaches the ETC, it is processed into a work order on an online system. Other forms follow similar paths from online to hard copy.



**Exhibit 8-11** provides the statistics for ETC-processed work orders for ACPS. These figures would be in addition to other types of technical support provided by the ETC, such as coordinating new wiring installation.

**Exhibit 8-11  
ETC-Processed Work Orders for  
Allegheny County Public Schools**

Time Period	Total Work Orders
6/13/05 - 6/5/06	955
7/1/04 - 6/13/05	694
7/1/03 - 4/27/04	693
6/30/02 - 5/6/03	839
7/1/01 - 6/30/02	768
<b>Total</b>	<b>3,949</b>

Source: Educational Technical Center, 2006.

**Exhibit 8-12** compares the survey responses of Allegheny County administrators and teachers regarding technical support and online processes. ACPS administrators are generally more satisfied than their peers in other divisions regarding technical support and administrative processes. ACPS teachers, however, are less satisfied than their peers. Less than half of ACPS teachers *agree* or *strongly* agree that they receive quick assistance or that the division provides adequate administrative technology. Only a small percentage of ACPS teachers indicated that most administrative processes are completed online.

**Exhibit 8-12  
Administrators and Teachers Survey Results Related to  
Technology Support and Administrative Processes  
Allegheny County Public Schools and Districts in Evergreen’s Survey Database**

Survey Statement	ACPS Administrators		Administrators in Evergreen’s Survey Database		ACPS Teachers		Teachers in Evergreen’s Survey Database	
	Strongly Agree & Agree	Strongly Disagree & Disagree	Strongly Agree & Agree	Strongly Disagree & Disagree	Strongly Agree & Agree	Strongly Disagree & Disagree	Strongly Agree & Agree	Strongly Disagree & Disagree
I get assistance quickly when I have a computer problem.	90.5%	4.8%	85.7%	10.7%	47.8%	44.6%	52.7%	39.8%
Most administrative process (purchasing, payroll etc.) are done online.	42.9%	23.8%	32.1%	50.0%	12.5%	9.8%	14.2%	19.9%
The school division provides adequate administrative technology.	95.2%	0%	81.8%	15.2%	44.6%	9.8%	59.1%	17.0%

Source: Evergreen Solutions Survey Results, 2006.

The ISTE Technology Support Index rates organizations with “highly efficient” trouble ticket systems as those where all technical issues are recorded and delegated to appropriate resources through an electronic system. All technical issues are subsequently tracked and evaluated through this system.

**RECOMMENDATION**

**Recommendation 8-3:**

**Adopt additional paperless flows for operational processes.**



The ETC already possesses such a capability and should work with ACPS to modify the division's procedures to begin with an online work order request, rather than a paper one. A similar process, or one expanding on the division's use of SchoolDude for maintenance work order requests, could be employed for instructional technology assistance requests.

### **FISCAL IMPACT**

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

## **8.4 SOFTWARE AND HARDWARE**

School divisions must select and employ software and hardware to meet both instructional and administrative objectives. While computers in the classroom are primarily an instructional resource, they serve an administrative function also, as most divisions now use computerized attendance and grading programs. 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 mass production of computers and peripherals. While the price of hardware is generally declining, so is the effective lifespan of many types of hardware. Each year, new hardware is released that is orders of magnitude more powerful than that released last year. As well, each year reveals completely new forms of hardware, many of which may be useful in the classroom or in streamlining administrative tasks.

### **FINDING**

Alleghany County Public Schools lacks a computer replacement policy. The division's Technology Plan establishes a goal of developing a computer replacement policy, but one has not yet been adopted.

In the past several years, the division has completed a number of technology projects and installed a number of newer computers and attendant printers. However, staff members noted that many teacher computers are old and slow. Several documents provided to Evergreen indicate a general consensus desire to replace computers on a five-year cycle, and in fact, the division is largely already following a five-year replacement cycle, but without a formally-adopted policy. A formally-adopted policy would assist in determining and solidifying annual budget needs.



As it relates to the cycling of computer equipment, ISTE rates organizations in this manner:

- Low - no replacement cycle has been defined;
- Moderate - equipment is placed on a replacement cycle greater than five years;
- Satisfactory - equipment is placed on a four- to five-year replacement cycle; and
- High - equipment is placed on a three-year replacement cycle.

## RECOMMENDATION

### Recommendation 8-4:

#### **Adopt a computer replacement policy in Alleghany County Public Schools.**

The creation of this policy would solidify the division's current practices related to technology spending. A replacement plan will assist division leaders in the annual budget development and ensure that division technology remains relatively current. ACPS should develop and adopt a formal computer replacement policy to support its current momentum in embracing technology. By adopting a formal policy, the division's budget priorities will be clearer.

## FISCAL IMPACT

Adopting a policy can be done at no cost to the division.

## FINDING

Alleghany County Public Schools has no procedures in place to assess satisfaction with, and use of, technology already in the division. Likewise, it has no formal mechanisms for assessing the level of technology integration in ACPS classrooms. As a result, it is not ensuring it is maximizing its technology expenditures.

**Exhibit 8-13** compares per pupil technology expenditures for 2003-04 (the last year in which Virginia collected expenditures in this manner; subsequent years do not provide a breakout for technology expenditures). These figures contain all expenditures incurred for all technology-related activities, including instruction, administration, and technical development and support, as well as software, hardware, and infrastructure purchases. As the exhibit shows, Alleghany County Public Schools spent the least per pupil and was well below both the peer and state averages. Since the 2003-04 school year, ACPS has increased its investments in technology areas, most notably through the creation of two Instructional Technology Resource Teacher positions.

This relatively low level of investment was at least partially reflected in ACPS student test scores. **Exhibit 8-14** compares ACPS students in 5<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade to those in peer divisions on the Standards of Learning (SOL) tests in computers and technology. The exhibit shows the 2002 results, which are the most recent available through the Virginia Department of Education. As the exhibit shows, 79 percent of ACPS 5<sup>th</sup> graders and 63 percent of ACPS 8<sup>th</sup> graders met or exceeded the SOL standards. These figures are lower than both the peer averages of 78 percent and 70 percent, and the state averages of 86 percent and 76 percent. Overall, ACPS students demonstrated lower levels of computers and technology skills than their peers or the state as a whole.



**Exhibit 8-13**  
**Technology Disbursements by Division**  
**Fiscal Year 2004**

School Division	Total Technology Disbursements	Per Pupil Cost
Alleghany County	\$233,636.72	\$81.27
Dickenson County	\$442,320.79	\$171.21
Nottoway County	\$619,941.50	\$267.97
Patrick County	\$901,826.61	\$346.86
Prince Edward County	\$627,628.15	\$229.12
Southampton County	\$367,933.17	\$131.82
<b>Peer Division Average</b>	\$591,930.04	\$229.40
<b>State Total</b>	<b>\$433,958,314.54</b>	<b>\$372.07</b>

Source: Virginia Department of Education, Web site, 2006.

**Exhibit 8-14**  
**Standards of Learning (SOL) Results**  
**Percentage of Students Meeting or Exceeding Standards in Computers/Technology**  
**Spring 2002**

School Division	5 <sup>th</sup> Grade	8 <sup>th</sup> Grade
Alleghany County	79%	63%
Dickenson County	82%	77%
Nottoway County	72%	78%
Patrick County	92%	74%
Prince Edward County	73%	67%
Southampton County	73%	53%
<b>Peer School Division Average</b>	<b>78%</b>	<b>70%</b>
<b>Commonwealth Average</b>	<b>86%</b>	<b>76%</b>

Source: Virginia Department of Education, Web site, 2006.

Since 2003-04, the division is likely much closer to its peers in technology spending. However, it is not yet systematically assessing the use of its technology, nor is it assessing user satisfaction with technology deployed. Anecdotally, staff reports that technologies like SmartBoards are in high demand and nearly always in use. Staff also reports that recent training in classroom response systems (the division currently owns equipment sufficient for two classrooms) has been well-received, and that the systems will be in high demand. However, neither of these anecdotal assertions could be supported by usage data. These observations should be quantified and analyzed on a regular basis. In fact, some staff reported to other Evergreen consultants that the SmartBoards were actually not in high demand.

In 2002, ACPS completed a “Taking a Good Look at Instructional Technology (TAGLIT)” survey. TAGLIT is a set of online assessment tools designed to provide school personnel with a review of the instructional technology in use. TAGLIT has five sections:

- Plan - addresses technology planning, policies, and expenditures;
- Teachers - addresses teacher technology skills, teacher technology use in teaching and learning, technology-related professional development, and technology-related instructional support;



- Students - addresses student technology skills, student frequency of technology use for learning, and student and teacher perspectives about how technology affects their classroom environment;
- Community - addresses technology-related community connections; and
- Staff - addresses hardware software and electronic/online resources, and technical support.

In addition to assessing each school's environment for these areas on a 4-point scale, the TAGLIT provides survey respondents an opportunity to provide written general comments related to technology. In reviewing the TAGLIT results for each ACPS school, Evergreen found that they provide a wealth of in-depth information. Having completed the TAGLIT once is commendable division activity. Nevertheless, often the greatest value of such undertakings is completing them at regular intervals, so that a division can measure its progress over time.

## RECOMMENDATION

### Recommendation 8-5:

#### **Develop procedures to assess technology usage, satisfaction, and instructional integration.**

The division should track and analyze technology use by department or school site, grade level, and subject area in order to ensure it has used its technology funds wisely, to identify areas needing additional technology, and to determine whether additional support, such as training or further infrastructure, is needed for full technology implementation. The division could also implement a method to assess student and community satisfaction with classroom tools and the ACPS Web site. Finally, the division should implement a regular assessment of technology integration in the classroom, either through the Web site or a tool similar to TAGLIT.

## FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

## 8.5 STAFF DEVELOPMENT

Training in the use of technology is the most critical factor in determining whether that technology is used effectively or even used at all. Administrative and instructional staff must be able to use effectively the technology available to them. Training must be ongoing; the technology environment is continuously evolving, and divisions must keep pace with the evolution.

The ISTE Technology Support Index identifies exemplary divisions as having these staff development practices:

- A comprehensive staff development program is in place that impacts all staff. The program is progressive in nature and balances incentive, accountability, and diverse learning opportunities.



- Online training opportunities are provided for staff both on-site and remotely, and represents a diversity of skill sets.
- Expectations for all staff are clearly articulated and are broad in scope. Performance expectations are built into work functions and are part of the organizational culture.
- Technical staff receives ample training as a normal part of their employment, including training towards certification.
- Basic troubleshooting is built into the professional development program, and is used as a first line of defense in conjunction with technical support.

## FINDING

Alleghany County Public Schools has not developed specific technology proficiency expectations for administrators, teachers, and staff. The division relies on the Virginia Technology Standards for Instructional Personnel (VA TSIP) for guidance, but these are rather broad and are not translated by the Commonwealth into specific expectations for division administrators to implement.

In interviews, ACPS staff noted a variance in the abilities of administrators, teachers, and staff in effectively using technology, both inside the classroom and out. Staff noted that, while some teachers are highly proficient, others are only rarely using technology.

**Exhibit 8-15** compares the current level of ACPS professional development related to technology with the ISTE indicators, based on Evergreen's analysis. As shown, ACPS has a relatively low level of professional development related to technology.

**Exhibit 8-15**  
**ACPS Professional Development Assessed on the ISTE Index**

Domain Indicator	ACPS Level	Resulting ISTE Efficiency Rating
Comprehensive Staff Development Programs	The division provides just one day of technical in-service training per year.	Low
Online Training Opportunities	Online training opportunities do not exist, other than for Instructional Technology Resource Teachers.	Low
Just-in-time Training	Some just-in-time training is available as needs arise through the ETC or ACPS Instructional Technology Resource Teachers.	Moderate
Expectations for All Staff	The Technology Plan is not in use. No clear expectations for learning technology are in place.	Low
Troubleshooting as Part of Professional Development	Troubleshooting training is not required.	Low
Training for Technical Staff	Technical staff can obtain training as necessary. ETC staff can determine and budget for their training needs, although funds are limited.	Moderate

Source: Created by Evergreen Solutions, 2006.



The Virginia Technology Standards for Instructional Personnel (VA TSIP) provides a foundation for developing technical literacy standards within ACPS. To date, all ACPS instructional personnel have met these standards. The VA TSIPs are listed in **Exhibit 8-16**. As shown, these standards provide broad expectations for teachers in implementing technology, but do not establish specifics for divisions to implement. For example, while one standard addresses the use of technology in the classroom to meet the needs of diverse learners, there are no addresses specifics provided as to how the specific technologies available in Allegheny County Public Schools can be used to differentiate instruction within the 3<sup>rd</sup> grade classroom on a daily basis.

The developers of the Levels of Technology Implementation (LoTI) conducted a nationwide survey of a sample of nearly 45,000 teachers in 2005-06, assessing their classroom technical proficiency with the framework. **Exhibit 8-17** includes the definitions for the LoTI Framework for assessing teacher technology proficiency. The survey found this distribution:

- Level 0 - eight percent
- Level 1 - 18 percent
- Level 2 - 22 percent
- Level 3 - 23 percent
- Level 4a - 18 percent
- Level 4b - nine percent
- Level 5 - one percent
- Level 6 - less than one percent

The developers recommend a target technology level of at least Level 4b.

Some states, including as Virginia, now require teachers to prove technological literacy by completing a number of professional development courses or developing a technology portfolio that demonstrates their ability to integrate technology into instruction. While these efforts are still relatively new, Evergreen's observations thus far in several school divisions indicate that such top-down, state-level efforts are not as successful as hoped. Instead, divisions where teachers are highly literate with technology and seamlessly integrate technology into instruction for enrichment, remediation, and differentiation often have one common characteristic—they are led by administrators who embrace technology and expect teachers to use it. For that reason, the technological competency of administrators and staff is also important, beyond the obvious efficiencies that can be gained from highly automated, online administrative processes in the central office.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

### **Recommendation 8-6:**

#### **Develop rigorous technology expectations for ACPS teachers and staff.**

Developing more explicit rigorous expectations for technical expertise will ensure that all teachers are maximizing the division's technology resources.



**Exhibit 8-16  
Virginia Technology Standards for Instructional Personnel**

Standard	Sample Enablers	Justification
<b>Demonstrate effective use of a computer system and utilize computer software.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use a variety of computer system input/output devices and peripherals</li> <li>• Store, organize, and retrieve software programs and data files on a variety of storage devices</li> <li>• Use different types of software programs including instructional, productivity, application tools, and courseware</li> <li>• Troubleshoot general hardware and software problems</li> </ul>	It is expected that by the year 2000, all classrooms in Virginia schools will have computers for teacher and student use. In the "information age," the need to operate a computer and utilize basic software should be as much a part of the daily routine for instructional personnel as it is for most of the business world.
<b>Apply knowledge of terms associated with educational computing and technology.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Apply functional knowledge of basic computer components, e.g., operating, application, and utility software; permanent and removable storage (main memory, hard drive, and optical or magnetic disc); monitor; scanner and digital camera; matrix, inkjet, and laser printers</li> <li>• Apply functional knowledge of various technology tools, e.g., video records and players, optical disc players, computer presentation devices, multimedia computer work station</li> </ul>	Educators need a common vocabulary and a functional understanding of educational technologies.
<b>Apply computer productivity tools for professional use.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use software tools to assist with classroom administrative tasks; use software tools to design, customize, or individualize instructional materials</li> <li>• Use software to enhance communication with students, parents, and community</li> <li>• Use telecommunications software to collaborate and find resource materials</li> </ul>	The use of basic productivity software to aid with student records, correspondence, management, and instructional materials development can be effective and time efficient. Educators should be able to model how technology can be used to enhance learning and job performance.
<b>Use electronic technologies to access and exchange information.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use local and worldwide telecommunications</li> <li>• Use search strategies to retrieve electronic information</li> </ul>	An understanding of how to search for, organize, and present information using modem media is becoming a common workplace and learning skill. State and national technology initiatives are moving toward local area networks for all schools. These networks are connected to state, national, and international networks. Educators must know how to access networks and to exchange and/or retrieve information for both teaching and professional development.



**Exhibit 8-16 (Continued)  
Virginia Technology Standards for Instructional Personnel**

Standard	Sample Enablers	Justification
<b>Identify, locate, evaluate, and use appropriate instructional technology-based resources (hardware and software) to support Virginia's Standards of Learning and other instructional objectives.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Understand types, characteristics, sources, and use of effective instructional software and other technology-based learning resources</li> <li>• Use tools of technology including, but not limited to, computers, modems, networks, printers, large group presentation devices, scanners, digital cameras, camcorders, video cassette recorders, optical disc players, etc.</li> </ul>	Educators need to utilize effectively all available resources, both traditional and technology-based, and be able to use these resources to assist students in achieving the Standards of Learning.
<b>Use educational technologies for data collection, information management, problem solving, decision making, communications, and presentation within the curriculum.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Incorporate word processing, spreadsheet, or database software in instruction</li> <li>• Incorporate telecommunications as a component of instruction; and use a presentation and/or authoring program to present a lesson or develop instructional materials</li> </ul>	Many modern jobs require the skills that are mentioned in this standard. Students will need learning experiences that help them become life-long learners with the ability to function in these areas, regardless of their eventual work or educational environment. Therefore, teachers must develop and model skills in the use of technology in order to offer students appropriate learning experiences.
<b>Plan and implement lessons and strategies that integrate technology to meet the diverse needs of learners in a variety of educational settings.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Utilize technology to facilitate assessment and student-centered instruction as determined by the discipline and/or grade level taught</li> <li>• Use multimedia, hypermedia, and telecommunications software to support individual and/or small group instruction; as teaching assignments dictate, utilize and/or understand resources available concerning adaptive technology</li> <li>• Use technology effectively in various educational settings, e.g., one computer in a classroom, class-size computer lab, computers in classroom clusters or mini labs, multimedia computer work stations, integrated learning systems (ELS)</li> <li>• Effectively utilize an automated library media center</li> </ul>	Educators strive to be responsive to the individual needs and learning styles of a diverse group of students. Technology-based resources can be used to meet these diverse needs in a variety of classroom and laboratory settings.
<b>Demonstrate knowledge of ethical and legal issues relating to the use of technology.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Abide by copyright laws</li> <li>• Practice responsible uses of technology</li> </ul>	Educators using instructional technology serve as models for students. They must have a basic understanding of the complex issues regarding the legal and ethical uses of technology.

Source: Commonwealth of Virginia House Bill 1848, 2006.



**Exhibit 8-17**  
**LoTI Framework for Assessing Teacher Technical Proficiency**

Level	Description
<b>Level 0 Non-use</b>	A perceived lack of access to technology-based tools or a lack of time to pursue electronic technology implementation. Existing technology is predominately text-based.
<b>Level 1 Awareness</b>	The use of computers is generally one step removed from the classroom teacher (e.g., integrated learning system labs, special computer-based pull-out programs, computer literacy classes). Computer-based applications have little or no relevance to the individual teacher's operational curriculum.
<b>Level 2 Exploration</b>	Technology-based tools generally serve as a supplement to the existing instructional program. The electronic technology is employed either as extension activities or as enrichment exercises to the instructional program and generally reinforce lower cognitive skill development (e.g., knowledge, comprehension, application).
<b>Level 3 Infusion</b>	Technology-based tools including databases, spreadsheet, and graphing packages, multimedia and desktop publishing applications, and Internet use augment selected instructional events (e.g., science kit experiment using spreadsheets/graphs to analyze results, telecommunications activity involving data sharing among schools). Emphasis is placed on higher levels of cognitive processing (e.g., analysis, synthesis, evaluation).
<b>Level 4a Integration (Mechanical)</b>	Technology-based tools are integrated in a mechanical manner that provides rich context for students' understanding of the pertinent concepts, themes, and processes. Heavy reliance is placed on prepackaged materials and outside interventions that aid the teacher in the daily operation of their instructional curriculum. Technology is perceived as a tool to identify and solve authentic problems perceived by the students as relating to an overall theme/concept. Emphasis is placed on student action and issues resolution that require higher levels of student cognitive processing.
<b>Level 4b Integration (Routine)</b>	Teachers can readily create Level 4 (Integrated Units) with little intervention from outside resources. Technology-based tools are easily integrated in a routine manner that provides rich context for students' understanding of the pertinent concepts, themes, and processes. Technology is perceived as a tool to identify and solve authentic problems relating to an overall theme/concept.
<b>Level 5 Expansion</b>	Technology access is extended beyond the classroom. Classroom teachers actively elicit technology applications and networking from business enterprises, governmental agencies (e.g., contacting NASA to establish a link to an orbiting space shuttle via Internet), research institutions, and universities to expand student experiences directed at problem-solving, issues resolution, and student involvement surrounding a major theme/concept.
<b>Level 6 Refinement</b>	Technology is perceived as a process, product, and tool toward students solving authentic problems related to an identified "real-world" problem or issue. Technology, in this context, provides a seamless medium for information queries, problem-solving, and/or product development. Students have ready access to and a complete understanding of a vast array of technology-based tools to accomplish any particular task.

Source: [www.loticonnection.com](http://www.loticonnection.com), 2006.



**FISCAL IMPACT**

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources. CCPS currently provides their Technology Expo using teacher in-service funds. Evergreen anticipates that ACPS could join in the Technology Expo using a portion of the funds they currently spend for staff development training.

**ALSO SEE RECOMMENDATION 10-10 IN CHAPTER 10**



***CHAPTER 9:  
FOOD SERVICE***



Chapter 9

## FOOD SERVICE

This chapter reviews staffing and organization related to food service in Allegheny County Public Schools (ACPS) and includes four major sections:

- 9.1 Policies and Procedures
- 9.2 Organization and Management
- 9.3 Student Meal Participation
- 9.4 Financial Performance

School meal programs began when the Child Nutrition Act of 1946 authorized the National School Lunch Program to “safeguard the health and well-being of the nation’s children.” The program, administered by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), is open to all public and nonprofit private schools and all residential childcare institutions. ACPS participates in the National School Lunch Program (NSLP), the School Breakfast Program (SBP), created by Congress in 1975, and the Child Nutrition Commodity Program. Divisions that participate in these federal programs receive cash subsidies and donated commodities from the USDA for each eligible meal they serve. In return, the division must serve its students meals that meet federal guidelines for nutritional value and offer free or reduced-price meals to eligible students.

ACPS, like other divisions participating in the federal feeding programs, receives federal support in the form of a cash reimbursement for each meal served, depending on the economic status of the student. The poorest students qualify for free lunches, while others qualify for reduced price lunches. All meals served according to federal guidelines receive some level of reimbursement, including those served to students who pay ‘full price.’ The 2005-06 and 2006-07 basic federal reimbursement rates for breakfast and lunch are shown in **Exhibit 9-1**.

**Exhibit 9-1**  
**National School Breakfast and Lunch Reimbursement Rates**  
**2005-06 and 2006-07 School Years**

Program	Severe Need Breakfast		Breakfast		Lunch	
	2005-06	2006-07	2005-06	2006-07	2005-06	2006-07
Free Meal	\$1.51	\$1.56	\$1.27	\$1.31	\$2.32	\$2.40
Reduced Price Meal	\$1.21	\$1.26	\$0.97	\$1.01	\$1.92	\$2.00
Paid Meal	\$0.23	\$0.24	\$0.23	\$0.24	\$0.22	\$0.23

Source: <http://www.fns.usda.gov>, 2006.

On the *School Foods Report Card*, published in June 2006 by the Center for Science in the Public Interest, the Commonwealth of Virginia received a grade of “D” for its policies on school foods and beverages sold through vending machines, school stores, and a la carte in schools.



Evergreen’s Survey included several questions related to the Food Service Program. Asked of ACPS administrators and teachers, the results for some of these questions are shown in **Exhibit 9-2**. The ACPS responses are compared to responses provided by administrators and teachers in other school divisions where Evergreen has collected data. ACPS administrators were more positive regarding food service operations, both in comparison to ACPS teachers and administrators in other divisions, except as to whether bus riders arrive in time to eat breakfast. A lower percentage of administrators agree or strongly agree with that statement than ACPS teachers (there are not enough comparison surveys in the peer population to provide data on this question). ACPS teachers were somewhat less positive than their peers in other divisions.

The ACPS Food Service Program consists of one Food Service Manager, six Site Managers, and 25 cafeteria workers. The Director of Administrative Services provides administrative oversight to the Food Service Manager. Together, the staff provides daily breakfast and lunch to all division students through seven cafeterias.

In 2005-06, the division served 346,235 reimbursable student lunches and 139,944 reimbursable student breakfasts. More than one-third of ACPS students, 38.7 percent, were eligible for free or reduced-price meals. The district averaged student participation rates of 26.9 percent for breakfast and 64.8 percent for lunch.

**Exhibit 9-2**  
**Comparison of Responses Related to Food Services in**  
**Allegheny County Public Schools with Teachers and**  
**Administrators in Evergreen’s Survey Database**

Survey Statement	ACPS Administrators		Administrators in Evergreen’s Survey Database		ACPS Teachers		Teachers in Evergreen’s Survey Database	
	Strongly Agree/ Agree	Strongly Disagree/ Disagree	Strongly Agree/ Agree	Strongly Disagree/ Disagree	Strongly Agree/ Agree	Strongly Disagree/ Disagree	Strongly Agree/ Agree	Strongly Disagree/ Disagree
The food services department provides nutritious and appealing meals and snacks.	66.7%	28.6%	57.5%	12.5%	38.1%	47.8%	38.9%	32.0%
Vending machines are not available to students during lunch periods.	90.5%	0%	64.3%	35.7%	78.8%	7.6%	46.9%	38.5%
Bus riders get to school with enough time to eat.	33.3%	57.1%	n/a	n/a	64.1%	15.7%	n/a	n/a
Cafeterias are calm environments in which to eat.	85.7%	9.5%	58.0%	20.0%	31.6%	55.9%	41.1%	26.5%
	<b>Needs Some or Major Improvement</b>	<b>Adequate or Outstanding</b>	<b>Needs Some or Major Improvement</b>	<b>Adequate or Outstanding</b>	<b>Needs Some or Major Improvement</b>	<b>Adequate or Outstanding</b>	<b>Needs Some or Major Improvement</b>	<b>Adequate or Outstanding</b>
Food Service	23.8%	76.2%	21.2%	54.5%	17.9%	50.0%	43.1%	47.4%

Source: Evergreen Solutions Survey Results, 2006.



## **CHAPTER SUMMARY**

The ACPS Food Service Program is operating at a commendable level in a number of areas. ACPS has adopted an excellent Wellness Policy and is actively seeking to support student health and wellness. The division is serving a varied menu at breakfast and lunch, and is daily offering students healthful choices. The division has implemented point-of-sale technology in all cafeterias, improving fiscal controls and minimizing student wait times. ACPS cafeterias have generally achieved student lunch participation rates in excess of industry standards, indicative of the popularity of its menu items, expert preparation, and attractive presentation. The program is also meeting industry standards for meals per labor hour efficiency, indicative of effective staffing patterns and skilled management of labor resources. Perhaps most importantly, the ACPS Food Service Program was self-supporting in 2005-06, a key indicator of the effective management of program resources.

Evergreen's eight recommendations for improvement are:

- adopt shared purchasing with Covington City School Division in order to reduce overall food costs;
- develop central storage for paper products related to the Food Service Program;
- charge the ACPS Food Service Fund for applicable utilities expenses;
- provide the Food Service Manager with the POS functionality to review individual cafeteria performance centrally;
- implement an online pay option for ACPS students and parents;
- evaluate Food Service Program performance relative to selected indicators each year;
- establish goals and programs to improve student breakfast participation, particularly among free and reduced-price student populations; and
- establish goals for ACPS Food Service Program financial performance.

### **9.1 POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**

The development of policies and procedures constitutes the means by which a division and subordinate departments communicate expectations and ensure consistent operations across a number of locations. Effective policies and procedures that are widely understood are critical in a food service operation, where individual cafeteria workers are responsible for making daily decisions that directly affect the quality of food served, as well as the profitability of their cafeteria.



**FINDING**

Federal law required each school food program to establish a local school wellness policy no later than July 1, 2006. The minimum requirements for this policy are shown in **Exhibit 9-3**. The ACPS Food Service Program had adopted a wellness policy and is actively seeking to support student health and wellness.

Alleghany County Public Schools adopted its policy on Student Wellness in July 2006. In this policy, the Board, “recognizes the link between student health and learning and desires to provide a comprehensive program promoting healthy eating and physical activity in division students.” The policy then establishes 15 goals in the areas of:

- Nutrition Education
- Physical Activity
- Other School-Based Activities
- Nutrition Guidelines

**Exhibit 9-3**  
**Federal Requirements for a Local Wellness Policy**

At a minimum, the policy must:
<p>(1) include goals for nutrition education, physical activity, and other school-based activities that are designed to promote student wellness in a manner that the local educational agency determines is appropriate;</p> <p>(2) include nutrition guidelines selected by the local educational agency for all foods available on each school campus under the local educational agency during the school day with the objectives of promoting student health and reducing childhood obesity;</p> <p>(3) provide an assurance that guidelines for reimbursable school meals shall not be less restrictive than regulations and guidance issued by the Secretary of Agriculture</p> <p>(4) establish a plan for measuring implementation of the local wellness policy, including designation of one or more persons within the local educational agency or at each school, as appropriate, charged with operational responsibility for ensuring that the school meets the local wellness policy; and</p> <p>(5) involve parents, students, representatives of the school food authority, the school board, school administrators, and the public in the development of the school wellness policy.</p>

*Source: Public Law 108-265, Section 2004.*

Some of the goals related specifically to the Food Service Program are shown in **Exhibit 9-4**.



**Exhibit 9-4  
ACPS Student Wellness Policy, Selected Goals**

Goal Area	Goals
<b>Nutrition Education</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The level of student participation in the school breakfast and school lunch programs is appropriate.</li> </ul>
<b>Other-School-Based Activities</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>An adequate amount of time is allowed for students to eat meals in adequate lunchroom facilities.</li> <li>All children who are participating in the subsidized food programs are able to obtain food in a non-stigmatizing manner.</li> </ul>
<b>Nutrition Guidelines</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Nutrition guidelines have been selected by the division for all foods available on every school campus during the school day. The objectives of the guidelines are to promote student health and reduce childhood obesity.</li> <li>Nutritional standards for the school breakfast and school lunch programs that meet or exceed state and federal standards are in place.</li> </ul>

Source: Alleghany County Public Schools, Policy JHCF, 2006.

In addition to implementing a wellness policy, the division developed Guidelines for Student Wellness Management. These guidelines articulate further objectives in the areas of nutrition, physical activity, physical education, and staff wellness. Some of the objectives related specifically to the Food Service Program are shown in **Exhibit 9-5**.

**Exhibit 9-5  
ACPS Guidelines for Student Wellness Management, Selected Objectives**

Area	Selected Objectives
<b>Breakfast/Lunch Program</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Schools will arrange bus schedules and utilize methods to serve breakfast that encourage maximum participation.</li> </ul>
<b>Cafeteria Climate</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Students will have adequate time for meals. The School Nutrition Association recommends a minimum of at least 10 minutes for breakfast and 20 minutes for lunch from the time the students are seated.</li> </ul>
<b>Meal Schedules</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>For elementary schools, a short, snack-free recess is encouraged before lunch so that students will come to lunch less distracted and ready to eat.</li> </ul>
<b>Recess</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Elementary students will have at least 20 minutes a day of supervised recess, preferably outdoors.</li> <li>Every effort will be made to offer recess before lunch.</li> </ul>

Source: Alleghany County Public Schools, Policy JHCF-R, 2006.

**COMMENDATION**

**Alleghany County Public Schools has adopted a comprehensive Wellness Policy that emphasizes the importance of the Food Service Program in overall student health and wellness.**



## FINDING

The ACPS cafeterias are offering a variety of choices to students each day at both meal times. As a result, participation has increased in the last two years.

School breakfast and lunch menus must follow a detailed and rigorous set of USDA guidelines. Currently, the Allegheny High School Site Manager determines the high school menu. The Clifton Middle School Site Manager determines the common menu for all the rest of the schools. The division develops menus on an enhanced food base, not on a nutrient analysis base. All ACPS schools offer breakfast and lunch. A review of a sample of menus showed a variety of entrée options and a sufficient variety of vegetable and fruit options.

The Allegheny High School and Clifton Middle School cafeterias are set up with a variety of food stations. Students circulate in any order among the food stations to make their selections. The observed student flows in these cafeterias, given the existing facility walls, is nearly ideal. ACPS staff has previously sought outside expert assistance in developing and improving upon these layouts.

In observing cafeteria operations, Evergreen found a variety of healthful choices. In three schools (Boiling Springs, Callaghan, and Sharon), students and adults can pre-order salads each day. In all the other schools, a salad bar is available daily. Consumption among the breakfast and lunch periods observed was quite good. Not only are students selecting healthy meals, they are also generally consuming most of those meals.

The Food Service Manager credits the expanded meal options, including salads in most cafeterias, for an increase in participation for the last two years. Revenues from student sales have increased by 21.0 percent from 2003-04 through 2005-06.

Starting this year, cafeteria site managers are posting nutritional information related to the day's meals prominently near the serving lines. This way, students and adults can know the nutritional content of the items they have selected for breakfast and lunch.

At the Public Forum hosted by Evergreen in November 2006, members of the public made 10 comments regarding food service. Only three of these related to menu choice (two negative, one positive). These comments were:

- *Need more selection of food offered everyday. Decrease the availability of "junk" food items. If it is not available, children will not choose it.*
- *Good nutritious and healthy selections are available – including recess time into lunch, would be developmentally appropriate up through middle school.*
- *We need HEALTHY MENUS! Offering candy, ice cream and endless chips to elementary students is horrible. These children need healthy alternatives. Young children have difficulty choosing healthy food over junk. They should not be given the choice of these sweets/junk.*



## COMMENDATION

**The Allegheny County School Food Service Program is offering students a variety of healthful options for breakfast and lunch meals.**

## FINDING

Because of limited storage space in its cafeterias and the lack of centralized warehouse space, ACPS requires food service vendors to make weekly deliveries to individual cafeterias. Given the remote geography of some sites, this likely contributes to higher than optimal costs for food and related food service products.

The ACPS central office has recently moved into its renovated facility, which was previously one of the division's elementary schools. One part of this space is not currently in use as office space and could be converted to store paper products related to food service (such as for paper trays, serving dishes, and utensil packets). Currently, the division contracts with vendors to supply these items directly to individual schools, although all the purchases are made centrally.

While not typically considered a best practice to establish central warehouse space (i.e., most divisions are moving toward just-in-time delivery and abandoning central warehouse functions), given the fairly remote geography of some ACPS schools and the relative lack of competition among vendors to provide products associated with the food service operation, it may ultimately save ACPS funds to do so.

## RECOMMENDATION

### **Recommendation 9-1:**

**Assess the potential for developing central storage for paper products related to the Food Service Program.**

With proper environmental controls and needs forecasting, the division should be able to reduce the number of times per year that it purchases food service paper products to just once or twice per year. These large purchases could be stored in a central facility, co-located with the division's central office. This should result in a price reduction from suppliers who are currently making multiple trips to the division's remote school sites. By coordinating with maintenance personnel, who are already making regular trips to the division schools, the division could minimize the delivery costs associated with distributing these products to the individual cafeterias. It is possible that the custodial operation in the division could share some of this space for its paper products and cleaning supplies. Furthermore, once the division implements centralized purchasing with CCPS, this space could also be used for storing paper products needed by the CCPS Food Services Program.

## FISCAL IMPACT

The exact fiscal impact of this recommendation will depend on the level of cost savings the division is able to negotiate with suppliers and would need to take into account the potential for



some additional costs, such as when a school needs paper products, but no maintenance personnel are scheduled to visit that week. In 2005-06, the division spent \$741,086 on food products, which would include paper products associated with individual student meals. A modest one percent net reduction in that cost would result in an annual savings of \$7,411 (accounting for the negotiated price reductions and any increases in division operating costs). The exact cost to renovate the existing unused ACPS central office is unknown, but should be fairly minimal (shelving, locks, etc.). To compensate for that cost, Evergreen estimates no net savings from this recommendation for the first three years.

Recommendation	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12
Develop Limited Central Storage	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$7,411	\$7,411

**FINDING**

The ACPS Food Service Program is not paying for utilities, maintenance, or custodial services provided by the division. As a result, general funds are being used to support the Food Service Fund.

A school food operation is typically operated as an enterprise fund, as it is in ACPS. In such a situation, the school food operation is expected to be self-supporting. However, the ACPS Food Service Program is not paying for the indirect costs that supports its operations, including maintenance, custodial services, and utilities costs. For utilities, in many school districts, the cafeterias are on separate utility meters so that the cost can be determined explicitly. In other districts, the utilities cost is determined by the percentage of square footage occupied by the cafeteria and then applying that percentage to total cost.

As of 2005-06, the ACPS Food Service Program is self-sustaining and does not require transfers from the general fund. It would be appropriate to expect the Food Services Department to cover these costs as well. School district food services operations across the country are generally expected to operate at a profit level that covers all of their cost, including indirect costs.

**RECOMMENDATION**

**Recommendation 9-2:**

**Charge all applicable expenses to the Food Service Fund.**

The division should charge the Food Service Fund for all allowable expenses, including utilities.

**FISCAL IMPACT**

Based on figures provided by ACPS staff, the division’s campuses comprise 481,904 square feet. Of this, Evergreen estimates the food service areas for each school as:



	<u>Cafeteria</u>	<u>Kitchen</u>
Allegheny High School	4,950 sq. ft.	1,330 sq. ft.
Clifton Middle School	3,687	2,822
Mountain View Elementary School	3,687	2,822
Boiling Spring Elementary School	0*	1,873
Callaghan Elementary School	2,441	1,638
Falling Spring Elementary School	1,329	1,785
Sharon Elementary School	2,013	2,112
<b>Total</b>	<b>18,107 sq. ft.</b>	<b>14,382 sq. ft.</b>

\*Students carry trays back to classroom; no cafeteria space.

Therefore, ACPS currently has approximately 32,489 square feet devoted to cafeteria functions. The division’s 2004-05 utility costs, including electricity and natural gas, were \$328,069, or \$0.681 per square foot. For the cafeteria areas, this yields an annual cost of \$22,125 (32,489 x \$0.681).

For 2006-07, the division has budgeted approximately \$757,000 for custodial salaries and benefits, which is an annual cost of approximately \$1.57 (\$757,000 / 481,904 sq. ft.). Applying this figure to 18,107 square feet of cafeteria space (cafeteria staff typically clean their own kitchens without custodial help), yields a total custodial cost of \$28,430.

These figures would represent a savings for the district’s General Fund, but a cost to the Food Service Fund.

<b>Recommendation</b>	<b>2007-08</b>	<b>2008-09</b>	<b>2009-10</b>	<b>2010-11</b>	<b>2011-12</b>
Charge the Food Service Program for Utilities and Custodial Costs	\$50,555	\$50,555	\$50,555	\$50,555	\$50,555

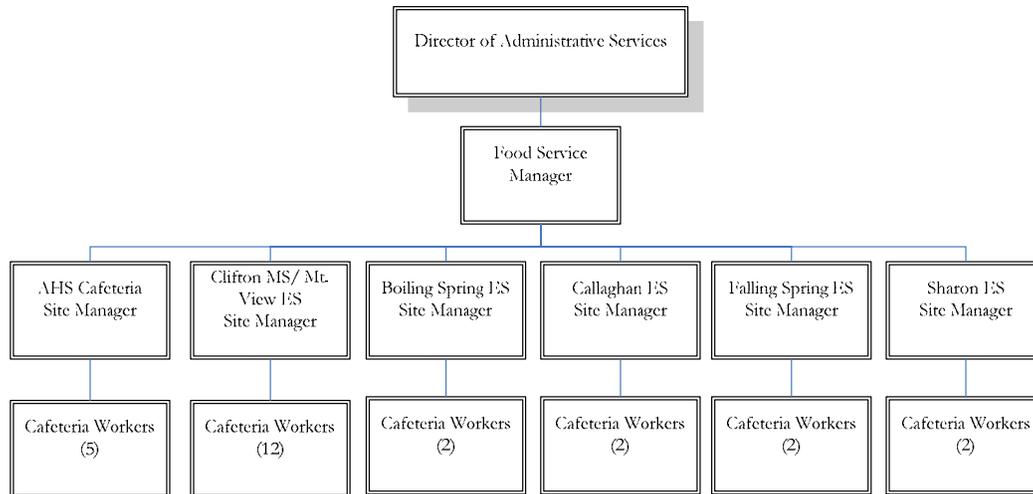
**9.2 ORGANIZATION AND MANAGEMENT**

Sound organizational structure serves as the foundation for efficient and effective operations. A streamlined organizational structure is particularly important for school food service operations, whose largest expenses are labor and food costs.

The current organization of the ACPS Food Service Department is shown in **Exhibit 9-6**. The Food Service Manager for the division reports to the Director of Administrative Services. The cafeteria managers report that they have hard-working staffs who enjoy working with students and that turnover among cafeteria staff is generally due to retirements. Within the cafeteria workers at each school job titles include Dishwasher, Cook, Cook/Cashier, and Cook/Server. Cafeteria workers may work 3.0, 4.5, 5.0, 5.5, 6.0, 6.25, or 6.5 hours per school day. With the exception of the Site Manager at Clifton Middle School/Mountain View Elementary School, who works eight hours per day, all site managers work seven hours per day.



**Exhibit 9-6**  
**ACPS Food Service Organization**  
**2006-07 School Year**



Source: Created by Evergreen Solutions, 2006

## FINDING

The ACPS Food Service Program has adopted an automated POS system in its cafeterias. As a result, Site Managers are able to create and review reports on productivity and profitability.

Three years ago, the division began implementation of an automated POS product called Café Terminal. The final installation, at Sharon Elementary School, was completed in 2005-06. Staff reports that they are pleased with the product. Café Terminal provides numerous reports that can be printed from the each cafeteria manager's computer.

In observing portions of breakfast and lunch periods during the on-site review, Evergreen found that the wait times for students to enter the line and exit with meal, utensils, and beverage averaged less than five minutes. This level of efficient service maximizes the amount of time that students have to consume their meals and is due in part to ACPS employing a POS system.

## COMMENDATION

**ACPS has implemented POS technology that improves food service fiscal controls and minimizes student wait times.**

## FINDING

Although ACPS has taken the initial steps to implement a POS system, it has not yet purchased modules within that system that would allow the Food Service Manager to generate reports centrally. As a result, each Site Manager develops and prints a hardcopy report that each forwards to the central office for review and analysis.

The makers of the current POS system that ACPS is using also have a product that would allow the Food Service Manager to review individual cafeteria operations from the central office



computer. With it, the ACPS Food Service Manager could develop the same reports she currently receives in hard copy from each site manager and could develop further electronic comparisons. This addition would allow the Food Service Manager to complete analyses in a more timely manner, as she would not have to wait for hard copy reports to be forwarded to her. Finally, she could prepare interim reports as necessary to ensure optimal cafeteria efficiency and effectiveness.

## RECOMMENDATION

### Recommendation 9-3:

**Provide the Food Service Manager with a POS application to be able to review individual cafeteria performance centrally.**

While the division has taken the commendable step of automating cafeteria sales, it could further improve its ability to analyze cafeteria operations by adopting an additional POS module. The cost is shown below as a net negative. However, implementing the recommendation should reduce some site manager time currently spent in producing and routing hard copies. In addition, providing data in an electronic format gives the Food Service Manager the opportunity to do more in-depth analysis which could lead to greater efficiencies in the future. These benefits are unquantifiable, but likely to occur.

## FISCAL IMPACT

Evergreen estimates that the necessary application from Café Terminal could be purchased and installed for \$10,000, with annual maintenance fees of approximately \$1,500.

Recommendation	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12
Implement Further POS Modules	(\$10,000)	(\$1,500)	(\$1,500)	(\$1,500)	(\$1,500)

## FINDING

Although ACPS has taken the initial steps to implement a POS system, it has not yet implemented an available option to allow students and their parents to pay for meals online. As a result, cafeteria cashiers are still handling a considerable amount of cash and checks, and daily cafeteria deposits can be as high as \$2,000.

The makers of the current POS system that ACPS is using have an option to allow students and their parents to prepay for meals using an online option. This product, called Café Prepay, offers these benefits:

- no enrollment fees;
- numerous payment options, including credit cards and bank withdrawals;
- the potential for faster moving lunch lines as cashiers will be handling less cash;
- e-mail notifications to parents at various account levels, so fewer students have negative account balances; and



- the potential to all offer school merchandise for sale through the same account.

**RECOMMENDATION**

**Recommendation 9-4:**

**Implement an online pay option for ACPS students and parents.**

While ACPS has taken the commendable step of automating cafeteria sales, it could further improve its efficiency by implementing an online pay option. This will potentially reduce student line wait times even further and improve fiscal controls and less funds actually change hands.

**FISCAL IMPACT**

This recommendation can be implemented at no charge to the division.

**FINDING**

Although ACPS does routinely examine some measures of cafeteria efficiency, it lacks established performance measures. As a result, cafeteria site managers do not have explicit indicators against which to measure their performance, both in comparison to the other ACPS cafeterias and over time.

The ACPS Food Service Manager does require each site manager to develop and print a monthly report from the automated POS system that includes items such as the number of meals served and the total a la carte dollars collected. The Food Service Manager and the Director of Administrative Services regularly review some performance data on each cafeteria; however, these are not formalized into a summary sheet by cafeteria or some other format.

Some common measures of school food service performance are provided in **Exhibit 9-7**.

**Exhibit 9-7  
Common Food Service Performance Indicators**

<b>Performance Area</b>	<b>Performance Indicator</b>
Safety	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Kitchen accidents per number of meals served</li> <li>• Workers' compensation claims</li> </ul>
Staffing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Staffing based on internally or externally established MPLH rates</li> <li>• Hours of training provided to cafeteria workers and managers</li> <li>• Labor costs as percentage of total costs</li> <li>• Administrative staffing costs as percentage of total costs</li> </ul>
Cost Efficiency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Food costs as percentage of total costs</li> <li>• Per meal costs</li> </ul>
Cost Effectiveness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Measures of student satisfaction with menu items</li> <li>• Number of new food items introduced</li> <li>• Cafeteria worker absentee rate</li> <li>• Annual turnover rate of cafeteria staff</li> <li>• Average student line wait time in minutes</li> <li>• Average student eating period (from tray receipt to end of allotted lunch time)</li> <li>• A la carte revenues</li> </ul>

Source: Created by Evergreen Solutions, 2006.



Developing internal productivity indicators and regularly assessing operations against those indicators can provide valuable information for improving operations. Highly efficient school divisions allocate cafeteria staffing on the basis of the meal equivalents they expect to serve. Effective Food Service Managers regularly assess cafeteria productivity compared to established staffing guidelines and adjust staffing as necessary. They assess the acceptance of menu items among students and seek to introduce new items on a regular basis. They continually work to improve line wait times and the overall dining experience for school division staff and students.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

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

**Evaluate Food Service Program performance relative to selected indicators on a regular basis.**

Evergreen recommends that ACPS establish performance measures on meals per labor hours (MPLH), profit/loss, menu variety, and line wait times at a minimum. Then, the division should regularly assess performance against those indicators on a regular basis. Such a review of its operations will provide the division with assurances that operations are up to standards and will serve to highlight solid performance and areas in need of improvement.

## **FISCAL IMPACT**

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources and should serve to support continuing fiscal stability in the program.

### **9.3 STUDENT MEAL PARTICIPATION**

Student meal participation is measured based on the number of students who select a full meal for either breakfast or lunch. A full meal is governed by USDA regulations and must meet requirements in portion size, selection, and number. Because low-income students may qualify for a free or reduced-price meal, participation figures are typically measured for three groups of students: free, reduced-price, and full pay.

**Exhibit 9-8** compares the percentages of free/reduced-price qualifying students in Alleghany County and the peer divisions. ACPS, at 37.7 percent free/reduced, is the lowest of the comparison group.

In 2005-06, Alleghany County Public Schools served 342,597 reimbursable student lunches and 137,058 reimbursable student breakfasts, as reported by the Virginia Department of Education. ACPS records indicate that the division provided 346,235 reimbursable student lunches and 139,944 reimbursable student breakfasts in 2005-06.



**Exhibit 9-8  
Student Demographics  
2005-06 School Year**

School Division	Total Student Population	Percent Eligible Free/Reduced Lunch*
<b>Allegheny County</b>	<b>2,928</b>	<b>37.7%</b>
Dickenson County	2,494	57.9%
Nottoway County	2,391	52.6%
Patrick County	2,580	48.0%
Prince Edward County	2,741	60.3%
Southampton County	2,852	42.7%
<b>Peer Division Average</b>	<b>2,612</b>	<b>52.3%</b>

Source: Virginia Department of Education, Web site, 2006.

\*as of October 31, 2005, based on DOE-provided data.

**FINDING**

Although overall breakfast participation is not terribly low, the division could improve participation among the students receiving free and reduced-price meals.

The average monthly breakfast participation in 2005-06 was 26.0 percent. Given that the percentage of free and reduced-price eligible students during the year averaged 37.7 percent of all students, the division is not serving breakfast to a portion of its poorer students.

**Exhibits 9-9 through 9-15** show the monthly totals for the number of students in each category—free, reduced-price, or full-pay—and the overall breakfast participation figure for each for each school. As the exhibits show, breakfast participation is highest among the free students, then among the reduced-price students. Among the students qualifying for free meals, participation rates ranged from 27.1 percent to 72.0 percent.

**Exhibit 9-9  
Boiling Springs Elementary School Student Breakfast Participation by Category  
2005-06 School Year**

Date	Students Eligible for Free Meals	Students Eligible for Reduced-Price Meals	Full-Pay Students	Percent Participation Among Free Students	Percent Participation Among Reduced-Price Students	Percent Participation Among Full-Pay Students
August 2005	56	18	84	90.8%	31.9%	43.8%
September 2005	44	24	89	81.9%	43.3%	43.9%
October 2005	48	25	84	76.1%	44.2%	49.3%
November 2005	48	25	85	71.2%	47.6%	51.0%
December 2005	48	25	85	62.0%	38.2%	43.0%
January 2006	54	24	80	67.4%	34.9%	46.3%
February 2006	56	23	79	70.1%	33.8%	50.5%
March 2006	58	20	80	73.2%	36.4%	48.3%
April 2006	58	19	81	65.4%	40.2%	45.2%
May 2006	58	19	81	71.2%	42.1%	50.6%
June 2006	58	19	82	69.4%	50.7%	47.9%
<b>AVERAGE</b>	<b>53</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>83</b>	<b>72.0%</b>	<b>40.9%</b>	<b>47.6%</b>

Source: Allegheny County Public Schools, 2006.



**Exhibit 9-10**  
**Callaghan Elementary School Student Breakfast Participation by Category**  
**2005-06 School Year**

Date	Students Eligible for Free Meals	Students Eligible for Reduced-Price Meals	Full-Pay Students	Percent Participation Among Free Students	Percent Participation Among Reduced-Price Students	Percent Participation Among Full-Pay Students
August 2005	80	12	134	38.4%	19.8%	10.1%
September 2005	72	14	141	46.0%	37.1%	13.7%
October 2005	75	14	140	45.3%	39.8%	14.5%
November 2005	82	13	135	45.3%	38.5%	15.2%
December 2005	81	12	137	37.6%	28.7%	15.2%
January 2006	82	14	139	37.8%	18.8%	17.0%
February 2006	85	13	135	35.8%	23.5%	18.5%
March 2006	84	13	136	44.2%	34.8%	17.4%
April 2006	84	13	136	45.9%	43.4%	17.9%
May 2006	85	14	136	51.1%	48.4%	29.1%
June 2006	84	14	137	46.9%	33.0%	17.5%
<b>AVERAGE</b>	<b>81</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>137</b>	<b>43.6%</b>	<b>35.1%</b>	<b>17.5%</b>

Source: Allegheny County Public Schools, 2006.

**Exhibit 9-11**  
**Falling Spring Elementary School Student Breakfast Participation by Category**  
**2005-06 School Year**

Date	Students Eligible for Free Meals	Students Eligible for Reduced-Price Meals	Full-Pay Students	Percent Participation Among Free Students	Percent Participation Among Reduced-Price Students	Percent Participation Among Full-Pay Students
August 2005	16	5	180	22.7%	10.0%	23.4%
September 2005	16	3	183	52.4%	42.9%	27.9%
October 2005	19	3	185	44.9%	52.6%	2.8%
November 2005	21	3	186	49.4%	42.1%	27.6%
December 2005	23	3	184	38.2%	25.9%	24.2%
January 2006	23	3	184	39.4%	36.8%	26.7%
February 2006	23	3	182	48.6%	47.1%	26.4%
March 2006	20	3	182	47.9%	55.6%	28.1%
April 2006	18	3	184	48.4%	56.9%	25.6%
May 2006	18	3	184	54.0%	59.1%	28.4%
June 2006	18	3	184	47.2%	58.3%	27.9%
<b>AVERAGE</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>183</b>	<b>46.5%</b>	<b>44.3%</b>	<b>24.4%</b>

Source: Allegheny County Public Schools, 2006.



**Exhibit 9-12**  
**Mountain View Elementary School Student Breakfast Participation by Category**  
**2005-06 School Year**

Date	Students Eligible for Free Meals	Students Eligible for Reduced-Price Meals	Full-Pay Students	Percent Participation Among Free Students	Percent Participation Among Reduced-Price Students	Percent Participation Among Full-Pay Students
August 2005	288	64	287	61.8%	16.8%	25.0%
September 2005	296	54	287	61.0%	53.9%	25.2%
October 2005	301	56	272	55.8%	53.6%	22.9%
November 2005	300	56	273	59.9%	52.5%	23.9%
December 2005	299	52	283	50.9%	43.4%	19.0%
January 2006	306	53	278	55.5%	47.7%	22.7%
February 2006	306	52	274	55.1%	47.7%	23.9%
March 2006	307	53	271	62.0%	53.5%	32.9%
April 2006	309	52	270	59.8%	49.0%	28.2%
May 2006	307	51	276	64.2%	52.3%	34.6%
June 2006	307	49	278	56.6%	44.1%	24.1%
<b>AVERAGE</b>	<b>304</b>	<b>53</b>	<b>276</b>	<b>56.2%</b>	<b>48.7%</b>	<b>25.2%</b>

Source: Alleghany County Public Schools, 2006.

**Exhibit 9-13**  
**Sharon Elementary School Student Breakfast Participation by Category**  
**2005-06 School Year**

Date	Students Eligible for Free Meals	Students Eligible for Reduced-Price Meals	Full-Pay Students	Percent Participation Among Free Students	Percent Participation Among Reduced-Price Students	Percent Participation Among Full-Pay Students
August 2005	81	28	126	52.2%	35.3%	17.7%
September 2005	53	29	152	80.1%	49.4%	18.1%
October 2005	62	30	143	66.2%	45.1%	18.9%
November 2005	64	30	140	64.4%	47.9%	18.4%
December 2005	64	28	141	49.5%	41.3%	16.3%
January 2006	64	27	155	56.0%	48.0%	15.3%
February 2006	68	28	141	55.9%	41.0%	15.9%
March 2006	69	28	139	59.8%	43.7%	18.9%
April 2006	68	28	140	61.8%	42.6%	17.8%
May 2006	68	28	141	60.5%	49.0%	20.2%
June 2006	68	28	141	49.8%	46.4%	19.5%
<b>AVERAGE</b>	<b>66</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>142</b>	<b>60.0%</b>	<b>45.5%</b>	<b>18.1%</b>

Source: Alleghany County Public Schools, 2006.



**Exhibit 9-14**  
**Clifton Middle School Student Breakfast Participation by Category**  
**2005-06 School Year**

Date	Students Eligible for Free Meals	Students Eligible for Reduced-Price Meals	Full-Pay Students	Percent Participation Among Free Students	Percent Participation Among Reduced-Price Students	Percent Participation Among Full-Pay Students
August 2005	195	47	407	23.9%	9.3%	4.8%
September 2005	182	54	411	30.5%	17.9%	6.6%
October 2005	190	53	408	36.1%	21.1%	9.0%
November 2005	191	53	407	37.0%	19.8%	10.0%
December 2005	190	52	407	37.3%	17.3%	9.0%
January 2006	192	52	408	37.9%	20.9%	10.0%
February 2006	192	52	409	38.6%	19.8%	11.3%
March 2006	194	52	405	43.7%	21.2%	14.5%
April 2006	195	52	407	42.6%	22.5%	11.1%
May 2006	198	52	405	48.6%	32.7%	22.0%
June 2006	199	52	404	40.1%	18.0%	9.7%
<b>AVERAGE</b>	<b>193</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>407</b>	<b>38.7%</b>	<b>21.3%</b>	<b>11.4%</b>

Source: Allegheny County Public Schools, 2006.

**Exhibit 9-15**  
**Allegheny High School Student Breakfast Participation by Category**  
**2005-06 School Year**

Date	Students Eligible for Free Meals	Students Eligible for Reduced-Price Meals	Full-Pay Students	Percent Participation Among Free Students	Percent Participation Among Reduced-Price Students	Percent Participation Among Full-Pay Students
August 2005	189	48	586	16.9%	6.0%	1.8%
September 2005	167	55	602	25.3%	4.8%	2.8%
October 2005	179	57	594	23.5%	5.4%	3.3%
November 2005	173	57	592	27.8%	9.2%	4.3%
December 2005	176	58	581	25.6%	9.2%	4.2%
January 2006	177	58	579	26.0%	11.1%	4.4%
February 2006	180	58	572	26.8%	12.3%	4.5%
March 2006	183	58	568	31.1%	12.6%	4.9%
April 2006	188	58	549	28.8%	10.0%	4.6%
May 2006	190	58	543	31.6%	11.3%	6.1%
June 2006	191	58	552	29.0%	10.8%	4.6%
<b>AVERAGE</b>	<b>181</b>	<b>57</b>	<b>574</b>	<b>27.1%</b>	<b>9.6%</b>	<b>4.2%</b>

Source: Allegheny County Public Schools, 2006.

Evergreen calculated the number of eligible free/reduced students by school and the number of those who eat breakfast on a daily basis. **Exhibit 9-16** provides the result of this calculation, the “gap” between those eligible for a free/reduced breakfast, and those selecting a breakfast meal. For example, Boiling Springs Elementary did not, on a daily basis, serve a reimbursable breakfast meal to 15 students eligible for a free meal and 13 students eligible for a reduced-price meal in 2005-06. In total, the division did not serve 481 free and 158 reduced-price breakfast meals to eligible students.



**Exhibit 9-16**  
**ACPS Free/Reduced Breakfast Gap Analysis**  
**2005-06 School Year**

	Boiling Springs		Callaghan		Falling Spring		Mountain View		Sharon		Clifton		AHS	
	Free Gap	Reduced Gap	Free Gap	Reduced Gap	Free Gap	Reduced Gap	Free Gap	Reduced Gap	Free Gap	Reduced Gap	Free Gap	Reduced Gap	Free Gap	Reduced Gap
August 2005	5	12	49	10	12	5	110	53	39	18	148	43	157	45
September 2005	8	14	39	9	8	2	115	25	11	15	126	44	125	52
October 2005	11	14	41	8	10	1	133	26	21	16	121	42	137	54
November 2005	14	13	45	8	11	2	120	27	23	16	120	43	125	52
December 2005	18	15	51	9	14	2	147	29	32	16	119	43	131	53
January 2006	18	16	51	11	14	2	136	28	28	14	119	41	131	52
February 2006	17	15	55	10	12	2	137	27	30	17	118	42	132	51
March 2006	16	13	47	8	10	1	117	25	28	16	109	41	126	51
April 2006	20	11	45	7	9	1	124	27	26	16	112	40	134	52
May 2006	17	11	42	7	8	1	110	24	27	14	102	35	130	51
June 2006	18	9	45	9	10	1	133	27	34	15	119	43	136	52
<b>AVERAGE</b>	15	13	46	9	10	2	133	27	26	15	118	41	132	51

Source: Allegheny County Public Schools, 2006.

ACPS staff has demonstrated a commendable level of effort in seeking to make breakfast available to all students. At Callaghan Elementary School, food service and transportation personnel worked together to adjust bus arrival times, thereby improving the opportunity for a healthy breakfast. The Food Service Manager reports that this will have an overall positive impact on 2006-07 participation figures. During state testing periods, ACPS principals have paid for all students to have breakfast to ensure no student is testing while hungry.

The Food and Nutrition Service Division of the USDA reports that research proves that students who eat breakfast at school have increased standardized achievement test scores, improved attendance, and reduced tardiness. Other research shows that students who eat breakfast have improved academic, behavioral, and emotional functioning. A 2004 national study completed by the Education Research Service entitled *Evaluating the Impact of School Nutrition Programs* found that children who have a school breakfast available consume a better overall diet, consume a lower percentage of calories from fat, are less likely to have a low intake of magnesium, and are less like to have low serum levels of Vitamin C and folate.

## RECOMMENDATION

### Recommendation 9-6:

**Establish goals and programs to improve student breakfast participation, particularly among free and reduced-price student populations.**

ACPS is not currently serving breakfast to a portion of the free and reduced-price student population. The ACPS food service operation should establish monthly goals to increase student participation. It should then identify root causes for less than optimal student participation, including transportation timing and alternatives to the current menus.



**FISCAL IMPACT**

In 2005-06, Allegheny County Public Schools had an average of 481 students qualifying for free and 158 students qualifying for reduced-price meals who did not select a breakfast meal. By reviewing potential impediments to breakfast selection and establishing reasonable goals for student participation, the division should be able to achieve 10 percent participation among these previous non-participants.

Assuming this increase, the division will realize increased annual revenues of \$15,352, based on these calculations:

- 481 free students x 10% new participation on a daily basis x \$1.31 (federal reimbursement) x 180 school days = \$11,342; and
- 158 reduced-price students x 10% new participation on a daily basis x \$1.41 (federal reimbursement of \$1.01 + student pay of \$0.40) x 180 school days = \$4,010.

These increased revenues would accrue to the School Food Fund and would better enable the program to support the increased costs created by other recommendations in this chapter.

Recommendation	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12
Improve Breakfast Participation	\$15,352	\$15,352	\$15,352	\$15,352	\$15,352

**FINDING**

Lunch participation at all ACPS elementary and middle schools exceeds the national average, except for one. Considering meal equivalents from a la carte sales, Allegheny High School participation also exceeds the national average.

Because participation rates are highly variable across the nation, depending greatly on local circumstances and management, only a few rules of thumb exist for assessing student meal participation. In 2000, one of the most widely used food service management manuals published industry standards for student lunch participation. These are compared to ACPS rates in **Exhibit 9-17**. As can be seen, Allegheny County Public Schools exceeds these rates at both the elementary and middle school levels, but falls a bit short at the high school level and at Sharon Elementary School. The overall ACPS elementary participation rate is 72 percent, which exceeds the industry standard of 70 percent.

Considering the a la carte sales at Sharon Elementary School and Allegheny High School on the basis of \$2.54 in a la carte equals one meal (and assuming that two-thirds of all collected a la carte should be applied to lunch meals), both schools achieve industry standards. **Exhibit 9-18** shows the results of the calculations. Considering a la carte, Sharon Elementary School achieved participation of 73 percent, while Allegheny High School achieved 53 percent.



**Exhibit 9-17  
Industry Standard and ACPS Lunch Participation Rates  
2005-06 School Year**

School	Industry Standard	ACPS
Boiling Springs	70%	79%
Callaghan	70%	71%
Falling Springs	70%	71%
Mountain View	70%	72%
Sharon	70%	68%
Clifton	60%	73%
Allegheny High	50%	46%

*Source: Pannell-Martin, School Foodservice Management, 4th Edition, 2000, and ACPS, 2006.*

**Exhibit 9-18  
Student Lunch Participation Considering A La Carte Sales  
2005-06 School Year**

	Sharon Elementary School			Allegheny High School		
	Lunch Meals Served	A La Carte Lunch Equivalents	Resulting Participation	Lunch Meals Served	A La Carte Lunch Equivalents	Resulting Participation
<b>2005-06 Total</b>	<b>28,880</b>	<b>2,317</b>	<b>73%</b>	<b>67,255</b>	<b>9,798</b>	<b>53%</b>

*Source: Allegheny County Public Schools, 2006.*

**COMMENDATION**

**ACPS cafeterias have achieved a commendable level of student lunch participation.**

The division should attempt to increase student participation in reimbursable lunch meals at Sharon Elementary School and Allegheny High School, albeit only slightly.

**9.4 FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE**

School food programs earn revenues through meal prices charged to students and adults, reimbursements from the federal government for each meal served that meets specifications, and in some cases through catering operations. The programs reduce their costs by participating in the Child Nutrition Commodity Program, whereby they receive food products for free.

The majority of school food revenues derive from student meal participation. Students who are financially able pay for their meals. All students who select a full meal (whether paying full price, a reduced price, or receiving a free meal), generate reimbursement funds.

In most divisions, food service programs are expected to support all of the operating expenditures through these revenue sources. In some divisions, food service programs also support all of their capital and overhead expenditures as well. Food service funds may maintain a balance of up to three months of operating expenses, with some exceptions.



**Exhibit 9-19** compares the division meal prices for full-pay students and adults. As the exhibit shows, in 2005-06, ACPS charged one of the lowest rates for breakfast meals, but some of the highest rates for lunch meals. For 2006-07, ACPS raised student meal prices by \$0.05 and adult meal prices by \$0.10.

**Exhibit 9-19  
Division Meal Prices (Full-Pay Students)  
2005-06 School Year**

	Allegheny County	Dickenson County	Nottoway County	Patrick County	Prince Edward County	Southampton County
<b>Breakfast</b>						
Elementary	0.75	0.70	0.85	0.95	1.60	0.80
Middle	0.75	X	0.85	X	0.75	0.85
High School	0.75	0.70	0.85	1.20	0.75	0.85
Adult	1.25	1.15	1.35	1.45	1.25	1.25
<b>Lunch</b>						
Elementary	1.50	1.25	1.40	1.40	1.50	1.20
Middle	1.75	X	1.50	X	1.50	1.40
High School	1.75	1.50	1.50	1.60	1.50	1.40
Adult	2.25	2.50	2.60	2.35	2.50	2.50

Source: Virginia Department of Education, Web site, 2006.

**Exhibit 9-20** compares the food services distributions for Allegheny County and the peers. As shown, the division had the second lowest cost per student, at \$323. This is well below the peer average of \$396.

**Exhibit 9-20  
Food Services Distributions  
Fiscal Year 2005**

School Division	Food Services	Per Pupil Cost
Prince Edward County	\$696,623	\$254
Allegheny County	\$946,864	\$323
Southampton County	\$1,093,918	\$384
Nottoway County	\$925,967	\$387
Patrick County	\$1,008,855	\$391
Dickenson County	\$1,402,027	\$562
<b>Peer Division Average</b>	<b>\$1,025,478</b>	<b>\$396</b>

Source: Virginia Department of Education, Web site, 2006.

**FINDING**

The ACPS Food Service Program is not adhering to best practices in financial control, although it improved substantially in 2005-06. In 2003-04 and 2004-05, the program’s revenues did not meet its operational expenditures. As a result, the program is not maintaining a sufficient fund balance.

**Exhibit 9-21** compares the revenues and expenditures for the past three years and shows dramatic improvements in the last few years. As the exhibit shows, in the past three years, revenues have increased by more than 40 percent, while expenditures have increased by 26.7 percent. The largest significant increase in revenues was the 76.9 percent increase in federal



reimbursements. All categories of expenditures showed some increase, but food products showed the greatest significant increase, rising by 41.0 percent in the three-year period. In 2003-04, the program ended with a debt of more than \$40,000 and required a loan from the division’s general fund. In 2004-05, the program repaid that loan and managed to end with a much smaller negative balance. For 2005-06, revenues exceeded expenditures by more than \$80,000, ending a two-year trend of negative fund balances at the end of the year.

**Exhibit 9-21  
ACPS Food Services Financial Performance  
2003-04 through 2005-06 School Years**

	2005-06	2004-05	2003-04	Percent Change
<b>Revenues</b>				
School Lunch, Breakfast, Special Milk, and Summer School Lunch/Breakfast Program Sales	\$345,632.49	\$334,919.32	\$285,624.85	21.0%
A La Carte and Adult Meal Sales	\$274,085.34	\$257,673.14	\$242,458.35	13.0%
Rebates	\$19,272.79	\$17,133.36	\$10,386.02	85.6%
Interest Earned	\$74.49	\$53.61	\$45.76	62.8%
Other Revenues - Miscellaneous	\$1,318.71	\$320.31	\$731.28	80.3%
Program Reimbursements (Federal Funds)	\$630,504.10	\$482,084.38	\$356,427.55	76.9%
State Funds	\$16,428.96	\$16,453.42	\$16,427.55	0%
Repayments of Loans/Fund Transfers	\$0.00	\$42,835.60	\$0.00	0%
Cash in Lieu of USDA Commodities	\$61,170.00	\$56,937.00	\$46,703.00	31.0%
<b>Total Revenues</b>	<b>\$1,348,486.88</b>	<b>\$1,208,410.14</b>	<b>\$958,804.36</b>	<b>40.6%</b>
<b>Expenditures</b>				
Personal Services	\$348,666.38	\$333,836.12	\$330,355.84	5.5%
Employee Benefits	\$106,225.28	\$100,929.89	\$91,108.78	16.6%
Purchased Services	\$12,661.76	\$9,669.76	\$8,246.99	53.5%
Other Charges	\$8,541.38	\$5,743.68	\$8,225.45	3.8%
Materials and Supplies	\$50,929.10	\$42,673.31	\$37,631.73	35.3%
Food Products	\$741,086.42	\$716,195.31	\$525,634.85	41.0%
<b>Total Expenditures</b>	<b>\$1,268,110.32</b>	<b>\$1,209,048.07</b>	<b>\$1,001,203.64</b>	<b>26.7%</b>
<b>Revenues - Expenditures</b>	<b>\$80,376.56</b>	<b>-\$637.93</b>	<b>-\$42,399.28</b>	<b>-289.6%</b>

Source: ACPS SNP-14, Financial Report – School Nutrition Programs, 2006.

One widely used source of cafeteria operational standards may be found in the 2000 edition of *Cost Control for School Foodservices, Third Edition*. **Exhibit 9-22** shows some of the financial standards provided in that text. Based on these standards, a division’s cafeteria labor costs, including fringe benefits, should not exceed 40 percent of total revenues; likewise its food costs. Its administrative costs should not exceed seven percent.

**Exhibit 9-22  
Food Services Financial Performance Standards**

Category	Percent of Revenue Standard
School Labor, Including Fringe Benefits	40%
Food Cost as Percent of Revenue	40%
Administrative Cost (Central Office Salaries w/Fringe)	7%

Source: *Cost Control for School Foodservices, Third Edition, 2000.*



**Exhibit 9-23** shows calculations based on the **Exhibit 9-22** and compares them with the operational standards of the previous exhibit. As can be seen, none of the ACPS figures meets generally accepted standards for any of the three years. ACPS is much lower than the standard for administrative overhead; in the division, only one central office position supports the entire food service program. However, school labor costs are significantly lower than the standard and school food costs are significantly higher than the standard. While it is generally desirable to obtain the highest quality food products, adequately paying workers to ensure that food is properly prepared is also desirable and a balance should be maintained.

**Exhibit 9-23**  
**Comparison of ACPS Food Services Financial Performance to Standards**  
**2003-04 through 2005-06 School Years**

Category	Percent of Revenue Standard	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06
School Labor, Including Fringe Benefits	40%	40%	33%	31%
Food Cost as Percent of Revenue	40%	55%	60%	56%
Administrative Cost (Central Office Salaries w/Fringe)	7%	5%	4%	3%

*Source: Created by Evergreen Solutions, 2006.*

Most troubling is that school labor costs have decreased in comparison to revenues over the past three years.

In interviews, cafeteria staff gave several examples of the pay compression in their area. Staff noted that the difference in hourly pay between long-term workers (some with more than 10 years of experience), and newer workers is generally minimal. One worker, with 16 years of experience, earns 10 cents more per hour, than a new worker. Staff also noted that the new policy this year, to reduce many workers from 6.5-hour days to 6.25-hour days, has resulted in several workers not qualifying for benefits. While it was likely the intent of the division administrators to trim costs with this policy, the effect has been less benefits to workers, and some staff said that the division is losing workers because of this new policy. Finally, ACPS administrators noted that, in the past, pay increases for food service workers have not kept pace with other classified positions in the division and that, long term, this inequity will need to be addressed. This need will likely become more acute as long-term workers begin to retire and the division must hire new employees at more competitive wages.

Food services operations within the school division are generally expected to operate at a profit level that covers all of their costs, including both school-based and central office costs. An accepted industry standard is for food service operations to maintain a profit margin equal to three or four percent of revenues in a fund balance. For smaller school divisions, such as ACPS, maintaining a profit margin of two to three percent would be a realistic goal. Highly effective divisions achieve this level in part by encouraging creativity among cafeteria managers and holding them accountable for cafeteria financial performance. The reason to maintain a fund balance is to ensure the program's viability even when unexpected expenses arise. Without an adequate fund balance, the program may have to rely on fund transfers from the division's general fund, which may negatively impact other programs.



## RECOMMENDATION

### Recommendation 9-7:

#### **Establish goals for the financial performance of the ACPS Food Service Program.**

ACPS should seek to control food costs to below 45-50 percent of revenues and should consider increasing labor expenses. In particular, the division should adopt consistent guidelines for which classes of employees are eligible for benefits. In addition, the division should establish a modest profit margin goal range and seek to operate the food service program to achieve that goal so that it can build an acceptable fund balance for the future. Many recommendations made elsewhere in this chapter should either increase revenues or reduce costs, and should contribute to achieving the goal. In addition, with its relatively high rate of full-pay students, the division should regularly compare its per plate costs with those charged to students. The division may need to adjust full-pay meal prices on an annual basis to ensure it is not providing meals at a net loss.

## FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources and should lead to greater fiscal stability in the ACPS Food Service Program.

## FINDING

The ACPS Food Service Program is highly productive and, overall, meets industry standards for meals per labor hour. As a result, the division is achieving maximum efficiency with its cafeteria staffing.

Cafeteria staffing is typically determined based on meal equivalents served. The Commonwealth of Virginia uses this conversion formula to determine meal equivalents:

- count each lunch as one;
- count each two breakfasts as one; and
- count each \$2.54 in a la carte sales as one.

**Exhibit 9-24** provides an industry standard for evaluating cafeteria productivity. A conventional system would include kitchens that prepare nearly all meals from raw ingredients, using some bakery bread and prepared pizza, and washing dishes. As the exhibit shows, a cafeteria serving less than 100 meal equivalents per day, would be within industry standards at eight to 10 MPLH. The Virginia Department of Education provides a more general standard of between 14 and 20 MPLH.

Using the POS system, the ACPS Food Service Manager is able to review the productivity of individual cafeterias on a regular basis. The Manager has the authority to adjust staffing as necessary to ensure high levels of productivity.



**Exhibit 9-24  
Industry Staffing Guidelines for On-Site Meal Production**

Number of Meal Equivalents	Conventional System	
	Low Productivity	High Productivity
Up to 100	8	10
101-150	9	11
151-200	10-11	12
201-250	12	14
251-300	13	15
301-400	14	16
401-500	14	17
501-600	15	17
601-700	16	18
701-800	17	19
801-900	18	20
901 and up	19	21

Source: Pannell-Martin, Dorothy, *Cost Control for School Foodservices, Third Edition, July 2000.*

Based on the industry standards, **Exhibit 9-25** provides the expected MPLH productivity of each ACPS school. At 176 meal equivalents per day, Boiling Springs Elementary School would have an expected productivity of between 10 and 12 MPLH. At the other end, Mountain View Elementary School, with 705 meal equivalents per day, would have an expected productivity of between 17 and 19 MPLH.<sup>1</sup>

**Exhibit 9-25  
Industry Staffing Guidelines Applied to ACPS Schools**

School	2005-06 Daily Meal Equivalents	Expected MPLH	
		Low Productivity	High Productivity
Boiling Springs	176	10-11	12
Callaghan	208	12	14
Falling Spring	200	10-11	12
Mountain View	705	17	19
Sharon	219	12	14
Clifton	692	16	18
Allegheny High	620	16	18

Source: Pannell-Martin, Dorothy, *Cost Control for School Foodservices, Third Edition, July 2000.*

**Exhibit 9-26** provides a breakdown of the number of daily hours cafeteria staff works on an average day. Two hours out of each work day for the Site Managers are taken from the potential labor hours because they are instead spent on paperwork, reporting, and supervisory duties. The Cafeteria Worker category includes cooks, cashiers, servers, and dishwashers. The total for each school shows the number of average daily labor hours available to prepare and serve student meals.

<sup>1</sup> Because Clifton Middle School and Mountain View Elementary School share cafeteria staff and commingle a la carte revenues, where necessary, the total for these items were divided in half and allocated to each school.



**Exhibit 9-26  
ACPS Cafeteria Staffing**

School	Position Title	Number of Workers	Daily Hours
Allegheny High School	Site Manager	1	5*
Allegheny High School	Cafeteria Worker	5	22.5
	<b>Total</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>27.5</b>
Clifton Middle/Mountain View Elementary	Site Manager	1	6*
Clifton Middle/Mountain View Elementary	Cafeteria Worker	12	74.75
	<b>Total</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>80.75</b>
Boiling Springs Elementary	Site Manager	1	5.0*
Boiling Springs Elementary	Cafeteria Worker	2	11.0
	<b>Total</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>16.0</b>
Callaghan Elementary	Site Manager	1	5.0*
Callaghan Elementary	Cafeteria Worker	2	12.75
	<b>Total</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>17.75</b>
Falling Spring Elementary	Site Manager	1	5.0*
Falling Spring Elementary	Cafeteria Worker	2	13.0
	<b>Total</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>18.0</b>
Sharon Elementary	Site Manager	1	5.0*
Sharon Elementary	Cafeteria Worker	2	12.75
	<b>Total</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>17.75</b>

Source: Allegheny County Public Schools, 2006.

\*Two hours daily excluded to handle reporting, paperwork, and supervisory duties.

**Exhibits 9-27 through 9-33** provide the monthly meals served for 2005-06, the labor hours expended each month, and the final MPLH calculation for each school. As the exhibits show, all but one of the schools (Callaghan Elementary School) met industry standards for expected MPLH productivity. As can be seen, Callaghan Elementary School, with a daily production of 208 meal equivalents and productivity of 11.7 MPLH, is just under the minimum industry standard of 12.0 MPLH. Also, as shown, Allegheny High School, at an average of 22.6 MPLH, greatly exceeded the expected productivity of 16 to 18 MPLH. Staff indicated that the high school's high productivity was in part due to its use of disposable plates and utensils, which eliminated the need for dishroom personnel. This change was made when flooding in the building rendered the dishwashing equipment inoperable.

**Exhibit 9-27  
Boiling Springs Elementary School Cafeteria Productivity  
2005-06 School Year**

Month	Number of Lunch Meals Served	Number of Breakfast Meals Served	A La Carte Sales	Meal Equivalents	Number of School Days	Labor Hours	MPLH
August 2005	956	747	\$91.90	1,366	8	128.0	10.7
September 2005	2,550	1,796	\$422.25	3,614	21	336.0	10.8
October 2005	2,441	1,691	\$362.90	3,429	19	304.0	11.3
November 2005	2,434	1,698	\$459.11	3,464	19	304.0	11.4
December 2005	1,143	683	\$184.40	1,557	9	144.0	10.8
January 2006	2,471	1,554	\$340.65	3,382	19	304.0	11.1
February 2006	2,206	1,477	\$328.95	3,074	17	272.0	11.3
March 2006	2,611	1,857	\$484.80	3,730	21	336.0	11.1
April 2006	2,034	1,397	\$264.90	2,837	17	272.0	10.4
May 2006	2,791	1,987	\$389.10	3,938	22	352.0	11.2
June 2006	894	713	\$117.00	1,297	8	128.0	10.1
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>22,531</b>	<b>15,600</b>	<b>\$3,445.96</b>	<b>31,688</b>	<b>180</b>	<b>2,880.0</b>	<b>11.0</b>

Source: Calculated by Evergreen Solutions, 2006.



**Exhibit 9-28**  
**Callaghan Elementary School Cafeteria Productivity**  
**2005-06 School Year**

Month	Number of Lunch Meals Served	Number of Breakfast Meals Served	A La Carte Sales	Meal Equivalents	Number of School Days	Labor Hours	MPLH
August 2005	1,210	373	\$161.40	1,460	8	142.0	10.3
September 2005	3,368	1,211	\$709.40	4,253	21	372.8	11.4
October 2005	3,185	1,137	\$673.80	4,019	19	337.3	11.9
November 2005	3,113	1,191	\$726.29	3,994	19	337.3	11.8
December 2005	1,440	493	\$280.15	1,797	9	159.8	11.2
January 2006	3,204	1,087	\$383.10	3,898	19	337.3	11.6
February 2006	2,889	993	\$568.55	3,609	17	301.8	12.0
March 2006	3,489	1,371	\$668.80	4,438	21	372.8	11.9
April 2006	2,788	1,164	\$468.55	3,554	17	301.8	11.8
May 2006	3,655	1,974	\$638.40	4,893	22	390.5	12.5
June 2006	1,141	544	\$144.25	1,470	8	142.0	10.4
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>29,482</b>	<b>11,538</b>	<b>\$5,422.69</b>	<b>37,386</b>	<b>180</b>	<b>3,195.0</b>	<b>11.7</b>

Source: Calculated by Evergreen Solutions, 2006.

**Exhibit 9-29**  
**Falling Spring Elementary School Cafeteria Productivity**  
**2005-06 School Year**

Month	Number of Lunch Meals Served	Number of Breakfast Meals Served	A La Carte Sales	Meal Equivalents	Number of School Days	Labor Hours	MPLH
August 2005	1,041	370	\$480.05	1,415	8	144.0	9.8
September 2005	2,844	1,274	\$1,269.70	3,981	21	378.0	10.5
October 2005	2,819	292	\$1,293.05	3,474	19	342.0	10.2
November 2005	2,885	1,197	\$1,163.60	3,942	19	342.0	11.5
December 2005	1,336	487	\$542.95	1,793	9	162.0	11.1
January 2006	2,923	1,126	\$1,282.50	3,991	19	342.0	11.7
February 2006	2,606	1,031	\$1,262.90	3,619	17	306.0	11.8
March 2006	3,120	1,309	\$1,624.80	4,414	21	378.0	11.7
April 2006	2,471	978	\$1,251.40	3,453	17	306.0	11.3
May 2006	3,342	1,403	\$1,525.25	4,644	22	396.0	11.7
June 2006	898	492	\$188.65	1,218	8	144.0	8.5
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>26,285</b>	<b>9,959</b>	<b>\$11,884.85</b>	<b>35,944</b>	<b>180</b>	<b>3,240.0</b>	<b>11.1</b>

Source: Calculated by Evergreen Solutions, 2006.



**Exhibit 9-30**  
**Mountain View Elementary School Cafeteria Productivity**  
**2005-06 School Year**

Month	Number of Lunch Meals Served	Number of Breakfast Meals Served	A La Carte Sales	Meal Equivalents	Number of School Days	Labor Hours	MPLH
August 2005	3,628	2,085	\$2,041.05	5,474	8	323.0	16.9
September 2005	9,903	5,923	\$6,246.87	15,324	21	847.9	18.1
October 2005	8,827	4,944	\$5,268.28	13,373	19	767.1	17.4
November 2005	9,027	5,214	\$5,302.70	13,722	19	767.1	17.9
December 2005	4,364	2,055	\$2,324.90	6,307	9	363.4	17.4
January 2006	9,356	4,907	\$5,389.13	13,931	19	767.1	18.2
February 2006	8,262	4,400	\$5,285.40	12,543	17	686.4	18.3
March 2006	10,104	6,466	\$6,437.50	15,871	21	847.9	18.7
April 2006	8,433	4,866	\$5,308.03	12,956	17	686.4	18.9
May 2006	10,909	7,026	\$6,721.55	17,068	22	888.3	19.2
June 2006	3,164	2,100	\$1,888.23	4,957	8	323.0	15.3
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>82,349</b>	<b>47,901</b>	<b>\$52,213.60</b>	<b>126,856</b>	<b>180</b>	<b>7,267.5</b>	<b>17.5</b>

Source: Calculated by Evergreen Solutions, 2006.

**Exhibit 9-31**  
**Sharon Elementary School Cafeteria Productivity**  
**2005-06 School Year**

Month	Number of Lunch Meals Served	Number of Breakfast Meals Served	A La Carte Sales	Meal Equivalents	Number of School Days	Labor Hours	MPLH
August 2005	1,175	595	\$301.05	1,591	8	142.0	11.2
September 2005	3,266	1,769	\$815.80	4,472	21	372.8	12.0
October 2005	3,098	1,550	\$890.95	4,224	19	337.3	12.5
November 2005	3,211	1,545	\$879.25	4,330	19	337.3	12.8
December 2005	1,532	596	\$465.45	2,013	9	159.8	12.6
January 2006	3,050	1,378	\$957.80	4,116	19	337.3	12.2
February 2006	2,766	1,223	\$901.80	3,733	17	301.8	12.4
March 2006	3,406	1,676	\$1,053.10	4,659	21	372.8	12.5
April 2006	2,737	1,340	\$923.75	3,771	17	301.8	12.5
May 2006	3,581	1,834	\$1,325.70	5,020	22	390.5	12.9
June 2006	1,058	595	\$312.20	1,478	8	142.0	10.4
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>28,880</b>	<b>14,101</b>	<b>\$8,826.85</b>	<b>39,406</b>	<b>180</b>	<b>3,195.0</b>	<b>12.3</b>

Source: Calculated by Evergreen Solutions, 2006.



**Exhibit 9-32**  
**Clifton Middle School Cafeteria Productivity**  
**2005-6 School Year**

Month	Number of Lunch Meals Served	Number of Breakfast Meals Served	A La Carte Sales	Meal Equivalents	Number of School Days	Labor Hours	MPLH
August 2005	4,020	1,631	\$2,041.05	5,639	8	323.0	17.5
September 2005	10,614	4,419	\$6,246.87	15,283	21	847.9	18.0
October 2005	9,621	4,005	\$5,268.28	13,698	19	767.1	17.9
November 2005	9,448	3,922	\$5,302.70	13,497	19	767.1	17.6
December 2005	4,168	1,751	\$2,324.90	5,959	9	363.4	16.4
January 2006	9,102	3,829	\$5,389.13	13,138	19	767.1	17.1
February 2006	8,193	3,478	\$5,285.40	12,013	17	686.4	17.5
March 2006	9,988	4,264	\$6,437.50	14,654	21	847.9	17.3
April 2006	7,850	3,352	\$5,308.03	11,616	17	686.4	16.9
May 2006	10,276	4,456	\$6,721.55	15,150	22	888.3	17.1
June 2006	2,535	1,178	\$1,888.23	3,867	8	323.0	12.0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>85,815</b>	<b>36,285</b>	<b>\$52,213.63</b>	<b>124,514</b>	<b>180</b>	<b>7,267.5</b>	<b>17.1</b>

Source: Calculated by Evergreen Solutions, 2006.

**Exhibit 9-33**  
**Allegheny High School Cafeteria Productivity**  
**2005-06 School Year**

Month	Number of Lunch Meals Served	Number of Breakfast Meals Served	a la Carte Sales	Meal Equivalents	Number of School Days	Labor Hours	MPLH
August 2005	3,006	364	\$4,005.50	4,765	8	220.0	21.7
September 2005	8,257	1,294	\$10,528.65	13,049	21	577.5	22.6
October 2005	7,526	1,229	\$9,404.75	11,843	19	522.5	22.7
November 2005	7,450	1,502	\$9,861.30	12,083	19	522.5	23.1
December 2005	3,467	674	\$4,463.15	5,561	9	247.5	22.5
January 2006	7,014	1,482	\$9,928.70	11,664	19	522.5	22.3
February 2006	6,248	1,376	\$9,303.60	10,599	17	467.5	22.7
March 2006	7,726	1,934	\$12,064.75	13,443	21	577.5	23.3
April 2006	6,102	1,448	\$9,053.55	10,390	17	467.5	22.2
May 2006	8,246	2,198	\$12,341.95	14,204	22	605.0	23.5
June 2006	2,213	695	\$3,859.40	4,080	8	220.0	18.5
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>67,255</b>	<b>14,196</b>	<b>\$94,815.30</b>	<b>111,682</b>	<b>180</b>	<b>4,950.0</b>	<b>22.6</b>

Source: Calculated by Evergreen Solutions, 2006.

Highly efficient school divisions allocate cafeteria staffing on the basis of the meal equivalents they expect to serve. Further, they regularly assess cafeteria productivity compared to established staffing guidelines and adjust staffing as necessary.

**COMMENDATION**

**The ACPS Food Service Program is highly efficient, meeting industry standards for meals per labor hour in five of its six cafeterias.**



Callaghan Elementary School is the only cafeteria not meeting industry standards for labor efficiency. In order to achieve a minimum 12.0 MPLH, the cafeteria would need to reduce daily labor by 0.5 hours or increase daily meal equivalent sales by 17.3. Evergreen recommends that a review of the 2006-07 data be completed before making any staffing adjustments.

**ALSO SEE RECOMMENDATION 10-15 IN CHAPTER 10**



**CHAPTER 10:  
SHARED SERVICES**



## *Chapter 10*

# ***SHARED SERVICES***

This chapter reviews shared services in Alleghany County Public Schools (ACPS) and includes two major sections:

- 10.1 Shared Services with Alleghany County Government
- 10.2 Shared Services with Covington City Public Schools (CCPS)

Shared services is a process that involves centralizing functions that most times were once performed in separate divisions or municipalities. Service sharing is recognized as an innovative way that can lower operating costs and improve overall performance. Sharing a service provides the opportunity to reduce redundancy and inefficiencies by sharing personnel and investments with others. Entities that participate in shared service arrangements can cut costs while improving the quality of the services shared. Divisions and municipalities that implement shared services also enjoy savings by standardizing practices and procedures, and by creating economies of scale.

When developing and implementing shared service arrangements, one may encounter obstacles that must be overcome by a flexible attitude and a spirit of cooperation between the agencies. Obstacles that impede cooperation that are often encountered when attempting to implement shared services include:

- territorialism or turf;
- disputes between entities;
- competition for limited resources;
- fear of lost jobs;
- loss of control;
- liability issues;
- limitations on time, money, and staff resources; and
- inadequate knowledge about the steps needed to encourage further cooperation and the legal implications of such steps.

Often times, school divisions and municipalities of small to medium size and in a rural location have difficulties finding and funding specialized personnel with the skills necessary to support the increasing needs of the entities. Many times sharing the skills of specialized personnel increases the level of services and reduces cost. Also, sharing the skills of management level staff and consolidating support processes reduces cost and increases production.



It is always a good business practice to document in writing specific provisions of agreements for sharing a service. A shared services agreement should be in the form of a contract tailored to the specific needs of the entities involved that, at a minimum, includes the following:

- nature and scope of the service(s) to be performed;
- measurable performance standards;
- assignment of responsibility;
- cost allocations;
- duration of the contract;
- procedure for payment; and
- dispute resolution.

Peer divisions were selected for comparative purposes for both Covington City Public Schools and Allegheny County Public Schools. Peer divisions for ACPS include Dickenson County, Nottoway County, Patrick County, Prince Edward County, and Southampton County Public Schools. Peer divisions for CCPS include Buena Vista City, Franklin City, Galax City, Norton City, and West Point Public Schools.

Many shared service opportunities originate in activities associated with a division’s administration, transportation, operations and maintenance, and food services programs. **Exhibit 10-1** compares the cost per pupil of administration, pupil transportation, operation and maintenance, and food services for CCPS and ACPS to each other and their respective peer divisions. Per pupil cost provides a general comparison of operational costs, but does not always present the best comparison as when data specific to the operation is used and does not reflect the actual level of services provided. It should also be noted that while divisions use criteria required by the Virginia Department of Education for submitting information, certain situations do exist which cause the data not to be totally comparable (such as when a county or city provides a service at no cost to a division thus causing the cost of that operation for that division to be understated). Further analysis has been conducted in individual chapters for each operation.

**Exhibit 10-1**  
**Comparative Per Pupil Cost for Administration and Operations**  
**in Covington City Public Schools and Allegheny County Public Schools**  
**Fiscal Year 2005**

Operation	Covington City Public Schools and Peer Divisions		Allegheny County Public Schools and Peer Divisions	
	Covington	Peer Average	Allegheny	Peer Average
Administration	\$360	\$391	\$299	\$282
Pupil Transportation	\$270	\$307	\$538	\$668
Operation and Maintenance	\$867	\$973	\$944	\$839
Food Services	\$429	\$314	\$323	\$396

Source: Virginia Department of Education, Web site 2006.



As shown in **Exhibit 10-1**, both CCPS and ACPS have total administrative and operations costs less than their peer division averages. CCPS has lower cost than their peer division average for administration, pupil transportation, and operation and maintenance, but a higher cost for food services than the peer average. ACPS has a higher per pupil cost for administration and operations and maintenance than the peer averages, but a lower per pupil cost for pupil transportation and food services than the peer average. CCPS per pupil cost was lower than ACPS per pupil cost for pupil transportation and operations and maintenance, but a higher cost for administration and food services.

Many comments were received from division administrators and teachers and from the general public directed at the concept of sharing of services. Most comments pertained to the merits and benefits of either consolidating ACPS and CCPS or to the merits and benefits of consolidating the local governments of the City of Covington and Allegheny County, both of which are outside the scope of this review. Nonetheless, opportunities do exist for sharing services between ACPS and CCPS, and between ACPS and Allegheny County Government. Notwithstanding the consolidation of entities that would force a sharing of administration and support services, there are services that are being shared and others that should be considered.

CCPS and ACPS each have a school board that is responsible for the administration and success of the respective divisions. Although almost any administrative or support function could be performed on a shared basis, each entity is still responsible for ensuring that its needs are met, responsibilities fulfilled and the services are provided at a cost that is in the best interest of its students and taxpayers. ACPS and CCPS must each report to the Virginia Department of Education as a separate school division, and all federal reporting, including payroll-related reports, must also be reported separately. Sharing a service normally adds an administrative burden to the agency that provides the shared service, and for the agency that agrees to have the service provided by another agency, staff loses a degree of control over the service provided. Divisions that receive services through a shared service arrangement must assign responsibility to a division employee to oversee the arrangement and ensure the division receives the services at the agreed to cost.

## **CHAPTER SUMMARY**

Allegheny County Public Schools shares a number of services with Covington City Public Schools and Allegheny County. Consolidating divisions would result in combining almost all services being performed by the divisions. Short of a consolidation, sharing services are limited to those where a sharing arrangement is approved by both ACPS and CCPS. Likewise sharing services between ACPS and Allegheny County must have each entity's approval. Allegheny taxpayers have benefited from ACPS's cooperative relationship with CCPS and Allegheny County that has resulted in cost saving sharing of services.

The division is commended for sharing services with Allegheny County for security needs, and with Covington City Public Schools for a technology center, a school nurse program, substitute teachers, and an attendance officer. Recommendations in this chapter are intended to focus attention on areas where services that are currently being shared can be improved and on other services that should be considered for sharing.



Primary recommendations in this chapter include:

- develop a shared purchasing agreement for commonly acquired office, custodial and building supplies, as well as fuel and vehicle maintenance supplies;
- pursue sharing services arrangement for Local Choice Health Insurance for both County and ACPS employees;
- establish a joint education foundation for Allegheny County Public Schools and Covington City Public Schools that is operated as a shared services arrangement;
- review the class times for Allegheny High School and Covington High School, and better align the bell times to reduce the impact on Covington High School students, and enable the Jackson River Technical Center to offer a fourth period;
- develop an arrangement to share the services of the ACPS Energy Manager with Covington City Public Schools;
- align the calendars for Allegheny County Public Schools and Covington City Public Schools to improve current shared services and to enhance future shared services possibilities;
- develop a formal shared services agreement with Covington City Public Schools to encourage and manage additional shared service arrangements; and
- establish indirect cost rates for shared service arrangements for Allegheny County Public Schools and Covington City Public Schools that are calculated using the same methodology.

### **10.1 SHARED SERVICES WITH ALLEGHANY COUNTY GOVERNMENT**

Allegheny County provides the local revenue necessary to fund the operations of ACPS. Sharing services between the two entities reduces costs that benefit the taxpayers of Allegheny County. Although the two entities serve the same taxpayers, their missions are different and each incurs cost for providing services to different segments of the County's population. The two entities share services of the Sheriff's Department for security of the schools, snow removal equipment, and athletic facilities for sponsored sports programs.

#### **FINDING**

Allegheny and ACPS share resources for a number common services that reduce the cost to the taxpayers of Allegheny County. Most of the services are provided by Allegheny County for ACPS at no cost to the school division. Services shared by Allegheny and ACPS include:

- ACPS athletic fields are fertilized and lined by County staff.



- County-owned snow removal equipment is used to clear heavy snow on ACPS parking lots and entrances to schools.
- ACPS provides the use of gymnasiums and other athletic facilities to the County for use by youth sports programs sponsored by the County.

## COMMENDATION

**Alleghany County Public Schools is commended for sharing a number of routine services with Alleghany County Government that provide cost savings to the taxpayers of Alleghany County.**

## FINDING

ACPS employs no security officers but receives the services of two school resource officers (SRO) and a Drug Abuse Resistance Education (DARE) Officer that are assigned to ACPS schools by the Alleghany County Sheriff's Office.

The purpose of the SRO is to deter crime. As part of this effort, the SRO interacts with students in the classroom, presenting safety, crime prevention and law enforcement career information. The SRO also presents safety and crime prevention training to school staff, such as how to improve building security, and handles reports by school administrators on criminal activity, including student infractions that break the law. Although the SRO is accountable to the sheriff, the division pays 80 percent of the SRO's salary. The SRO reports to the high school campus and works with principals of both the high school and middle school. The SRO receives training in working with youth and in school.

The Sheriff's Office also has a DARE Officer that provides drug and alcohol programs to ACPS schools. DARE is a collaborative effort by certified law enforcement officers, educators, students, parents, and community members to offer an educational program in the classroom to prevent or reduce drug abuse and violence among children and youth.

The DARE Program teaches ACPS students how to refuse alcohol and drugs by:

- providing accurate information about drugs and alcohol;
- providing ideas for alternatives to drug use;
- teaching decision-making skills;
- showing students how to resist peer pressure; and
- building self-esteem.

## COMMENDATION

**Alleghany County Public Schools is commended for coordinating security needs with Alleghany County, resulting in shared services of Sheriff's deputies.**



## FINDING

Within the four entities (ACPS, Alleghany County Government, CCPS and the City of Covington) there are three separate arrangements for providing technology services. Alleghany County has two contracts to provide technology services for its technology system, Covington City provides support for its technology with one technology staff member, and CCPS and ACPS have their technology supported by the Educational Technology Center (ETC) located at the Jackson River Technology Center.

The Educational Technology Center is supported from taxpayer funds provided by the City of Covington and Alleghany County. ACPS and CCPS are provided with identical support for the Educational Technology Center. Staff at the center are extremely cautious when it comes to ensuring that one division does not receive a service that is not provided to the other division. A good example of this pertains to the automated trouble ticket system that staff at the Center use to track requests for assistance received from either of the divisions. When either division needs assistance with a component of technology a hard copy of a trouble ticket is completed and sent to the Educational Technology Center. Once received by the Educational Technology Center, information on the trouble ticket is entered into their automated work order system. ACPS staff has the capability to enter their trouble tickets into the automated system, but CCPS does not. Since CCPS does not have the capability to access the automated system, ACPS is not allowed to directly enter their trouble tickets directly into the system.

Although Alleghany County Government and the City of Covington provide funding to the Educational Technology Center through their respective school divisions and both need technology support, neither is provided the support from Educational Technology Center and must secure the service elsewhere. Alleghany County has an immediate need for additional technology support and has provided funding to hire a technology technician in its 2006-07 budget.

Consolidating technology support allows for a greater degree of coverage by having staff cross-trained. When a service is provided with just one employee or by a contract with a vendor located in another city, the support being provided is often disrupted when the one employee leaves or the contracted vendor changes employees.

## RECOMMENDATION

### Recommendation 10-1:

**Consider expanding the technology support provided by the Educational Technology Center to support both Alleghany County and the City of Covington.**

By allowing the City of Covington and Alleghany County to share in the services of the Educational Technology Center, both agencies could provide better technology services to its employees and the public. Standardization of technology between all four agencies can also be provided and, if this occurs, the sharing of information among the agencies will be enhanced.



## FISCAL IMPACT

While this recommendation can be implemented without additional costs to ACPS and CCPS. Funding included in Allegheny County and the City of Covington's budgets will need to be transferred to the Educational Technology Center's budget to cover the cost of services provided to the County and City.

## FINDING

ACPS and Allegheny County have separate purchasing programs that acquire commonly used items through separate bids and contracts. They do not have purchasing agreements to share purchasing functions. Both ACPS and Allegheny County purchase general office, custodial and building maintenance, and fuel and maintenance supplies for their vehicle fleets.

Many agencies get better pricing from vendors and are able to reduce administrative costs by entering into purchasing agreements with other entities. Generally, each agency will determine an approximate amount of merchandise they intend to purchase during a 12-month period. One of the agencies will then consolidate the amounts and perform the competitive purchasing. Each entity agency then allowed to process individual purchase orders from these bids. Vendors normally offer better pricing to consolidated purchases because the amounts to be purchased are generally larger than if purchased by a single agency.

## RECOMMENDATION

### Recommendation 10-2:

**Develop a shared purchasing agreement for commonly acquired office, custodial and building supplies, as well as fuel and vehicle maintenance supplies, between ACPS and Allegheny County Government.**

Allegheny County and ACPS can benefit from a shared services arrangement for commonly acquired supplies. Although each of the entities acquires a portion of their supplies from state contracts, sharing bids and contracts for other items will reduce the actual cost of the items by increasing the volume purchased and also decrease administrative work associated with processing and managing separate bids and contracts.

ACPS, Allegheny County, CCPS and the City of Covington could benefit from a consolidated shared purchasing agreement for similar supplies and materials. Each agency could save administrative time by using the same bids and contracts, and could reduce the cost of items when purchased in bulk.

## FISCAL IMPACT

Both ACPS and Allegheny County can realize a cost savings in addition to reducing administrative workloads by combining purchases and sharing bids and contracts. ACPS expenditures for fuel, supplies and materials total approximately \$1,077,000 a year. While each entity purchases items unique only to that entity, based on best practices seen in other school



divisions, savings on common items should result in savings that average two percent of total purchases. A conservative estimated of a two percent savings on total purchase will provide ACPS an annual savings of \$21,540 (\$1,077,000 x 2 percent). Allegheny County can also realize similar savings by participating in the shared purchasing agreement. Additional savings would be possible if ACPS and Allegheny County expanded the agreement to include CCPS and the City of Covington (see **Recommendation 10-14**).

Recommendation	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12
Develop Shared Purchasing Agreement	\$21,540	\$21,540	\$21,540	\$21,540	\$21,540

**FINDING**

Employees of both Allegheny County and ACPS are provided health insurance coverage through policies from Anthem Blue Cross Blue Shield. Allegheny County’s Anthem Blue Cross-Blue Shield policies are acquired through its participation in the Local Choice Health Insurance Program provided by the Commonwealth of Virginia. Although ACPS health insurance is provided through policies from Anthem Blue Cross-Blue Shield, their polices are acquired directly by ACPS through a separate solicitation.

The coverages provided by the county policies are different than the coverages provided by the school division policies, and the premiums paid by the County for its employees are also different than those paid by ACPS for its employees. **Exhibit 10-2** presents the premiums associated with the two plans.

**Exhibit 10-2  
Health Insurance Premiums  
2006-07 Fiscal Year**

Health Insurance Plan	Premiums		
	Paid by Employee	Paid by County/ACPS	Total
<b>Allegheny County</b>			
KEY CARE 15			
Single	\$141.60	\$425.58	\$567.18
Dual	\$205.72	\$617.14	\$822.86
Family	\$343.79	\$1,031.38	\$1,375.17
<b>ALLEGHANY COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS</b>			
KEY CARE 20			
Employee	\$51.00	\$461.00	\$512.00
Employee and One	\$131.00	\$532.00	\$663.00
Employee and Spouse	\$256.00	\$589.00	\$845.00
Family	\$498.00	\$731.00	\$1,229.00
Employee and Spouse (Both Employed)	\$0.00	\$845.00	\$845.00
Family (Both Employed)	\$37.00	\$1,192.00	\$1,229.00

Source Allegheny County Public Schools, Human Resource Office, November 2006.



The Commonwealth of Virginia allows agencies to request combined policies that have the same coverages and premiums. The Commonwealth of Virginia has to approve a combined insurance program and establishes the premiums for a combined program. Many times a combined program has the advantage of lower premiums or the ability of the agencies to provide better coverages at approximately the same cost. ACPS management indicated that the school division obtained a quote from the Commonwealth of Virginia for a plan through the Local Choice Program, but the premiums were higher than the one the division obtained directly from Anthem Blue Cross Blue Shield.

**RECOMMENDATION**

**Recommendation 10-3:**

**Pursue sharing services arrangement for health insurance for both County and ACPS employees.**

A shared insurance program for ACPS and Allegheny County Government whether through Local Choice or a direct solicitation should reduce the cost for both entities. In order for ACPS and Allegheny County to pursue an effective shared insurance policy, consideration should be given to standardizing benefits for school division and county employees. ACPS and Allegheny County should also consider proposing a shared insurance program with CCPS and the City of Covington in an attempt to further reduce employee insurance costs to the taxpayers.

**FISCAL IMPACT**

Both ACPS and Allegheny County could realize cost savings by combining employee insurance policies. Premiums vary depending on policy provisions and the number of employees in each group type. Although overall costs are likely to increase even with combining policies due to health industry cost increases, a conservative estimate to base cost savings for a combined policy, based on past experiences of the Evergreen consultant team, would be \$25.00 a month per employee (which represents a reduction in premiums for a single employee of about 5.5 percent to less than two percent for a family). A reduction in average employee monthly premiums of only \$25 per month would provide ACPS with annual savings of \$127,500 (\$25.00 x 425 employees x 12 months). Additional savings could be possible if ACPS and Allegheny County expanded the agreement to include CCPS and the City of Covington (see **Recommendation 10-19**).

<b>Recommendation</b>	<b>2007-08</b>	<b>2008-09</b>	<b>2009-10</b>	<b>2010-11</b>	<b>2011-12</b>
Develop Shared Services Arrangement for Local Choice Health Insurance	\$127,500	\$127,500	\$127,500	\$127,500	\$127,500



## **10.2 SHARED SERVICES WITH COVINGTON CITY PUBLIC SCHOOLS**

ACPS and CCPS share the same primary mission of educating the students attending schools in their division. Each division is provided local funding from their respective county or city. Sharing services that reduce cost provides a lower tax burden on local taxpayers. Since each division incurs costs to provide almost identical type services in order to provide education to the students attending their schools, opportunities exist for a variety of services to be shared on a cost-effective basis. Services to students can be either direct services or indirect services. Direct services are those that are provided directly to students such as instructional, transportation and food services. Indirect services are those that must be performed to support the direct services, such as providing facilities, human resources, finance, and other operations.

### **COMMENDATIONS**

#### **FINDING**

ACPS and CCPS share vocational programs, an Alternative Education Center, and an Education Technology Center all operated at the Jackson River Technical Center (JRTC). The JRTC is operated under an agreement between ACPS and CCPS dated December 19, 2001. The operation of the JRTC is under the governance of a Board of Control, whose membership consists of four designated members of the ACPS School Board and three designated members of the CCPS School Board. The responsibility of a Superintendent for the Center is provided on a two-year rotating basis between the superintendents of the two divisions. The CCPS Superintendent is currently serving as the JRTC Superintendent.

Vocational programs are provided to ACPS and CCPS high school students during three class periods of 8:40 a.m. to 10:05 a.m., 10:19 a.m. to 11:45 a.m., and 12:19 p.m. to 1:49 p.m. The Student Handbook for the Center lists 34 vocational related courses that are offered at the center. The courses include, but are not limited to:

- Accounting
- Business Law
- Computer Systems and Technology
- Marketing
- Sports, Entertainment, and Recreation Marketing
- Health
- Automotive
- Carpentry
- Electrical
- Plumbing
- Welding
- Building Maintenance and Trades
- Culinary Arts
- Early Childhood Education
- Work Experience



The costs of providing vocational and technology courses at the JRTC are shared by ACPS and CCPS on a percentage that is calculated based on the average daily attendance of the two divisions for the last three years. The operating cost for 2006-07 is shared on a basis of 80 percent from ACPS and 20 percent from CCPS. Each class has 20 slots with 15 allocated to ACPS and five to CCPS.

The cost of the Alternative Education Program maintained at the JRTC is shared at the same percentages of 80 percent for ACPS and 20 percent for CCPS. The Alternative Education Program offers classes at three different times. A morning class from 8:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. that has slots for 25 students, an afternoon class from 12:30 p.m. to 3:30 p.m. with slots for 25 students and a late afternoon class from 3:30 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. for 15 students. For 2006-07, the program has 39 students enrolled in classes.

The Educational Technology Center provides computer and technology support to ACPS, CCPS and also to staff of JRTC. The cost for the operation is funded 63 percent from ACPS, 20 percent from ACPS, and 17 percent from JRTC's budget. The Educational Technology Center has a coordinator, one network operations specialist, and two technicians who provide voice, data, and audio visual support to the two divisions and the JRTC. The staff provides support to 1,500 personal computers at ACPS, 450 personal computers at CCPS, 85 personal computers at JRTC, 89 network infrastructure devices, and 25 servers.

## COMMENDATION

**Alleghany County Public Schools is commended for sharing a Center with Covington City Public Schools that provides vocational and technology courses, an alternative education program, and a technology support operation.**

## FINDING

Health services to ACPS and CCPS students are provided through a shared school nursing program. The shared program is supported by and partially funded by the Alleghany Foundation.

The shared nursing program provides educational and preventative information for students and staff of both divisions. In addition to attending to student illnesses, nurses also provide screenings for vision, hearing, and other health problems. The program is managed by a full-time Nurse Coordinator and a part-time Secretary that is employed for seven hours a day.

School nurses are provided to all ACPS and CCPS schools for the number of hours shown in **Exhibit 10-3**.

The Alleghany Foundation pays 50 percent of the cost of each nurse for a six-hour shift. The remaining 50 percent of cost is shared by ACPS and CCPS, at the rate of 75 percent and 25 percent respectively. The cost of the Nurse Coordinator and six hours of the secretary is also shared on a 75 percent and 25 percent basis. The additional hour for the Nurse Coordinator Secretary is funded by ACPS Medicaid reimbursement funds.



**Exhibit 10-3  
Nurses by School  
2006-07 School Year**

Division/School	Hours Per Day
<b>Allegheny County Public Schools</b>	
Allegheny High School	6.0
Clifton Middle School	8.0
Boiling Springs Elementary School	4.5
Callaghan Elementary School	4.5
Falling Springs Elementary School	4.5
Mountain View Elementary School	6.0
Sharon Elementary School	4.5
<b>Covington City Public Schools</b>	
Covington High School	4.0
Jester –Watson Intermediate School	4.0
Edgemont Primary School	7.0

*Source Allegheny County Public Schools and Covington City Public Schools Health Service Office, November 2006.*

The cost of the program for the 2005-06 school year was \$226,820. The Allegheny Foundation funded \$113,410 of the cost, while ACPS paid \$85,058 and CCPS paid \$28,353 of the remaining cost.

### COMMENDATION

**Allegheny County Public Schools is commended for sharing a School Nurse Program with Covington City Public Schools.**

### FINDING

ACPS and CCPS share substitute teachers. Prospective substitute teachers who apply at either ACPS or CCPS are asked if they would also like to provide services to the other division. When prospective substitute teachers indicate that they would like for their application to be filed with both divisions, the human resource offices share the applications. Once an application is satisfactorily completed at one of the division's human resource offices, a copy is sent to the other human resource office. Each division's human resource office then maintains a list of qualified substitute teachers from which they can make a selection when the need arises.

By sharing applications for prospective substitute teachers, each division increases the pool of qualified teachers that otherwise would not be available unless the applicant also completed an application at the other division. By sharing applications, the administrative workload is reduced at each division and the process is also a service to the prospective substitute teacher since they do not have to complete duplicate applications.



## COMMENDATION

**Allegheny County Public Schools is commended for sharing applications for substitute teachers with Covington City Public Schools.**

## FINDING

ACPS and CCPS share an Attendance Officer that enables the divisions to provide the service without each having separate operations.

The Attendance Officer accepts referrals from both ACPS and CCPS for students that have non-attendance issues. There is not a set number of referrals that each division can make to the Attendance Officer. In a normal year, less than 100 referrals are made. By far the majority of the referrals are from ACPS because of the difference in the number of enrolled students. The cost of the Attendance Officer is shared by the two divisions with ACPS paying 80 percent and CCPS paying 20 percent.

After students are referred to the Attendance Officer, a meeting is scheduled with a parent. Sometimes when a parent of an older student is unable or refuses to attend, a meeting is scheduled with only the student. When parents do not agree to attend a meeting with the Attendance Officer, they are eligible to be referred to the court for non-participation. The parent is also eligible to be taken to court, if the Attendance Officer believes the student is in need of supervision for behavioral problems.

Some students are referred to the Attendance Officer for behavior issues. The student is evaluated and the Attendance Officer determines if the student is disruptive in the classroom environment and needs help. When the student is believed to need addition at supervision, the Attendance Officer can petition the court for help through a program called *Child In Need of Supervision*.

In addition to the Attendance Officer, the two divisions share an organization that assists the Attendance Officer with students that continue to have problems after the Attendance Officer has attempted to help the student make improvements. Prior to referring the student to the court, the Attendance Officer refers the student to a Truancy Team for further evaluation and assistance. The Truancy Team is composed of members from the following organizations:

- Virginia Cooperative Extension;
- Allegheny Highlands Community Services Board;
- Covington High School;
- Allegheny High School;
- Allegheny-Covington Health Department;
- ACPS-CCPS Attendance Officer;
- Allegheny/Covington Department of Social Services; and
- Goodwill Industries of the Valleys.



Detailed statistics for both divisions were not readily available. During 2005-06, a total of 96 students were referred to the Attendance Officer. Eighty-four (84) were from ACPS and 12 were from CCPS. Most years, CCPS refers about ten students. Although detailed statistics were not available for CCPS, they were available for ACPS and are shown in **Exhibit 10-4**.

**Exhibit 10-4**  
**ACPS Attendance Statistics**  
**2002-03 to 2005-06 School Years**

Category	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06
Referrals to Attendance Officer:				
High	70	32	25	46
Middle	19	8	13	22
Elementary	8	6	22	16
Referrals made to court	47	21	40	37
Referrals made to court two or more times	17	16	15	0
Parent conferences held	91	45	87	80

*Source: Alleghany County Public Schools and Covington City Public Schools Attendance Office, November 2006.*

It is always a good business practice to continue to monitor workloads to help ensure that services are provided in the most cost effective manner. While a process proves to be efficient during a certain period, considering methods to improve shared services with entities that provide similar services for future periods increases the ability to provide those services in the most effective manner.

### COMMENDATION

**Alleghany County Public Schools is commended for participating in the shared services of an Attendance Officer with Covington City Public Schools.**

### FINDING

Both ACPS and CCPS operate school buses for the benefit of the students who attend classes in each of the divisions. CCPS has nine buses that make four regular bus routes in the morning, five regular routes in the afternoon and one special education route in both the morning and afternoon. All routes are within the City of Covington.

ACPS has 43 buses that make 38 regular and five special education routes daily. Although eight of the routes go through the City of Covington to pick up or deliver students, the buses are almost always close to capacity. In fact, the transportation needs for two of the buses that go through the City were such that 64 passenger buses had to be replaced with 78-passenger buses.

While the opportunity for sharing bus services has not been extensively explored by ACPS and CCPS, a special route is shared where CCPS has only one student that requires transportation. Transportation services are shared for transporting students to the Shenandoah Autism Center in Clifton Forge. A CCPS autism student is picked up by an ACPS bus and transported to and from the Autism Center. This arrangement eliminates the need for a CCPS bus to duplicate the route made by the ACPS bus.



## COMMENDATION

**Allegheny County Public Schools is commended for sharing the transportation of an autism student to the Shenandoah Autism Center in Clifton Forge with Covington City Public Schools.**

## RECOMMENDATIONS

### FINDING

The Allegheny Foundation is very active in the City of Covington and Allegheny County. However, neither ACPS nor CCPS have an active education foundation to assist the divisions with receiving and administering funds for educational programs, scholarships, and activities that either have not been funded or have been underfunded by each division's regular operating budget.

Since ACPS and CCPS have no education foundation or formal fundraising function, no specific programs exist to use the assets or to identify ways for interested donors, corporations, or other foundations to support educational programs. Without a foundation, both ACPS and CCPS have limited funds to recognize creative and exemplary teaching, innovative class projects, or provide scholarships.

ACPS currently has over \$100,000 in grant funds and interest earnings are used for scholarships. The funds are maintained in a student activity account at Allegheny High School. Maintaining these funds in the student activity account provides internal control of the funds at a less than desirable level.

In 1984, an Allegheny Highlands Education Foundation was formed, but has been inactive for a number of years. The ACPS administration believes that the articles of incorporation had been amended to reflect that ACPS and CCPS were the member divisions; however, documents could not be located to document the change.

The articles of incorporation state that the purpose of the former education foundation was to:

- accept and expend funds in support of such curricular and extracurricular activities and programs of the Allegheny Highlands School Division, that upon approval of the Allegheny Highlands School Board, the corporation may from time to time determine;
- provide financial assistance to such graduates of the school division who have demonstrated the achievement of excellence at the secondary school level, and to assist in their pursuit of postsecondary education;
- provide rewards, both financial and laudatory, to students, teachers and administrators of said school division who have demonstrated the pursuit and/or achievement of excellence in scholastic fields of study, and in the visual and performing arts throughout the elementary and secondary levels; and



- take and hold by bequest, devise, gift, purchase or lease either absolutely or in trust, for any of its purposes, any property, real or personal, without limitation as to amount or value; and
- sell, convey and dispose of any such property and to invest and reinvest the principal thereof, and deal with and expend the income and principal of the corporation for any of the purposes hereinbefore set forth.

Many school divisions have established and operated foundations to secure and maintain additional revenue for local public education. These foundations receive Internal Revenue Service designation as IRS Code Section 501(c) (3) organizations that are nonprofit and tax-exempt. The Council on Foundations, a nonprofit membership organization of grant making foundations and corporations located in Washington, D.C., publishes *First Steps in Starting a Foundation* as an information guide along with a number of other publications related to operating a foundation.

## RECOMMENDATION

### Recommendation 10-4:

#### **Re-establish a joint education foundation for Allegheny County Public Schools and Covington City Public Schools that is operated as a shared services arrangement.**

By re-establishing a joint education foundation, each division will have access to an organization that will enable them to enhance funding for educational services not provided through the normal budget process and to better management scholarship funds. With community input, the two boards should explore the initial legal steps necessary to either revise the Allegheny Highlands Education Foundation or form a new education foundation. The steps should include:

- selecting of a committee of community, business, and division charged with creating the foundation;
- filing articles of incorporation with the State;
- selecting a board of trustees; and
- adopting bylaws to guide the operation of the nonprofit foundation, including policies and criteria for the disbursement of funds.

## FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

## FINDING

ACPS developed and implemented an energy management program, while CCPS has a very limited program to help reduce energy costs for heating and cooling facilities.



ACPS is in the fourth year of its energy program. In 2001, the division contracted with Energy Education Inc. to assist the division in establishing an energy management program. The contract called for the vendor to provide software for capturing data for division facilities and for training staff in how to use the software and how to interpret data in order to manage the energy used. The first year of the contract was spent learning the software and populating the software with needed data. Training was so successful that ACPS was able to buy out the contract and continue the program with division personnel.

The energy program has enabled ACPS to realize savings or cost avoidances from both electrical and fuel oil usages. For the 2003-04, 2004-05, and 2005-06 school years, ACPS has avoided costs for electricity and fuel of over \$482,000. **Exhibit 10-5** shows the base year of 2002-03 that is used as the starting point to determine the amount of cost avoidance that the division has been able to achieve. Cost avoidance for both electricity and fuel oil was achieved for the 2003-05 through the 2005-06 school years.

**Exhibit 10-5**  
**Avoided Energy Usage and Cost in**  
**Allegheny County Public Schools**  
**2002-03 to 2005-06 School Years**

Category	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06
<b>Electricity</b>				
KWH Usage	5,655,379	4,321,735	4,476,731	4,463,251
Cost Avoidance		\$93,355	\$82,505	\$92,985
<b>Fuel Oil</b>				
Gallons Used	194,652	174,797	140,099	129,380
Cost Avoidance		\$19,259	\$78,556	\$115,531
<b>Total Cost Avoided</b>		<b>\$112,614</b>	<b>\$161,061</b>	<b>\$208,516</b>

Source: Allegheny County Public Schools, Energy Manager, November 2006.

ACPS reports that the success of the division's energy program and its continued success was due to and is dependant upon continuing to:

- closely following energy conservation guidelines as they are drawn out;
- reduce the number of non-essential energy consuming equipment in school buildings (such as personal microwaves, refrigerators, coffee pots, etc) unless they are necessary for classroom instruction);
- rigorous scheduling applied with strict parameters;
- closely monitoring HVAC units/system through temperature loop parameters, setbacks, high/low set points;
- trying to further decrease "on and off peak demand" with Dominion Power; and
- self-monitoring electric meters to check billed KWH.

The ACPS Energy Manager worked full-time on the energy management program during its implementation and now spends approximately 90 percent of the time on energy matters. The



other ten percent is spent on a new work order process initiated by the division. It was reported to the Evergreen Review Team that the development of an energy program for CCPS could be accomplished without significant impact to ACPS operations.

## RECOMMENDATION

### Recommendation 10-5:

#### **Develop an arrangement to share the services of the ACPS Energy Manager with Covington City Public Schools.**

By sharing the services of the ACPS Energy Manager, an energy program can be developed for CCPS which should result in a success similar to that which ACPS achieved. The arrangement will provide CCPS the expertise of ACPS Energy Manager on an as needed part-time basis and significantly reduce the cost of hiring a separate energy manager. The shared services would also enable ACPS to recover a portion of the costs incurred for the Energy Manager. Making 30 percent of the ACPS Energy Manager's time available will require a reassignment of some of the Energy Manager's responsibilities and should be coordinated with a recommendation in Chapter 6 of this report to expand the ACPS maintenance staff.

## FISCAL IMPACT

It is estimated that the ACPS Energy Manager should spend approximately 30 percent of her time implementing and managing an energy program for CCPS. This is based on the number of schools that each division has, seven for ACPS and three for CCPS. The Energy Manager's compensation is \$43,560 a year (\$32,000 salary + \$11,520 fringe benefits at a 36 percent fringe benefits rate). Reimbursement for 30 percent of the Energy Manager's compensation will be \$13,068 a year (\$43,560 x 30 percent).

Recommendation	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12
Share ACPS Energy Manager	\$13,068	\$13,068	\$13,068	\$13,068	\$13,068

Also see Section 6.5 of Chapter 6.

## FINDING

Class offerings at the JRTC are impacted because class times at Alleghany High School and Covington High School are not coordinated. Starting times and class schedules at the high schools are different and the differences have not been addressed to limit the impact on students attending the JRTC.

Alleghany High School is on a four-by-four block schedule, while Covington High School is on a seven-period schedule. Each school is convinced that its particular class schedule is best for their students, but they are negatively impacting the amount of time that CCPS students spend in classes at the JRTC and the inability of JRTC to offer a fourth period of instruction.

The schedules for the two high schools are shown in **Exhibit 10-6**.



**Exhibit 10-6**  
**Class Schedules for Covington and Allegheny High Schools**  
**2006-07 School Year**

Period	Covington High School (CHS)		Allegheny High School (AHS)	
	Begin	End	Begin	End
First	7:48 a.m.	8:48 a.m.	8:35 a.m.	10:00 a.m.
Second	8:53 a.m.	9:42 a.m.	10:15 a.m.	11:45 a.m.
Third	9:47 a.m.	10:36 a.m.	11:45 a.m.	1:50 p.m.
Fourth	10:41 a.m.	11:30 a.m.	1:55 p.m.	3:25 p.m.
Fifth – First Lunch	12:07 p.m.	12:56 p.m.	n/a	n/a
Fifth – Second Lunch	11:35 a.m.	12:24 p.m.	n/a	n/a
Sixth	1:01 p.m.	1:50 p.m.	n/a	n/a
Seventh	1:55 p.m.	2:44 p.m.	n/a	n/a

Source: Covington City Public Schools and Allegheny County Public Schools Administration Office, November 2006.

JRTC's schedule is more closely aligned with Allegheny High School's schedule and is presented in **Exhibit 10-7**.

**Exhibit 10-7**  
**JRTC Class Schedule**  
**2006-07 School Year**

Period	Beginning Time	Ending Time	Impact
First	8:40 a.m.	10:05 a.m.	CHS students arrive at 8:50 and miss about 10 minutes of instruction.
Second	10:19 a.m.	11:45 a.m.	CHS students leave at 11:30 and miss about 15 minutes of instruction.
Third	12:19 p.m.	1:49 p.m.	CHS students leave at 1:35 and miss about 14 minutes of instruction.

Source: Jackson River Technology Center, November 2006.

The JRTC class schedule requires Covington High School students to either arrive ten and 15 minutes after a class begins or leave before the class is complete. Attendance by Allegheny High School students is not impacted by the JRTC schedule since it closely aligns with the first three blocks of Allegheny High School's schedule and the campuses are located within about a five-minute walk from each other. However, the schedule does restrict all JRTC courses to the first three Allegheny High School blocks. Providing no JRTC sections during the fourth block creates conflicts for Allegheny High School students, resulting in many students not being able to fit JRTC options into their schedules. In addition, since the class day for CCPS students ends at 2:44 p.m., the possibility of JRTC offering a fourth class is prohibited.

These differences cause educational problems for students as well as when one division has holidays or workdays and the other one does not. An example of how differing school calendars affect students at both high schools occurred during the week of the site visit when Allegheny students were not in school, but Covington students were. As a consequence, no classes were held on campus at JRTC. These calendar differences prevent students in both divisions from benefiting from a full year's coursework. Staff at the JRTC reported that sometimes students from one division attend while students from the other do not. Testimony from one student who attended the public forum during the site visit provided evidence of the benefits that students reap who attend classes at the JRTC and the positive impact attendance has on their



employability options, both during high school and after graduation. Since CTE courses are limited at both division high schools, the Center offers students important opportunities to broaden their career and technical educations and prepare for post-graduation pursuits.

## RECOMMENDATION

### Recommendation 10-6:

**Review the class times for Allegheny High School and Covington High School, and better align the bell times to reduce the impact on Covington High School students, and enable the Jackson River Technical Center to offer a fourth period.**

More closely aligning the bell time would reduce the impact on CHS students and provide the possibility of JRTC to offer a fourth period. One scenario that should be considered is starting the classes at Covington High School about 30 minutes later. This would provide for a better alignment with the JRTC class schedule and also for a fourth period to be offered.

One of the potential advantages of having two school divisions in the same community that share a resource such as the JRTC should be the ability to bolster career technology offerings for the students in both divisions. The CTE offerings provided at the Center prevent both divisions from having to incur the high costs of technical equipment and programs that, in actuality, without the Center would probably not be available to students. CTE courses also have higher personnel costs due to the required smaller class sizes. It is thus imperative to coordinate schedules so that all students can fully benefit from the rich offerings of the center. Having daily and yearly schedules that conflict is neither fiscally nor educationally sound.

In considering potential schedule changes to better meet the needs of students, one factor taken into consideration should be recent research on the effect of adolescent lack of sleep on school performance. An abstract of a study of research by Hansen, Janssen, Schiff, Zee, and Dubocovich concluded that:

*...current high school start times contribute to sleep deprivation among adolescents. Consistent with a delay in circadian sleep phase, students performed better later in the day than in the early morning...Both short-term and long-term strategies that address the epidemic of sleep deprivation among adolescents will be necessary to improve health and maximize school performance. (ERIC EJ728059)*

## FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

## FINDING

School calendars are not coordinated between ACPS and CCPS impacting the ability to increase the sharing of services. The school calendars for ACPS and CCPS are different and the differences make it difficult to share services and impact the services that are being shared especially at the Jackson River Technical Center.



**Exhibit 10-8** presents excerpts from the calendars for ACPS and CCPS for 2006-07 school year.

Both divisions stated that attempts are made to share professional development that occurs in each of the divisions. When one of the divisions plans for an instructor to present a professional development class at the division they contact the other division to offer their training on shared bases. Training is usually scheduled on the dates established on each of the division’s calendars for professional development or teacher in-service dates. As shown in **Exhibit 10-8**, professional development days and in-service dates are different on the two calendars and limit the ability of each division to share professional development.

**Exhibit 10-8**  
**Selected ACPS and CCPS Calendar Dates**  
**2006-07 School Year**

Date	Covington City Public Schools	Allegheny County Public Schools
October 02	Teacher Workday	
October 16		Teacher Workday – Parent teacher conferences
November 10		Teacher In-Service
November 13	Teacher Workday	
Dec 22-23, January 01-02	Winter Break	
Dec 22 – Jan 01		Winter Break
January 17		Teacher Workday – Parent Teacher Conferences
February 26	Professional Development/Workday	
March 19		Teacher Workday/Teacher Conference
March 20		Teacher In-service
April 5,6,9,10	Spring Break	
April 6-10		Spring Break
April 16	Professional Development/Workday	

*Source: Allegheny County Public Schools and Covington City Public Schools, November 2006.*

As previously stated, the difference in schedules has also impacted the services provided to students by JRTC. When schools in each division are closed at different dates, the number of students that attend classes at JRTC is impacted. When ACPS is closed for teacher workdays or days that are different for holidays or spring break than CCPS, the number of students that attend classes at JRTC are drastically reduced. When ACPS is closed based on its calendar, normally only about five students from CCPS are present in JRTC classes. Instruction to CCPS students was reported as almost nonexistent when ACPS students are not there. Instruction to CCPS students does not take place when ACPS closes for snow days and CCPS is open, because JRTC closes when ACPS closes. JRTC provides instruction to ACPS students when ACPS has snow make-up days, but CCPS students do not attend if CCPS was not also closed for the same snow days.



## **RECOMMENDATION**

### **Recommendation 10-7:**

#### **Align the calendars for Alleghany County Public Schools and Covington City Public Schools to improve current shared services and to enhance future shared services possibilities.**

Aligning the calendars for ACPS and CCPS will improve instructional times for CCPS students attending JRTC. The alignment of calendars will also make it more favorable to create shared professional development for each of the division.

A number of challenges will need to be addressed in order for calendars for ACPS and CCPS to be better aligned. These include standardizing when schools are closed for inclement weather and when make up days are scheduled, addressing the need for ACPS to complete 90 days of instruction per semester, and standardizing when each division administers exams prior to the winter holiday break.

## **FISCAL IMPACT**

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

## **FINDING**

Professional development in ACPS is handled separately from Covington City Public Schools and the Jackson River Technical Center.

Each entity within Alleghany County (ACPS, CCPS, JRTC), conducts its own professional development activities. While there are some informal opportunities to pool resources, this typically consists of one administrator at ACPS calling one administrator at CCPS and discussing a professional development opportunity.

There has been significant overlap in the instructional professional development conducted for ACPS and CCPS within the past few years. There has been some overlap in non-instructional professional development between the divisions, but in the past few years, ACPS has provided far more in-house opportunities to staff than CCPS. By working together to coordinate professional development offerings, each division/school will be able to increase the number and type of professional development events. A formal arrangement between the organizations can help solidify the relationship.

Many school divisions and districts utilize Web-based calendaring systems for professional development opportunities. Staff are able to log in to the Web site, view available professional development events in the area, and sign up online, with supervisor approval. The divisions could create a pay arrangement based on the number of attendees from each.

It should be noted that the common ACPS/CCPS calendar recommended in Chapter 10 is essential for the effective implementation of this recommendation.



## RECOMMENDATION

### Recommendation 10-8:

**Develop a plan to coordinate professional development with Covington City Public Schools and the Jackson River Technical Center to use a shared Web-based calendar system to encourage participation and coordination among the divisions/school.**

ACPS should develop a plan to formally coordinate professional development with CCPS and the Jackson River Technical Center. The plan should include the responsibilities of each participating organization, goals for the cooperative, and procedures for identifying, scheduling, and organizing professional development events.

The cooperative should utilize a Web-based calendar system for posting professional development activities and allowing employees to sign-up for events. Evergreen Solutions estimates development of a simple, e-mail-based system would cost between \$300 and \$500, and development of a more elaborate database system would cost between \$3,000 and \$5,000. The cost for the system could be divided among the divisions and the center. The divisions would shoulder the majority of the cost for the system, since instructional professional development opportunities represent the majority of professional development events in the area. **Exhibit 10-9** below depicts a potential breakout of costs for the calendar system.

**Exhibit 10-9**  
**Costs for Development of Online Professional Development Calendar System**

<b>Participating Organization</b>	<b>Cost For Participation</b>	<b>Percentage Of Total Cost</b>
<b>Allegheny County Public Schools</b>	<b>\$2,575</b>	<b>51.5%</b>
Covington City Public Schools	\$1,800	36.0%
Jackson River Technical Center	\$625	12.5%
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$5,000</b>	<b>100%</b>

*Source: Created by Evergreen Solutions, 2006.*

## FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented at a one-time cost to the division of approximately \$2,750. This cost assumes a cost of \$5,000 for the professional development system and that ACPS would be responsible for 51.5 percent of the total cost.

The division currently has a \$25,000 budget dedicated to professional development. The division can expect to save an estimated 20 percent of this budget on an annual basis through the cooperative arrangement, or \$5,000.

Factoring in the one-time implementation cost for the Web-based application in year one, the division could realize total cost savings of \$22,750 over a five-year period.



Recommendation	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12
Develop Online Professional Development System	(\$2,750)	\$5,000	\$5,000	\$5,000	\$5,000

## FINDING

Allegheny County Public Schools offers a number of avenues for teachers and staff to obtain technology training, but could do more. ACPS teachers have varying levels of technical proficiency.

The division's two Instructional Technology Resource Teachers provide technical instruction upon request to teachers and staff. Some professional development opportunities are available through the Dabney S. Lancaster Community College's summer technology program and Jackson River Technical Center night classes. As needed, ETC staff also provide professional development opportunities.

For Fall 2006, classes available to the community and division staff included through the Jackson River Technical Center included:

- Microsoft Windows XP Operating System — a 5-week, 15-hour class;
- Microsoft PowerPoint 2003 — a 5-week, 15-hours class;
- Protect Your PC — a 5-week, 10-hour class;
- Educational Technology — a 10-week, 30-hour class; and
- Upgrade Your PC — a 5-week, 10-hour class.

Beyond this, the division itself only provides teachers with one day of inservice per year related to technology training, with topics determined by teacher interest (last held in Fall 2006). Moreover, staff reports there are no set expectations regarding technical professional development.

**Exhibit 10-10** shows the results of Evergreen's survey regarding technology training and expectations. As can be seen, ACPS administrators and teachers generally have more positive opinions related to whether teachers receive technology training, are expected to integrate technology, and know how to use technology in the classroom in comparison to counterparts in Evergreen's survey database.

However, ACPS staff reports that teachers vary greatly in their level of technical proficiency. While most teachers use e-mail regularly, they may not be using all of the tools within the e-mail application. Staff reports that most teachers are proficient in Microsoft Word, but most are not proficient in Microsoft Excel. The division has a gradebook application, but teachers generally only use it to input student final grades, rather than to keep a running tally of all class grades. SmartBoard use varies depending on each teacher's ability.



**Exhibit 10-10  
Administrators and Teachers Survey Results Regarding Technology Training  
Allegheny County Public Schools and Districts in Evergreen’s Survey Database**

Survey Statement	ACPS Administrators		Administrators in Evergreen’s Survey Database		ACPS Teachers		Teachers in Evergreen’s Survey Database	
	Strongly Agree + Agree	Strongly Disagree + Disagree	Strongly Agree + Agree	Strongly Disagree + Disagree	Strongly Agree + Agree	Strongly Disagree + Disagree	Strongly Agree + Agree	Strongly Disagree + Disagree
Teachers receive training in how to integrate technology into the classroom.	95.2%	0%	82.1%	10.7%	88.0%	8.7%	63.3%	27.9%
Teachers are expected to integrate technology into the classroom.	95.2%	0%	85.7%	10.7%	94.0%	2.2%	70.8%	14.2%
Teachers know how to use computers in the classroom.	95.2%	4.8%	79.4%	8.0%	85.3%	8.7%	58.3%	15.7%

Source: *Evergreen Solutions Survey Results, 2006.*

Covington City Public Schools holds an annual Technology Expo as part of its teacher preservice workshops. Teachers can select workshops on topics of interest and can make requests for desired workshop topics. The Technology Expo is held in mid-August each year, and trainers from outside organizations provide some of the content. Teachers select the workshops they wish to attend the Spring before. While they can choose whatever topics they wish, teachers are required to attend four sessions. Staff reports this professional development opportunity has been well-received.

**RECOMMENDATION**

**Recommendation 10-9:**

**Seek an agreement to co-host the Covington City Public Schools Technology Expo.**

The recommendation calls for ACPS to work with CCPS to participate in a joint conference. Both divisions already leverage their technology through joint support of the ETC, and a joint technology conference would be a logical extension. A larger audience would increase the potential for bringing in outside conference presenters in new technologies. The overall goal of this recommendation would not be to substitute the division’s day of technology training, but to expand beyond one day to multiple days. CCPS already has a good process for its Technology Expo and ACPS should seek to join this.

This recommendation was not made with the intent of combining services wherever possible. Rather, Evergreen found that CCPS appeared to have a more robust approach to technology in-service training, as noted in interviews with staff members in both divisions (and the ETC), and on survey results. So, rather than recommend that ACPS work to improve its technology training and broaden its technology offerings in isolation, Evergreen recommends that ACPS seek to become a part of what is apparently an already highly functioning program orchestrated by the CCPS.



## FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources. CCPS currently pays for the Technology Expo out of existing staff development funds as could be the case with ACPS.

## FINDING

ACPS and CCPS provide psychologists to assist in its special education program. Both divisions use psychologists, but do not attempt to coordinate their needs in order to better use the resource.

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) requires all public school districts that receive federal funds to identify students with learning disabilities or special learning needs so that accommodations can be made to provide equal learning opportunities. Once a student has been referred, the division must provide a comprehensive, nondiscriminatory assessment within a prescribed amount of time.

ACPS has two psychologists that are responsible for testing children at designated schools. CCPS contracts for the services of a psychologist who is based in Lynchburg, Virginia. The psychologist must provide a comprehensive written assessment for each student referred to special education within 60 days of the referral.

**Exhibit 10-11** shows the number of special needs students for ACPS and its peer divisions, and **Exhibit 10-12** shows the same information for CCPS and its peer divisions.

ACPS has two psychologists that are responsible for testing approximately 500 special needs students at designated schools. CCPS contracts for the services of a psychologist who is based in Lynchburg, Virginia for testing about 200 special education students. The psychologist must provide a comprehensive written assessment for each student referred to special education within 60 days of the referral.

**Exhibit 10-11**  
**Special Needs Students**  
**Allegheny County and Peer Divisions**  
**2004-05 School Year**

School Division	Total Student Population	Special Education Students	Percent Special Education Students*
<b>Allegheny County</b>	<b>2,928</b>	<b>498</b>	<b>17.0%</b>
Dickenson County	2,494	446	17.9%
Nottoway County	2,391	426	17.8%
Patrick County	2,580	441	17.1%
Prince Edward County	2,741	559	20.4%
Southampton County	2,852	533	18.7%
<b>Peer Division Average</b>	<b>2,612</b>	<b>480</b>	<b>18.4%</b>

Source: Virginia Department of Education, Web site, 2006.

\*December 1, 2005 count.



**Exhibit 10-12**  
**Special Needs Students**  
**Covington City and Peer Divisions**  
**2005-06 School Year**

School Division	Total Student Population	Special Education Students	Percent Special Education Students*
<b>Covington City</b>	<b>870</b>	<b>205</b>	<b>23.6%</b>
Buena Vista City	1,125	169	15.0%
Franklin City	1,324	265	20.0%
Galax City	1,329	140	10.5%
Norton City	730	108	14.8%
West Point	802	93	11.6%
<b>Peer Division Average</b>	<b>1,062</b>	<b>153</b>	<b>14.4%</b>

*Source: Virginia Department of Education, Web site, 2006.*

\*December 1, 2005 count.

The two ACPS psychologists at ACPS are extremely busy with the testing and assessments of ACPS students, and often must work additional hours normally at the end of the school year to complete evaluations and make sure all paperwork is complete. ACPS includes its psychologists in Medicaid billings and uses some of the funds received to pay the psychologists for their additional hours.

Both ACPS and CCPS have the need for psychologists that are employed by one of the divisions. CCPS must contract for its psychologist and ACPS frequently pays its psychologist for additional hours. Workloads at ACPS vary during the year and could possibly be leveled if an additional psychologist was added and those services were shared with CCPS.

## RECOMMENDATION

### Recommendation 10-10:

#### **Develop a shared services arrangement between Allegheny County Public Schools and Covington City Public Schools for the services performed by psychologists.**

Developing a shared service arrangement for psychologists should enable the divisions to balance the needs of each division. A part-time psychologist paid for using the funds currently expended by CCPS for a contracted psychologist should provide both divisions with local service, and balance the changing needs of both divisions.

## FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources. Although no cost savings are anticipated, the service level to both divisions should be increased with the addition of a part-time psychologist funded from the CCPS budget that is being used to pay for a contracted psychologist, and ACPS using this third psychologist as needed.



**FINDING**

Both ACPS and CCPS are required to provide a special education program for students with disabilities, but do not share the services of specialized teachers or aides with each other.

The Federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) requires divisions to provide appropriate public education for all children with disabilities regardless of the severity of the handicap. The law states education is to be provided in the least restrictive environment, and that students with disabilities are to be included in state and district assessment programs.

The Virginia Department of Education establishes minimum staffing requirements for special education programs. Alternative special education staffing plans can be presented to the Department of Education for their approval for unique situations.

Special education instructional arrangements are based on the individual needs and individualized education programs of eligible students receiving special education services. Students who receive their instruction and related services in a regular classroom are considered to be in a mainstream instructional setting. Additional instructional arrangements include, but are not limited to, a resource room where the student is removed from the regular classroom less than 50 percent of the day or a self-contained class where the student is removed from the regular classroom more than 50 percent of the day. If a student's disability is so severe that satisfactory education cannot take place for any part of the school day in a regular classroom, he or she may be served in a separate self-contained classroom. In addition, a school division must be prepared to provide a more restrictive setting, such as a day treatment program or even a residential treatment placement, if the student's needs and educational program require a more restrictive placement.

Specific areas of eligibility for special education services include autism, deafness, hearing impairment, mental retardation, speech and language impairment, auditory impairment, traumatic brain injury, serious emotional disturbance, vision impairment including blindness, multiple disabilities, orthopedic impairment, other health impairments, learning disabilities, pervasive developmental issues, and homebound instruction for students unable to attend school. Most divisions also provide a pre-school program for children with disabilities who are three to five years old.

Prior to 1998, ACPS and CCPS shared some special education services for a number of years. At one time, the divisions shared a pre-school program, with ACPS providing pre-school services to eight to ten CCPS students, and CCPS providing services to two or three severely mentally retarded students. The divisions also shared specialized teachers including those who specialized in working with hearing and sight impaired students.

The need for special education services changes between school years and even during a school year. The staffing necessary to provide needed services and to meet the Commonwealth's minimum staffing requirements also changes. An example of how situations can easily change that would significantly impact teacher staffing needs would be if either the one CCPS hearing impaired student or the one specialized teacher for the hearing impaired were to leave the division.



## RECOMMENDATION

### Recommendation 10-11:

**Develop a shared services arrangement between Alleghany County Public Schools and Covington City Public Schools for special education needs, especially for specialized teachers where there are a limited number of students needing that service.**

Both ACPS and CCPS could benefit from an arrangement that shares special education staff. Analyzing the needs of each division as a part of the annual budget process and developing a shared service arrangement based on those annual needs would have the potential of decreasing costs for both divisions. Also by developing an arrangement that monitors student needs and available specialized teachers during the year could also improve the services to each division's students.

## FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources. The cost savings cannot be determined at this time.

## FINDING

ACPS and CCPS are both hampered by their small size in their efforts to make available a variety of Advanced Placement (AP) and Dual Enrollment (DE) courses. Each division attempts to make AP and DE courses available to students who desire to take these courses.

During the 2005-06 school year, two AP classes were offered to CHS students. Thirty-two (32) students are currently enrolled in four advanced placement courses. Two are offered on the internet in US Government and Senior English. Additionally, two courses in US History and English 11 are being taught on campus by Covington High School (CHS) teachers. The CCPS Virginia School Report Card reflects that too few CCPS students are currently enrolled in dual enrollment and advanced placement courses. No CCPS students were enrolled in the Governor's School courses.

Alleghany High School provides a number of advanced placement and dual enrollment classes for its students. Five advanced placement teachers provide courses on campus in English, Government, Calculus and US History. The division has five advanced placement teachers—one each for Art, Calculus, Government, US History, and English 12. Four dual enrollment teachers provide course in English, Political Science, Marine Ecology and Forestry.

ACPS and CCPS students have participated in DE classes offered by the Jackson River Governor's School and Dabney S. Lancaster Community College, both located in Clifton Forge. Dual enrollment courses are offered at the Governor's School that are taught by college professors in a college environment. Enrollment of ACPS and CCPS students has drastically declined since 2000-01. One major reason given for the decline was the travel that students had to incur between their campuses and the Governor's School.



ACPS and CCPS student enrollment at the Jackson River Governor's School is shown in **Exhibit 10-13**.

**Exhibit 10-13**  
**Student Enrollment by Year**

Year	Allegheny County Public Schools	Covington City Public Schools
2000-01	19	3
2001-02	13	1
2002-03	12	3
2003-04	13	5
2004-05	8	4
2005-06	23	7
2006-07	5	0

*Source Jackson River Governor's School, 2006.*

Many divisions find that a cost effective way to offer additional opportunities to students who desire to take advanced courses is to share its instructional resources. In many instances, students are transported between campuses to enable them to attend AP and DE classes that are not offered at their campuses. Others use technology to simulcast instruction that is presented at one location to another location so that students can take the course without having to travel between campuses.

## RECOMMENDATION

### Recommendation 10-12:

**Consider establishing a shared service arrangement to enhance the opportunities for Allegheny High School and Covington High School students to take advanced placement and dual enrollment courses.**

By establishing a shared service arrangement for advance placement and dual enrollment courses, students who desire to take advanced courses can be provided more opportunities. A shared service arrangement will probably benefit the students of CCPS more than ACPS because CCPS students will be provided more of an increase in the number of courses than ACPS students. The cost to the division that administers a shared course can be reduced by recovering a portion of the cost from the other division. Developing a program that uses simulcasting of classes will provide students access to the advanced courses without having to leave their campus.

## FISCAL IMPACT

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources although each division could incur minimal transportation expense to transport students between campuses. Simulcasting of courses between the divisions can be implemented using each division's current Internet connections. While both ACPS and CCPS have the technology equipment and infrastructure necessary for simulcasting classes between Allegheny High School and Covington High School using the Internet, each would need to establish priority for the simulcasting to help with the



quality of the transmission. Should the quality of simulcasting using the Internet prove to be less than desirable, a direct connection between the high schools would need to be considered and evaluated. Many options are available that could cost between \$1,000 and \$2,250 a month for each division.

## FINDING

ACPS and CCPS have separate purchasing programs that acquire commonly used items through bids and contracts but do not have purchasing agreements to share purchasing arrangements. Both ACPS and CCPS purchase food produces and supplies for its food services programs, general office supplies, custodial and building maintenance supplies, and instructional supplies.

Purchasing programs at both ACPS and CCPS are decentralized with the finance officer at each division providing central oversight for each division. Neither CCPS nor ACPS has staff who perform central purchasing functions for their respective divisions. Almost all purchases are made by staff at the schools and departments. Purchasing is initiated by the schools and departments, and then sent to the finance offices for final review and processing.

Many entities enter into purchasing agreements with other entities to get better pricing from vendors and to reduce administrative costs. Generally, each entity will determine an approximate amount of merchandise they intend to purchase during a 12-month period. One of the entities will then consolidate all amounts and perform the competitive purchasing functions. All entities are then allowed to process individual purchase orders from these bids. Vendors normally offer better pricing to consolidated purchases because the amounts to be purchased are generally larger than if purchased by a single entity.

## RECOMMENDATION

### Recommendation 10-13:

**Develop a shared purchasing agreement between Allegheny County Public Schools and Covington City Public Schools for commonly acquired office, custodial, and instructional supplies.**

Although both divisions acquire much of their supplies from state contracts, coordinating and sharing bids and contracts for all other items will reduce the actual cost of the items by increasing the volume purchased and also decrease administrative work associated with processing and managing separate bids and contracts. Combining bidding and contracting for commonly acquired items for items not acquired from state contracts can also reduce the cost to each of the divisions.

ACPS, CCPS, Allegheny County, and the City of Covington all could benefit from a consolidated shared purchasing agreement for commonly acquired supplies and materials. Each could save administrative time by using the same bids and contracts and addition could reduce the cost of items when purchased in bulk (also see **Recommendation 10-2**).



**FISCAL IMPACT**

Both ACPS and CCPS can realize cost savings in addition to reducing administrative workloads by combining purchases and sharing bids and contracts. While each entity purchases items unique only to that entity savings on common items should result in savings that average three percent of total purchases. ACPS expenditures for supplies and materials total approximately \$1,077,000 a year. A conservative estimate of a three percent savings in the cost of items purchased will provide ACPS an annual savings of \$32,310 (\$1,077,000 x 3 percent). This conservative estimate is based on the experiences of Evergreen consultants. Allegheny County can also realize similar savings by participating in the shared purchasing agreement. Additional savings would be possible if ACPS and CCPS expanded the agreement to include Allegheny County and the City of Covington.

Recommendation	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12
Develop a Shared Purchasing Agreement	\$32,310	\$32,310	\$32,310	\$32,310	\$32,310

**FINDING**

Both ACPS and CCPS are using many of the same vendors for products necessary in food service operations, but are not seeking to negotiate together and thus potentially reduce costs.

**Exhibit 10-14** compares the 2006-07 vendors for ACPS and CCPS. As the exhibit shows, both divisions share the same vendors for most food purchases. Moreover, staff in both divisions noted that they do not receive many bids from a variety of vendors. Both divisions believe this is related to the relatively small value of the separate contracts. Some national vendors may be uninterested in the smaller contracts for bid by small food service operations, but could be interested in a more sizeable joint contract.

Joining with other government entities to make shared purchases typically results in overall cost savings, as the entities are able to negotiate lower per unit costs at higher volumes. Various food service departments across the country report significant food savings from joining a purchasing cooperative. One large national purchasing cooperative, run by the Region IV Educational Service Center in Houston, Texas, reports that members of the cooperative save as much as 25 percent in certain categories of purchase, with an administrative cost of two percent.

**Exhibit 10-14  
Comparison of Food Service Vendors to CCPS and ACPS  
2006-07 School Year**

Product	ACPS Vendor	CCPS Vendor
Food Products	Staunton Foods Quality Foods	Staunton Foods Quality Foods
Fruit and Produce	Staunton Fruit and Produce	Staunton Fruit and Produce
Dairy	Broughton Food Company	United Dairy
Bread	Flowers Baking Company	Flowers Baking Company

*Source: Allegheny County Public Schools and Covington City Public Schools, 2006.*



**RECOMMENDATION**

**Recommendation 10-14:**

**Adopt shared purchasing in food services with Covington City Public Schools.**

Both school divisions currently use many of the same vendors for bread, food, and paper products. They could likely achieve a greater economy of scale by purchasing the same items jointly and may find that additional vendors will compete for their business, as the contract volume will be larger. ACPS may want to consider expanding this shared purchasing even further and reach out to appropriate representatives of other neighboring school divisions (e.g., Rockbridge and Botetourt). The division may find even greater economies of scale joining or creating a regional purchasing cooperative.

**FISCAL IMPACT**

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources. Joining with CCPS to purchase food products should save the division at least two percent of its annual food costs based on best practices seen in other school systems. In 2005-06, the division spent \$741,086 on food products. A modest two percent reduction in that cost would result in an annual savings of \$14,822.

<b>Recommendation</b>	<b>2007-08</b>	<b>2008-09</b>	<b>2009-10</b>	<b>2010-11</b>	<b>2011-12</b>
Adopt Shared Food Services Purchasing with CCPS	\$14,822	\$14,822	\$14,822	\$14,822	\$14,822

**FINDING**

The ACPS transportation program is relatively small (ranks second in its peer group with 43 route buses), and would be considered a mid-sized pupil transportation system. In addition to the buses there are 29 other pieces of equipment being supported by the Allegheny County garage. In addition to labor, this includes providing the maintenance, supplies, and fueling needs. The overall operational size of the County garage dictates relatively little buying power for parts, supplies, fuel, etc. The County does an excellent job of maintaining the equipment, but there is room for improve.

**RECOMMENDATION**

**Recommendation 10-15:**

**Actively seek a shared or co-op purchasing arrangement in transportation with other nearby governmental entities.**

ACPS should explore with other nearby divisions (e.g., CCPS, City, County, Public Works, DOT, State, etc.) as to what items of similar kind are generally purchased (i.e., fuel, lubes, oils,



parts, supplies, etc.) Expanding the buying power by increasing the quantities is common and is being done more frequently as agencies seek ways to control costs.

**FISCAL IMPACT**

Based upon the projected expenses for fuels, lubes, and other parts and support items (total: \$208,000) a reduction of 10 percent would be expected by group purchases. The 10 percent savings is based on past experiences and the cost savings the State has received by the volume of sales. This would equate to a favorable \$20,800 potential impact for the ACPS plus additional savings for the other participants.

<b>Recommendation</b>	<b>2007-08</b>	<b>2008-09</b>	<b>2009-10</b>	<b>2010-11</b>	<b>2011-12</b>
Organize Transportation Purchasing Co-Op	\$20,800	\$20,800	\$20,800	\$20,800	\$20,800

**FINDING**

ACPS and CCPS both operate pupil transportation programs for the students of the divisions. ACPS runs 43 routes each day compared to five for CCPS. Very little coordination or sharing of services exists between the divisions. The one shared transportation service is for one CCPS student that is transported by an ACPS bus to the Shenandoah Autism Center in Clifton Forge.

Although the cost per pupil for transporting division students for both ACPS and CCPS are below the peer averages of their respective peer divisions, costs could possibly be reduced with a consolidated transportation program. The CCPS cost per pupil is \$270 compared to its peer division average of \$307 and ACPS cost per pupil of \$538 is below its peer division average of \$668. Determining the efficiency of a pupil transportation program and comparing cost on a pure cost per student is difficult and does not provide a reliable basis for comparability purposes.

A recommendation in the transportation chapter of the ACPS report recommends the division hire a transportation director to manage the transportation needs of the division. Transportation at ACPS is managed on part-time basis by a long-time employee who is contemplating retirement. The CCPS transportation program is managed by the Director of Administrative Services who also is responsible for the division’s food services program, procurement, gifted and talented, testing, and maintenance of facilities.

Many entities find the most opportune time to consider sharing a service is when there is a change in personnel such as when a long-time employee leaves or when an additional position is added.

**RECOMMENDATION**

**Recommendation 10-16:**

**Consider sharing the services of a Director of Transportation employed by Allegheny County Public Schools.**



Sharing the service of a full-time transportation director employed by ACPS will improve both ACPS and CCPS transportation programs and has the potential of reducing cost for each division. Sharing the services of a Director of Transportation will provide each division with expertise of a transportation professional that will potentially improve the transportation programs in both divisions. While the initial benefit provides management expertise to the two programs, coordinating and combining routes of the two divisions should be explored to reduce the cost to both divisions.

**FISCAL IMPACT**

The annual compensation for a Director of Transportation is estimated to be \$74,800 which includes a salary of \$55,000 plus employee benefits of \$19,800 (\$55,000 x 36 percent). Although CCPS has only five routes compared to ACPS 43 routes, in order to manage two separate operations, the split in time is estimated to be approximately 85 percent for ACPS and 15 percent for CCPS. The additional cost to hire a Director of Transportation is presented in Chapter 7, Transportation.

The CCPS cost of the shared transportation service is estimated to be \$11,220 per year (\$74,800 x 15 percent), plus the indirect cost previously discussed.

Recommendation	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12
Share Director of Transportation	\$11,220	\$11,220	\$11,220	\$11,220	\$11,220

**FINDING**

The ACPS Transportation System serves a large area that is geographically concentric to the Covington City Schools (CCPS) service area. The ACPS system serves its own needs as well as those of the area vocational school. The ACPS system was reviewed in conjunction with its neighboring division (CCPS). During this effort it was discovered that a number of ACPS transportation buses traverse through and in some cases actually stop in Covington City to pick up students on their own daily transport endeavors. Currently, one CCPS autistic child is being transported with an agreement with ACPS to the Clifton Forge area. Each division services a common vocational school which is proximate to Allegheny High School. The bus fleet for ACPS has a higher percentage of single-routed buses with fewer mid-day route commitments. The CCPS transportation system is more stressed with extra work.

**RECOMMENDATION**

**Recommendation 10-17:**

**Analyze opportunities to coordinate transportation services with the Covington City Public Schools to leverage existing assets.**

This analysis would expand upon the bell schedule and route consolidation recommendation (**Recommendation 7-6**) in Chapter 7 and require a more refined review of the bell systems between both divisions. This effort must concentrate on affixing times that will create opportunities to share services and assets, while allowing for an improved service to the



vocational school. All services and issues need to be considered, including vocational school shuttles, the mid-day routes (City has many while the County has only a few), special education, extra-curricular trips, the short City routes, bus capacities, all single-routed buses, avoidance of driver overtime, and bus maintenance. Every opportunity to lower overhead must be explored.

The concept must be beneficial to both divisions as well as their shared vocational school. In order to gain efficiencies, positive gains occur in some or all of the following: in reduced numbers of drivers, hours, buses, reduced additional equipment purchases, and less overtime.

These shared services must be coordinated and managed on a centralized basis. This can be achieved in several ways: 1) create a more formal Transportation Coop agency which becomes a separate entity managed by one transportation director and funded and supervised by both divisions via a transportation committee; (2) a more simplified sharing effort via an intergovernmental agreement similar to the less official method used now for the one autistic child being shared. Keep the two entities separate, but still managed by one director; or (3) it can be a contracted service arrangement where ACPS would be paid by CCPS to deliver their services for a fixed fee. The more formal entity or the contracted method would be more easily managed and would result in gaining the greatest amount of savings as it would be headed by one independent director who would oversee both transportation operations and have the ability to leverage all assets and combine as many efforts as is possible.

## FISCAL IMPACT

The computation of an actual fiscal impact becomes nearly impossible until a decision is made as to which of the entity structures is best suited for all parties and what combined services along with their associated costs become known. To view some potential savings, we have to make some assumptions: the combined expense for the two systems is determined by combining 2005-06 reported costs for all transportation (CCPS: \$236,000, ACPS: \$1,620,000 = \$1,856,000---13% for CCPS and 87% for ACPS) the combined route bus fleets would be 6 + 43 = 49 total route buses and this also approximates the 13 percent and 87 percent ratio from above. Adjusting the combined total cost per bus for fixed overhead the estimated combined cost per bus per year would be  $(\$1,856,000 \times .90 = \$1,670,400/49 = \$34,089$  per bus per year).

In an attempt to estimate potential savings, one can assume that a certain number of buses will be reduced or one can make an assumption of a fixed percent reduction of overall costs (assumes some percent of the miles, labor, etc. has been consolidated between the two operations, or in the case of the contracted services, ACPS would charge CCPS their cost of providing the services plus a management fee).

If the fixed percent method is chosen and 10 percent (which is more than possible) is used, the combined savings would be \$167,000 annually. This number would be enhanced by the overtime savings that would be saved within CCPS as the ACPS drivers have a lesser guarantee so the overtime pay at CCPS would disappear as work was shifted more equally among all drivers available. This would be an additional \$16,000 annually with an estimated annual combined total of \$183,000. The 10 percent overhead allowance (\$185,600) will more than cover the amount needed to be added for the cost of a Director/Supervisor as described in

**Recommendation 7-1** (Chapter 7 - \$64,000) so no further allowance should be given for this position.



Recommendation	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12
Share Transportation Services with CCPS*	\$183,000	\$183,000	\$183,000	\$183,000	\$183,000

\* These are estimates using broad assumptions. If the combined costs method is used at the minimal 10 percent savings level, these approximate savings would translate back into the 13 percent and 87 percent assumption of costs described above leaving ACPS with an estimated \$159,000 savings and CCPS with \$24,000 savings. These estimates are based on best practices seen in other school districts/divisions by Evergreen transportation consultants.

**FINDING**

Both Allegheny County Public Schools and Covington City Public Schools provide employee benefits packages to their employees. Employee benefit packages include options for coverages such as health, dental, and vision.

**Exhibit 10-15** shows ACPS Anthem health insurance premium information. The employer percentage share denotes the employer paid percentage of the premiums for each option. The percentage fluctuates annually contingent upon management decisions.

**Exhibit 10-15  
Anthem Health Insurance Premium and Participation Information  
2004 through 2006 Fiscal Years**

2006 – Key Care 20				
Coverage Plans	Total Premium	Employer Share	Employee Share	Employer % Share
EO	\$512	\$461	\$51	88%
E + 1	663	532	131	78
E + Spouse	845	589	256	68
Family	1229	731	498	58
ES [BE]	845	845	0	100
F {BE}	1229	1192	37	97
2005 – Key Care 15				
EO	480	403	77	84
E + 1	624	462	162	74
E + Spouse	792	515	277	65
Family	1152	634	518	55
ES [BE]	792	792	0	100
F {BE}	1152	1037	115	90
2004 - Key Care 15				
EO	394	340	54	85
E + 1	513	395	118	75
E + Spouse	651	430	221	65
Family	947	530	417	50
ES [BE]	651	651	0	100
F {BE}	947	870	77	91

Source: Allegheny County Public Schools, 2006.

COVERAGE PLAN CODES

EO = Employee Only  
 ES = Employee and Spouse  
 ES {BE}= Employee and Spouse, Both Employed by the Division;

E + 1 = Employee plus one child  
 F = Family  
 F {BE}= Family, Employee and Spouse Both Employed by the Division.



**Exhibit 10-16** provides ACPS health claims utilization for the last three years. As can be seen, Health insurance premiums have experienced a 31 percent increase since the 2003-04 fiscal year. It is important to note, however, that ACPS health insurance is rated on an insurance year of October through September.

**Exhibit 10-16  
Health Insurance Claims  
2003-04 through 2005-06 Fiscal Years**

Health Insurance Claims			
2003-04	2004-05	2005-06	Percent Increase
\$1,911,521	\$2,158,418	\$2,507,619	31%

*Source: Allegheny County Public Schools, Workers' Compensation Records, 2006.*

ACPS and CCPS employee benefit plans have similarities and differences. Both divisions procure health insurances for their own plan. Dental insurance is provided as an employer-paid benefit for CCPS employees and a self-paid option for Allegheny County Public Schools.

**Exhibit 10-17** shows examples of similarities and differences between both divisions' plans.

**Exhibit 10-17  
Allegheny County Public Schools and Covington City Public Schools  
Health Insurance Comparisons  
2006-07 School Year**

Category	ACPS	CCPS
Out of pocket	\$3,000/\$6,000	\$1,000/\$2,000/\$3,000
Deductible	None	\$100/\$200/\$300
Lifetime Maximum	Unlimited	Unlimited
Co Payments	\$20/\$40	\$15/\$20
Emergency Facility Service	\$100	\$75
In Patient Service	\$400	\$200
Out Patient Service	\$100	\$75
Dental	None	Included

*Source: Allegheny County Public Schools Records, 2006.*

**Exhibit 10-18** shows the ACPS comparison of ACPS insurance costs based on CCPS plan and CCPS insurance costs based on the ACPS insurance plan. Calculations for these estimates assume the same participant levels for each division and, thereby, do not consider potential savings that may be experienced for pooling the risk.

**RECOMMENDATION**

**Recommendation 10-18:**

**Explore cooperative bidding for health benefits.**



**Exhibit 10-18**  
**Allegheny County Public Schools and Covington City Public Schools**  
**Health Insurance Projected Cost Comparisons**

<b>Division</b>	<b>Number Of Participants</b>	<b>Total Annual Cost with Current Plan</b>	<b>Estimated Costs if ACPS Used CCPS Plan</b>	<b>Estimated Costs if CCPS Used the ACPS Plan</b>	<b>Estimated Additional (Costs) Savings</b>
Allegheny County Public Schools	317	\$2,707,389	\$3,080,655		\$356,266
Covington City Public Schools	115	\$1,324,153		\$1,191,169	(\$132,984)
<b>TOTAL</b>	432		\$3,080,655	\$1,191,169	\$223,266

Source: Allegheny County Public Schools Records, 2006.

Cooperating with the health insurance bids could potentially benefit both divisions. Both plans are more similar than different. The opportunity to pool participants and spread the risk over a larger pool could have a dilutive impact on premiums. School divisions with small employee populations have benefited from a pooling of the risk. Even though each plan has aspects which are more costly than the other, the divisions, working cooperatively, should strive for a plan design that benefits both divisions and minimizes the costs.

**FISCAL IMPACT**

Estimated potential cost savings of \$135,370 could be saved by a five percent reduction in costs associated with the pooling of risks. Estimated savings are calculated by multiplying the projected total annual health insurance costs of \$2,707,389 times five percent. The five percent is a conservative estimate based on experiences found in other school systems.

<b>Recommendation</b>	<b>2007-08</b>	<b>2008-09</b>	<b>2009-10</b>	<b>2010-11</b>	<b>2011-12</b>
Explore Cooperative Bidding for Health Benefits	\$135,370	\$135,370	\$135,370	\$135,370	\$135,370

**FINDING**

ACPS and CCPS do not have a formal agreement to encourage and manage a comprehensive shared services program. Additional shared service arrangements are available for the school divisions. Although cost savings can be achieved and services increased, they can only be successful if each shared service arrangement is properly organized and continually monitored under the auspices of a formal agreement.

Whether a new shared service is implemented by sharing the services of specific specialized staff members, consolidating operations, centralizing management, or sharing facilities, the success will be enhanced if each entity is provided a degree of oversight to the program. A formal



structure that provides each entity the opportunity to be involved in the oversight and monitoring of the shared service will greatly increase the success of the services shared and enhance the possibilities for future shared service arrangements. Most entities do not actively pursue new arrangements if an employee or multiple employees will be required to be terminated. Many times, shared service opportunities that are compatible with an entity's beliefs comes available when there is a resignation of a key employee whose duties could be enhanced or savings achieved through a shared services arrangement.

The JRTC provides ACPS and CCPS a good example and offers the foundation for forming a very sound and effective comprehensive formal shared services program. The JRTC is operated under a formal agreement between the two school divisions. Each division provides school division board members who serve on the JRTC Board of Control to provide oversight and direction. The agreement also specifies how costs are to be funded for participation in programs offered by the Center.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

### **Recommendation 10-19:**

#### **Develop a formal shared services agreement with Covington City Public Schools to encourage and manage additional shared service arrangements.**

A formal shared services agreement will enhance the opportunities for additional shared service arrangements by ensuring that each division has an opportunity to participate in the oversight of the services provided. An agreement will also encourage further sharing of services by continually bringing shared services to the attention of both divisions.

## **FISCAL IMPACT**

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

## **FINDING**

Indirect cost allocation rates have not been established to enable ACPS and CCPS to recovery their respective indirect and support costs when providing shared services to other entities.

While a number of shared services are being performed between ACPS and CCPS (such as a shared nursing program and an attendance officer), an indirect cost rate has not been calculated to determine the total cost of providing the services. This report identifies other services that should be considered for a shared services arrangement where indirect costs should be considered.

One concern pointed out to the Evergreen Review Team that would be a deterrent to additional sharing service, arrangements was the ability of the division that manages a shared service to be reimbursed for its total costs of providing the service, including employee benefits and indirect costs. The division that provides a shared service with its staff incurs costs in addition to direct labor costs which is not reimbursed. The division that provides the staff to perform a shared



service incurs the cost of supporting that personnel, while the division that receives the service receives a benefit for not being required to provide support to the personnel. In order for each division to incur only its proportionate share of the total costs of providing or receiving a shared service, the total costs including the direct costs and indirect costs must be calculated and shared on an equitable basis.

Indirect costs are normally those which are not directly associated with the actual salary of the personnel that performs a specific service or function. Although, many times the employee benefits of the personnel such as health and dental insurance premiums, workers' compensation costs, social security and/or retirement benefits have been calculated and are readily identifiable, the indirect costs incurred by the division to support the personnel are less tangible and have not been calculated. These costs are normally the support costs of administration (such as those for the Superintendent, finance, human resources, and for indirect costs such as providing office space, supplies, telephone, and technology).

## **RECOMMENDATION**

### **Recommendation 10-20:**

**Establish indirect cost rates for shared service arrangements for Allegheny County Public Schools and Covington City Public Schools that are calculated using the same methodology.**

Calculating and using indirect cost rates will help ensure that the total costs for providing a shared service is included in reimbursements. Calculating indirect costs rates using the same methodology will also ensure that reimbursements between the two divisions are equitable.

## **FISCAL IMPACT**

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.

## **FINDING**

JRTC personnel reported that the Advisory Committee is instrumental in encouraging the addition of new programs at the Center. Specific instances of contributions made by long-standing committee members were cited. However, the Advisory Committee does not, by either charter or by-laws, reflect the current local job market. Interviewees stated that no by-laws exist to specify operational and organizational guidelines. Provision should be made for the rotation of membership to ensure that representation reflects local and national employment needs as they continually change.

The 2001 cooperative agreement between the two school boards regarding the operation of the Technical Center references one of the Board of Control's powers to "adopt such constitution and by-laws as are necessary for the efficient operation" of JRTC. They specify a set pro rata share contributed by each division for capital outlay and specify the pro rata portion of operating costs as three-year average of Average Daily Membership (ADM) of each division's students on March 30. Membership on the Board of Control is not similarly representative of each division's



enrollment. ACPS has four representatives and CCPS three. However, the percentage of students that ACPS has is 76 percent compared to CCPS's 24 percent.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

### **Recommendation 10-21:**

**Adopt by-laws for governance of the JRTC that specify tenure and turnover of advisory committee members, and re-address the percentages of Board of Control representatives to mirror student enrollments at the Center.**

As many interviewees from the schools and community testified during site visits, the local job market has changed dramatically within the past five years. As local circumstances change, so does the need for the CTE courses offered within the community to change to reflect both local and national employment needs. Such ongoing reflection is essential to prepare local students for success after graduation. Both divisions are in the same community. Graduates of both do and will continue to benefit from the career preparation they receive at JRTC. It is critical that current job market trends are represented on the Advisory Committee. Having by-laws upon which both divisions agree would continue to ensure that the employment needs of all students in the entire community will be represented in Board and Advisory Committee decisions about available courses.

## **FISCAL IMPACT**

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources.



**CHAPTER 11:  
COSTS AND SAVINGS SUMMARY**



Chapter 11

**COSTS AND SAVINGS SUMMARY**

The Evergreen Team has developed about 100 recommendations in this report. Approximately 30 of the recommendations have fiscal implications. **Exhibit 11-1** shows the total costs and savings for study recommendations that have fiscal impacts in the operational areas in ACPS (excluding shared services), while **Exhibit 11-2** shows the savings for shared services recommendations. As can be seen, the total net savings is over \$1.5 million over five years for operational efficiencies in ACPS and over \$2.8 for shared services recommendations. The five-year costs and savings are shown in 2007 dollars. It is important to keep in mind that the identified savings and costs are incremental and cumulative.

**Exhibit 11-1**  
**Summary of Annual Costs and Savings by Year**  
**Over Five Years for Non-Shared Services Recommendations**  
**(Chapters 2-9)**

Costs/Savings	Years					Total 5-Year (Costs) or Savings	One-Time (Costs)
	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11		
<b>Total Costs</b>	<b>(\$294,517)</b>	<b>(\$370,117)</b>	<b>(\$447,637)</b>	<b>(\$447,637)</b>	<b>(\$447,637)</b>	<b>(\$2,007,545)</b>	
<b>Total Savings</b>	<b>\$532,203</b>	<b>\$713,704</b>	<b>\$753,704</b>	<b>\$774,915</b>	<b>\$774,915</b>	<b>\$3,549,441</b>	<b>(\$37,836)</b>
<b>Total Net Savings</b>	<b>\$237,686</b>	<b>\$343,587</b>	<b>\$306,067</b>	<b>\$327,278</b>	<b>\$327,278</b>	<b>\$1,541,896</b>	
<b>Total Five-Year Net Savings Minus One-Time (Costs)</b>						<b>\$1,504,060</b>	

**Exhibit 11-2**  
**Summary of Annual Costs and Savings by Year**  
**Over Five Years for Shared Services Recommendations**  
**(Chapter 10)**

Costs/Savings	Years					Total 5-Year (Costs) or Savings	One-Time (Costs)
	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11		
<b>Total Costs</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$0</b>	
<b>Total Savings</b>	<b>\$559,630</b>	<b>\$564,630</b>	<b>\$564,630</b>	<b>\$564,630</b>	<b>\$564,630</b>	<b>\$2,818,150</b>	
<b>Total Net Savings</b>	<b>\$559,630</b>	<b>\$564,630</b>	<b>\$564,630</b>	<b>\$564,630</b>	<b>\$564,630</b>	<b>\$2,818,150</b>	<b>(\$2,750)</b>
<b>Total Five-Year Net Savings Minus One-Time (Costs)</b>						<b>\$2,815,400*</b>	

\*Approximately \$750,000 are for shared service savings with Allegheny County Government; the remainder use for shared services with Covington City Public Schools.



**Exhibit 11-3** shows costs and savings by chapter for non-shared services recommendations in Chapters 2 through 9.

**Exhibit 11-4** shows costs and savings for shared services recommendations in Chapter 10. These costs/cost savings would directly impact ACPS if pursued with either Alleghany County Government (**Recommendations 10-2 and 10-3**) or with Covington City Public Schools (other recommendations).

About 170 additional recommendations in this report do not have a fiscal impact. These recommendations are included in Chapters 2 through 10 of the full report.



**Exhibit 11-3  
Summary of Annual Costs and Savings by Year  
for Non-Shared Services Recommendations by Chapter  
(Chapters 2-9)**

Chapter	Recommendation	Estimated (Cost)/Savings					Total 5-Year (Costs) or Savings	One-Time (Costs)
		2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11		
<b>CHAPTER 2: DIVISION ADMINISTRATION</b>								
2-6	Hire Planning and Accountability Supervisor	(\$89,247)	(\$89,247)	(\$89,247)	(\$89,247)	(\$89,247)	\$446,235	
2-8	Consider Elimination of Two Assistant Principal Positions	\$178,171	\$178,171	\$178,171	\$178,171	\$178,171	\$890,855	
<b>Chapter 2 Subtotal (Cost)/Savings</b>		<b>\$88,924</b>	<b>\$88,924</b>	<b>\$88,924</b>	<b>\$88,924</b>	<b>\$88,924</b>	<b>\$444,620</b>	
<b>CHAPTER 3: HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGEMENT</b>								
3-1	Implement Human Resources RDA Component	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	(\$14,250)
3-11	Conduct Compensation and Classification Study	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	(\$22,500)
<b>Chapter 3 Subtotal (Cost)/Savings</b>		<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>(\$36,750)</b>
<b>CHAPTER 4: FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT</b>								
4-2	Integrate Financial Accounting Systems	(\$14,100)	(\$9,500)	(\$9,500)	(\$9,500)	(\$9,500)	\$52,100	
<b>Chapter 4 Subtotal (Cost)/Savings</b>		<b>(\$14,100)</b>	<b>(\$9,500)</b>	<b>(\$9,500)</b>	<b>(\$9,500)</b>	<b>(\$9,500)</b>	<b>\$52,100</b>	
<b>CHAPTER 5: EDUCATIONAL SERVICE DELIVERY AND MANAGEMENT</b>								
5-1	Combine Visiting Teacher/ Attendance Officer Positions	\$74,896	\$74,896	\$74,896	\$74,896	\$74,896	\$374,480	
5-7	Reduce Number of Teacher Aide Positions	\$147,301	\$294,602	\$294,602	\$294,602	\$294,602	\$1,325,709	
5-9	Adapt Proven Strategies for Referral to Special Education	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	(\$1,086)
<b>Chapter 5 Subtotal (Cost)/Savings</b>		<b>\$222,197</b>	<b>\$369,498</b>	<b>\$369,498</b>	<b>\$369,498</b>	<b>\$369,498</b>	<b>\$1,700,189</b>	<b>(\$1,086)</b>
<b>CHAPTER 6: FACILITIES USE AND MANAGEMENT</b>								
6-3	Limit Variety of Equipment and Materials	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$13,800	\$13,800	\$27,600	
6-4	Hire Additional Mechanics and Helpers	(\$34,000)	(\$81,600)	(\$159,120)	(\$159,120)	(\$159,120)	\$592,960	
6-6	Hire Custodial Manager	\$0	(\$47,600)	(\$47,600)	(\$47,600)	(\$47,600)	\$190,400	
6-7	Use the LEED Green Building Rating System	\$0	\$34,200	\$74,200	\$74,200	\$74,200	\$256,800	
<b>Chapter 6 Subtotal (Cost)/Savings</b>		<b>\$34,000</b>	<b>\$95,000</b>	<b>\$132,520</b>	<b>\$118,720</b>	<b>\$118,720</b>	<b>\$498,960</b>	



**Exhibit 11-3 (Continued)**  
**Summary of Annual Costs and Savings by Year**  
**for Non-Shared Services Recommendations by Chapter**  
**(Chapters 2-9)**

Chapter	Recommendation	Estimated (Cost)/Savings					Total 5-Year (Costs) or Savings	One-Time (Costs)
		2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11		
<b>CHAPTER 7: TRANSPORTATION</b>								
7-1	Hire Transportation Supervisor	(\$64,000)	(\$64,000)	(\$64,000)	(\$64,000)	(\$64,000)	\$320,000	
7-5	Purchase Routing Software	(\$8,000)	(\$1,500)	(\$1,500)	(\$1,500)	(\$1,500)	\$14,000	
7-6	Alter Bell Times	\$65,928	\$65,928	\$65,928	\$65,928	\$65,928	\$329,640	
<b>Chapter 7 Subtotal (Cost)/Savings</b>		<b>\$6,072</b>	<b>\$428</b>	<b>\$428</b>	<b>\$428</b>	<b>\$428</b>	<b>\$4,360</b>	
<b>CHAPTER 8: TECHNOLOGY MANAGEMENT</b>								
8-2	Increase Technical Staff	(\$75,170)	(\$75,170)	(\$75,170)	(\$75,170)	(\$75,170)	\$375,850	
<b>Chapter 8 Subtotal (Cost)/Savings</b>		<b>\$75,170</b>	<b>\$75,170</b>	<b>\$75,170</b>	<b>\$75,170</b>	<b>\$75,170</b>	<b>\$375,850</b>	
<b>CHAPTER 9: FOOD SERVICE</b>								
9-1	Develop Limited Central Storage	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$7,411	\$7,411	\$14,822	
9-2	Charge the Food Service Program for Utilities and Custodial Costs	\$50,555	\$50,555	\$50,555	\$50,555	\$50,555	\$252,775	
9-3	Implement Further POS Modules	(\$10,000)	(\$1,500)	(\$1,500)	(\$1,500)	(\$1,500)	\$16,000	
9-6	Improve Breakfast Participation	\$15,352	\$15,352	\$15,352	\$15,352	\$15,352	\$76,760	
<b>Chapter 9 Subtotal (Cost)/Savings</b>		<b>\$55,907</b>	<b>\$64,407</b>	<b>\$64,407</b>	<b>\$71,818</b>	<b>\$71,818</b>	<b>\$328,357</b>	
<b>TOTALS FOR NON-SHARED SERVICES (CHAPTERS 2-9)</b>								
<b>TOTAL COSTS</b>		<b>(\$294,517)</b>	<b>(\$370,117)</b>	<b>(\$447,637)</b>	<b>(\$447,637)</b>	<b>(\$447,637)</b>	<b>(\$2,007,545)</b>	
<b>TOTAL SAVINGS</b>		<b>\$532,203</b>	<b>\$713,704</b>	<b>\$753,704</b>	<b>\$774,915</b>	<b>\$774,915</b>	<b>\$3,549,441</b>	<b>(\$37,836)</b>
<b>TOTAL NET SAVINGS</b>							<b>\$1,541,896</b>	
<b>TOTAL FIVE-YEAR NET SAVINGS MINUS ONE-TIME (COSTS)</b>								<b>\$1,504,060</b>



**Exhibit 11-4  
Summary of Annual Costs and Savings by Year for  
Shared Services Recommendations by Chapter  
(Chapter 10)**

Chapter	Recommendation	Estimated (Cost)/Savings					Total 5-Year (Costs) or Savings	One-Time (Costs)
		2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11		
<b>CHAPTER 10: SHARED SERVICES</b>								
10-2	Develop Shared Purchasing Agreement	\$21,540	\$21,540	\$21,540	\$21,540	\$21,540	\$107,700*	
10-3	Develop Shared Services Arrangement for Local Choice Health Insurance	\$127,500	\$127,500	\$127,500	\$127,500	\$127,500	\$637,500*	
10-5	Share ACPS Energy Manager	\$13,068	\$13,068	\$13,068	\$13,068	\$13,068	\$65,340	
10-8	Develop Online Professional Development System	\$0	\$5,000	\$5,000	\$5,000	\$5,000	\$20,000	(\$2,750)
10-13	Develop a Shared Purchasing Agreement	\$32,310	\$32,310	\$32,310	\$32,310	\$32,310	\$161,550	
10-14	Adopt Shared Food Services Purchasing with CCPS	\$14,822	\$14,822	\$14,822	\$14,822	\$14,822	\$74,110	
10-15	Organize Transportation Purchasing Co-Op	\$20,800	\$20,800	\$20,800	\$20,800	\$20,800	\$104,000	
10-16	Share Director of Transportation	\$11,220	\$11,220	\$11,220	\$11,220	\$11,220	\$56,100	
10-17	Share Transportation Services with CCPS*	\$183,000	\$183,000	\$183,000	\$183,000	\$183,000	\$915,000	
10-18	Explore Cooperative Bidding for Health Benefits	\$135,370	\$135,370	\$135,370	\$135,370	\$135,370	\$676,850	
<b>Chapter 10 Subtotal (Cost)/Savings</b>		<b>\$559,630</b>	<b>\$564,630</b>	<b>\$564,630</b>	<b>\$564,630</b>	<b>\$564,630</b>	<b>\$2,818,150</b>	
<b>TOTALS FOR SHARED SERVICES (CHAPTER 10)</b>								
<b>TOTAL COSTS</b>		<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$0</b>	
<b>TOTAL SAVINGS</b>		<b>\$559,630</b>	<b>\$564,630</b>	<b>\$564,630</b>	<b>\$564,630</b>	<b>\$564,630</b>	<b>\$2,818,150</b>	
<b>TOTAL NET SAVINGS</b>		<b>\$559,630</b>	<b>\$564,630</b>	<b>\$564,630</b>	<b>\$564,630</b>	<b>\$564,630</b>	<b>\$2,818,150</b>	<b>(\$2,750)</b>
<b>TOTAL FIVE-YEAR NET SAVINGS MINUS ONE-TIME (COSTS)</b>								<b>\$2,815,400</b>

\*Related to shared services with Allegheny County Government



***APPENDIX:  
SURVEY RESULTS***



# Allegheny County Public Schools Administrator Survey

## A. DEMOGRAPHICS

	<b>1-5 years</b>	<b>6-10 years</b>	<b>11-15 years</b>	<b>16-20 years</b>	<b>20+ years</b>
1. How long have you worked in the school division?	28.6%	4.8%	14.3%	0%	52.4%
2. How long have you been in your current position in the school division?	57.1%	28.6%	4.8%	0%	9.5%

## B. DIVISION ADMINISTRATION

<b>Survey Questions</b>	<b>Strongly Agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>No Opinion</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>
3. The division's strategic plan guides daily decision making.	42.9%	47.6%	4.8%	4.8%	0%
4. I know how my work activities and objectives tie to the division's strategic plan.	47.6%	52.4%	0%	0%	0%
5. School board members know and understand the educational needs of students in the school division.	57.1%	42.9%	0%	0%	0%
6. School board members know and understand the operations of the school division.	42.9%	52.4%	0%	4.8%	0%
7. The Superintendent is a respected and effective instructional leader.	33.3%	61.9%	0%	4.8%	0%
8. The Superintendent is a respected and effective business manager.	57.1%	42.9%	0%	0%	0%
9. The division administration is efficient.	38.1%	47.6%	4.8%	9.5%	0%
10. The division administration supports the educational process.	66.7%	28.6%	0%	4.8%	0%
11. School-based personnel play an important role in making decisions that affect schools in the division.	28.6%	66.7%	4.8%	0%	0%
12. Principals are effective instructional leaders in their schools.	52.4%	47.6%	0%	0%	0%
13. Principals are effective managers of the staff and teachers in their schools.	66.7%	33.3%	0%	0%	0%
14. Most administrative practices in the school division are highly efficient and effective.	38.1%	57.1%	4.8%	0%	0%
15. Administrative decisions are made promptly and decisively.	33.3%	61.9%	0%	4.8%	0%
16. School division administrators are easily accessible and open to input.	47.6%	47.6%	0%	4.8%	0%
17. Authority for administrative decisions is delegated to the lowest possible level.	14.3%	47.6%	0%	33.3%	4.8%



Survey Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
18. Major bottlenecks exist in many administrative processes that cause unnecessary time delays.	4.8%	14.3%	0%	57.1%	23.8%
19. The school division has too many layers of administrators.	4.8%	9.5%	0%	57.1%	28.6%
20. Division administrators provide quality service to schools.	23.8%	66.7%	0%	4.8%	4.8%

### C. EDUCATION SERVICE DELIVERY

Survey Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
21. The emphasis on learning in the school division has increased in recent years.	61.9%	28.6%	9.5%	0%	0%
22. The division uses detailed classroom-level data for instructional decision-making.	38.1%	47.6%	9.5%	4.8%	0%
23. Lessons are organized to meet students' needs.	19.0%	71.4%	9.5%	0%	0%
24. Students find curriculum, course selections, and lessons relevant to their needs and interests.	4.8%	71.4%	14.3%	9.5%	0%
25. The division has effective special programs for the following:					
a. Honors/Gifted and Talented Education	23.8%	42.9%	9.5%	23.8%	0%
b. Special Education	14.3%	76.2%	4.8%	4.8%	0%
c. Head Start and Even Start Programs	4.8%	28.6%	52.4%	14.3%	0%
d. Advanced Placement	28.6%	52.4%	14.3%	4.8%	0%
e. Alternative Education	19.0%	42.9%	9.5%	23.8%	4.8%
f. English as Second Language (ESL)	9.5%	14.3%	47.6%	23.8%	4.8%
g. Career and Vocational	19.0%	52.4%	4.8%	23.8%	0%
h. Dropout Prevention	14.3%	42.9%	14.3%	23.8%	4.8%
26. Parents are immediately notified if a child is absent from school.	28.6%	42.9%	9.5%	19.0%	0%
27. Teacher turnover is low.	19.0%	61.9%	4.8%	14.3%	0%
28. Educational programs are regularly and objectively evaluated.	33.3%	47.6%	4.8%	14.3%	0%
29. Teacher openings are filled quickly.	14.3%	71.4%	0%	14.3%	0%
30. Teachers are held accountable for ensuring students learn.	57.1%	42.9%	0%	0%	0%
31. Principals are held accountable for ensuring students learn.	71.4%	28.6%	0%	0%	0%
32. Teachers are given the skills and knowledge to effectively differentiate instruction for each student.	23.8%	71.4%	4.8%	0%	0%
33. Teachers/teacher groups use data to tailor learning experiences for individual students/student groups.	9.5%	71.4%	9.5%	9.5%	0%
34. All schools have equal access to educational materials such as computers, television monitors, and science labs.	52.4%	33.3%	0%	14.3%	0%



Survey Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
35. Our schools can be described as “good places to learn.”	57.1%	38.1%	0%	4.8%	0%
36. NCLB has been effectively implemented in our school division.	61.9%	33.3%	0%	4.8%	0%

## D. HUMAN RESOURCES

Survey Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
37. Salary levels in the school division are competitive.	0%	71.4%	4.8%	23.8%	0%
38. My salary level is adequate for my level of work and experience.	0%	57.1%	4.8%	38.1%	0%
39. Teachers who do not meet expected work standards are disciplined.	9.5%	57.1%	4.8%	28.6%	0%
40. Staff who do not meet expected work standards are disciplined.	9.5%	66.7%	0%	23.8%	0%
41. The division has a good orientation program for new employees.	23.8%	71.4%	0%	4.8%	0%
42. The division accurately projects future staffing needs.	4.8%	81.0%	9.5%	4.8%	0%
43. The division has an effective employee recruitment program.	9.5%	71.4%	9.5%	9.5%	0%
44. Division employees receive annual personnel evaluations.	47.6%	47.6%	0%	4.8%	0%
45. The division rewards competence and experience, and provides qualifications needed for promotion.	14.3%	33.3%	33.3%	19.0%	0%
46. I am satisfied with my job in the school division.	42.9%	52.4%	0%	4.8%	0%
47. I am actively looking for a job outside the school division.	0%	0%	38.1%	19.0%	42.9%
48. The division has a fair and timely grievance process.	28.6%	66.7%	4.8%	0%	0%
49. There are not enough high quality professional development opportunities for teachers.	0%	0%	9.5%	52.4%	38.1%
50. There are not enough high quality professional development opportunities for school administrators.	0%	4.8%	4.8%	52.4%	38.1%

## E. COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

Survey Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
51. The division regularly communicates with parents.	38.1%	57.1%	4.8%	0%	0%
52. Parents play an active role in decision-making in our schools.	33.3%	52.4%	4.8%	9.5%	0%



Survey Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
53. Teachers regularly communicate with the parents of the students they teach.	19.0%	76.2%	4.8%	0%	0%
54. Most parents seem to know what goes on in our schools.	9.5%	71.4%	4.8%	14.3%	0%
55. The school division explains test results to parents.	9.5%	52.4%	14.3%	23.8%	0%
56. Schools have plenty of volunteers to help student and school programs.	14.3%	33.3%	14.3%	38.1%	0%
57. At least some local businesses are actively involved in supporting our schools.	19.0%	61.9%	4.8%	9.5%	4.8%

## F. FACILITIES USE AND MANAGEMENT

Survey Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
58. Parents, citizens, students, faculty, staff and the board provide input into facility planning.	38.1%	52.4%	0%	9.5%	0%
59. Schools are clean.	9.5%	85.7%	0%	4.8%	0%
60. Our schools have sufficient space and facilities to support the instructional programs.	9.5%	38.1%	0%	28.6%	23.8%
61. Schools are well-maintained.	14.3%	71.4%	0%	14.3%	0%
62. Repairs are made in a timely manner.	14.3%	66.7%	0%	19.0%	0%
63. Division facilities are open for community use.	38.1%	61.9%	0%	0%	0%
64. Emergency maintenance is handled promptly.	28.6%	66.7%	0%	4.8%	0%
65. The division has an effective energy management program.	57.1%	33.3%	0%	9.5%	0%

## G. FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

Survey Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
66. Site-based budgeting is used effectively to extend the involvement of principals and teachers.	14.3%	57.1%	14.3%	14.3%	0%
67. Campus administrators are well trained in fiscal management techniques.	19.0%	52.4%	9.5%	19.0%	0%
68. Funds are managed wisely to support education in the school division.	33.3%	61.9%	4.8%	0%	0%
69. The division's financial reports are easy to understand and read.	19.0%	52.4%	14.3%	9.5%	4.8%
70. Campus and program administrators have sufficient access to the financial data they need.	14.3%	81.0%	4.8%	0%	0%
71. Financial reports are made available to community members when asked.	28.6%	28.6%	38.1%	4.8%	0%



**H. PURCHASING**

Survey Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
72. The Purchasing Office gets me what I need when I need it.	38.1%	38.1%	19.0%	4.8%	0%
73. The school division purchases the highest quality materials and equipment at the lowest cost.	23.8%	57.1%	0%	19.0%	0%
74. The purchase order process is efficient and effective.	33.3%	66.7%	0%	0%	0%
75. The division provides teachers and administrators an easy-to-use standard list of supplies and equipment.	9.5%	52.4%	14.3%	14.3%	9.5%

**I. TRANSPORTATION**

Survey Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
76. Students are often late arriving to and/or departing from school because the buses do not arrive to school on time.	4.8%	4.8%	0%	38.1%	52.4%
77. There are sufficient buses to meet extracurricular needs of students.	28.6%	38.1%	9.5%	14.3%	9.5%
78. Buses are often broken down, disrupting services.	4.8%	0%	0%	57.1%	38.1%
79. The process for requesting a field trip is efficient and effective.	19.0%	81.0%	0%	0%	0%
80. Bus drivers effectively handle discipline issues on the buses.	9.5%	71.4%	0%	14.3%	4.8%
81. Students do not feel safe riding school division buses.	0%	4.8%	0%	38.1%	57.1%

**J. FOOD SERVICES**

Survey Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
82. The Food Services Department provides nutritious and appealing meals and snacks.	14.3%	52.4%	4.8%	28.6%	0%
83. Vending machines are not available to students during lunch periods.	61.9%	28.6%	9.5%	0%	0%
84. Snacks and drinks available through the vending machines are nutritious.	4.8%	52.4%	28.6%	9.5%	4.8%
85. Bus riders get to school with enough time to eat breakfast.	33.3%	57.1%	4.8%	4.8%	0%
86. Cafeterias are calm environments in which to eat.	14.3%	71.4%	4.8%	9.5%	0%



**K. TECHNOLOGY MANAGEMENT**

Survey Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
87. Students regularly use computers.	61.9%	33.3%	4.8%	0%	0%
88. Teachers receive training in how to integrate technology into the classroom.	52.4%	42.9%	4.8%	0%	0%
89. Teachers are expected to integrate technology into the classroom.	57.1%	38.1%	4.8%	0%	0%
90. Teachers know how to use computers in the classroom.	47.6%	47.6%	4.8%	0%	0%
91. The division Web site is a useful tool.	38.1%	52.4%	4.8%	4.8%	0%
92. I get assistance quickly when I have a computer problem.	33.3%	57.1%	4.8%	0%	4.8%
93. The school division provides adequate instructional technology.	33.3%	61.9%	4.8%	0%	0%
94. The school division provides adequate administrative technology.	42.9%	52.4%	4.8%	0%	0%
95. I have adequate equipment and computer support to conduct my work.	57.1%	33.3%	0%	4.8%	4.8%
96. Teachers and students have fast and easy access to the Internet.	33.3%	57.1%	4.8%	4.8%	0%
97. Most administrative process (purchasing, payroll etc.) are done on-line.	19.0%	23.8%	33.3%	14.3%	9.5%

**L. OVERALL OPERATIONS**

School Division Operation	Should Be Eliminated	Needs Major Improvement	Needs Some Improvement	Adequate	Outstanding
a. Strategic Planning	0%	0%	19.0%	57.1%	23.8%
b. Curriculum Planning	0%	4.8%	9.5%	61.9%	23.8%
c. Facilities Planning	0%	14.3%	19.0%	52.4%	14.3%
d. Budgeting	0%	0%	9.5%	71.4%	19.0%
e. Financial Management	0%	4.8%	4.8%	57.1%	33.3%
f. Asset Management	0%	0%	0%	90.5%	9.5%
g. Risk Management	0%	0%	9.5%	81.0%	9.5%
h. Community Relations	0%	0%	14.3%	61.9%	23.8%
i. Program Evaluation	0%	0%	4.8%	81.0%	14.3%
j. Instructional Coordination	0%	0%	4.8%	81.0%	14.3%
k. Student Support Services	0%	0%	19.0%	66.7%	14.3%
l. Federal Programs (e.g., NCLB) Coordination	0%	0%	14.3%	71.4%	14.3%
m. Instructional Technology	0%	0%	4.8%	76.2%	19.0%
n. Administrative Technology	0%	0%	0%	81.0%	19.0%
o. Grants Administration	0%	0%	28.6%	61.9%	9.5%
p. Personnel Recruitment	0%	0%	14.3%	61.9%	23.8%
q. Personnel Selection	0%	0%	9.5%	66.7%	23.8%



<b>School Division Operation</b>	<b>Should Be Eliminated</b>	<b>Needs Major Improvement</b>	<b>Needs Some Improvement</b>	<b>Adequate</b>	<b>Outstanding</b>
r. Personnel Evaluation	0%	0%	4.8%	76.2%	19.0%
s. Personnel Retention	0%	0%	14.3%	71.4%	14.3%
t. Professional Development	0%	0%	14.3%	71.4%	14.3%
u. Safety And Security	0%	0%	14.3%	61.9%	23.8%
v. Facilities Maintenance	0%	14.3%	9.5%	71.4%	4.8%
w. Custodial Services	0%	4.8%	33.3%	47.6%	14.3%
x. Food Services	0%	0%	23.8%	61.9%	14.3%
y. Transportation	0%	0%	19.0%	57.1%	23.8%
z. Purchasing	0%	0%	14.3%	71.4%	14.3%



# Allegheny County Public Schools Teacher Survey

## A. DEMOGRAPHICS

	<b>1-5 years</b>	<b>6-10 years</b>	<b>11-15 years</b>	<b>16-20 years</b>	<b>20+ years</b>
1. How long have you worked in the school division?	32.1%	17.9%	14.7%	8.2%	27.2%
2. How long have you been in your current position in the school division?	48.9%	17.4%	12.0%	8.7%	13.0%

## B. DIVISION ADMINISTRATION

<b>Survey Questions</b>	<b>Strongly Agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>No Opinion</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>
3. The division's strategic plan guides daily decision making.	9.8%	53.8%	27.7%	7.6%	1.1%
4. I know how my work activities and objectives tie to the division's strategic plan.	15.8%	61.4%	15.2%	7.1%	0.5%
5. School board members know and understand the educational needs of students in the school division.	13.6%	58.2%	10.9%	15.2%	2.2%
6. School board members know and understand the operations of the school division.	14.1%	62.5%	13.0%	8.7%	1.6%
7. The Superintendent is a respected and effective instructional leader.	15.8%	55.4%	7.1%	16.8%	4.9%
8. The Superintendent is a respected and effective business manager.	21.7%	53.3%	12.0%	9.8%	3.3%
9. The division administration is efficient.	7.1%	54.4%	14.1%	21.2%	3.3%
10. The division administration supports the educational process.	19.0%	62.0%	8.2%	8.7%	2.2%
11. School-based personnel play an important role in making decisions that affect schools in the division.	6.0%	50.5%	9.2%	28.3%	6.0%
12. Principals are effective instructional leaders in their schools.	19.0%	60.9%	4.4%	14.7%	1.1%
13. Principals are effective managers of the staff and teachers in their schools.	19.0%	63.6%	3.3%	11.4%	2.7%
14. Most administrative practices in the school division are highly efficient and effective.	8.7%	51.6%	13.0%	24.5%	2.2%
15. Administrative decisions are made promptly and decisively.	8.2%	47.8%	14.1%	27.7%	2.2%
16. School division administrators are easily accessible and open to input.	10.9%	46.2%	11.4%	25.5%	6.0%
17. Authority for administrative decisions is delegated to the lowest possible level.	2.2%	24.5%	41.8%	24.5%	7.1%



Survey Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
18. Major bottlenecks exist in many administrative processes that cause unnecessary time delays.	5.4%	28.3%	35.9%	26.6%	3.8%
19. The school division has too many layers of administrators.	5.4%	21.7%	25.5%	42.4%	4.9%
20. Division administrators provide quality service to schools.	7.1%	58.7%	16.3%	15.8%	2.2%

**C. EDUCATION SERVICE DELIVERY**

Survey Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
21. The emphasis on learning in the school division has increased in recent years.	24.5%	54.9%	13.0%	6.5%	1.1%
22. The division uses detailed classroom-level data for instructional decision-making.	12.5%	49.5%	21.2%	15.8%	1.1%
23. Lessons are organized to meet students' needs.	23.9%	64.1%	3.8%	7.1%	1.1%
24. Students find curriculum, course selections, and lessons relevant to their needs and interests.	12.0%	59.8%	12.5%	15.2%	0.5%
25. The division has effective special programs for the following:					
a. Honors/Gifted and Talented Education	13.6%	53.8%	14.7%	14.7%	3.3%
b. Special Education	17.4%	56.0%	4.9%	17.4%	4.4%
c. Head Start and Even Start Programs	6.0%	23.4%	60.3%	8.2%	2.2%
d. Advanced Placement	12.5%	48.4%	27.7%	9.2%	2.2%
e. Alternative Education	9.8%	35.9%	32.6%	14.7%	7.1%
f. English as Second Language (ESL)	2.2%	8.7%	52.7%	24.5%	12.0%
g. Career and Vocational	13.0%	51.1%	22.3%	9.2%	4.4%
h. Dropout Prevention	2.7%	22.3%	47.8%	20.6%	6.5%
26. Parents are immediately notified if a child is absent from school.	19.6%	52.7%	20.6%	5.4%	1.6%
27. Teacher turnover is low.	3.3%	38%	19.6%	31.0%	8.2%
28. Educational programs are regularly and objectively evaluated.	6.5%	58.7%	22.3%	10.9%	1.6%
29. Teacher openings are filled quickly.	7.1%	57.6%	19.6%	13.6%	2.2%
30. Teachers are held accountable for ensuring students learn.	23.4%	64.7%	6.5%	5.4%	0%
31. Principals are held accountable for ensuring students learn.	21.2%	58.2%	15.2%	5.4%	0%
32. Teachers are given the skills and knowledge to effectively differentiate instruction for each student.	11.4%	60.9%	8.2%	16.3%	3.3%
33. Teachers/teacher groups use data to tailor learning experiences for individual students/student groups.	13.0%	60.3%	12.5%	13.0%	1.1%
34. All schools have equal access to educational materials such as computers, television monitors, and science labs.	6.5%	37.5%	11.4%	32.6%	12.0%



Survey Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
35. Our schools can be described as “good places to learn.”	25.0%	62.5%	4.9%	6.0%	1.6%
36. NCLB has been effectively implemented in our school division.	16.8%	57.6%	19.0%	6.5%	0%

**D. HUMAN RESOURCES**

Survey Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
37. Salary levels in the school division are competitive.	3.8%	32.6%	4.4%	45.1%	14.1%
38. My salary level is adequate for my level of work and experience.	3.8%	26.6%	4.4%	48.9%	16.3%
39. Teachers who do not meet expected work standards are disciplined.	1.6%	28.8%	27.7%	32.6%	9.2%
40. Staff who do not meet expected work standards are disciplined.	2.2%	25.5%	32.1%	32.6%	7.6%
41. The division has a good orientation program for new employees.	7.6%	52.7%	27.7%	10.9%	1.1%
42. The division accurately projects future staffing needs.	2.7%	41.3%	39.1%	15.8%	1.1%
43. The division has an effective employee recruitment program.	3.8%	44.6%	41.8%	7.6%	2.2%
44. Division employees receive annual personnel evaluations.	12.5%	74.5%	9.2%	3.8%	0%
45. The division rewards competence and experience, and provides qualifications needed for promotion.	2.7%	32.1%	23.4%	34.8%	7.1%
46. I am satisfied with my job in the school division.	27.7%	62.5%	4.9%	3.8%	1.1%
47. I am actively looking for a job outside the school division.	1.1%	8.2%	15.8%	39.1%	35.9%
48. The division has a fair and timely grievance process.	1.1%	21.7%	69.0%	7.1%	1.1%
49. There are not enough high quality professional development opportunities for teachers.	4.9%	18.5%	19.6%	53.3%	3.8%
50. There are not enough high quality professional development opportunities for school administrators.	1.1%	6.0%	64.7%	24.5%	3.8%

**E. COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT**

Survey Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
51. The division regularly communicates with parents.	16.8%	63.0%	14.1%	6.0%	0%
52. Parents play an active role in decision-making in our schools.	7.6%	46.7%	22.8%	21.2%	1.6%



Survey Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
53. Teachers regularly communicate with the parents of the students they teach.	24.5%	69.0%	3.3%	3.3%	0%
54. Most parents seem to know what goes on in our schools.	9.8%	54.4%	9.8%	25.5%	0.5%
55. The school division explains test results to parents.	4.9%	50.0%	27.2%	15.2%	2.7%
56. Schools have plenty of volunteers to help student and school programs.	3.8%	38.6%	14.1%	38%	5.4%
57. At least some local businesses are actively involved in supporting our schools.	7.6%	69.6%	12.5%	9.8%	0.5%

**F. FACILITIES USE AND MANAGEMENT**

Survey Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
58. Parents, citizens, students, faculty, staff and the board provide input into facility planning.	5.4%	51.1%	17.9%	21.2%	4.4%
59. Schools are clean.	11.4%	49.5%	7.1%	21.7%	10.3%
60. Our schools have sufficient space and facilities to support the instructional programs.	3.3%	22.3%	2.7%	46.2%	25.5%
61. Schools are well-maintained.	4.4%	46.2%	8.7%	25.5%	15.2%
62. Repairs are made in a timely manner.	2.2%	34.2%	10.3%	35.9%	17.4%
63. Division facilities are open for community use.	10.9%	69.6%	12.5%	5.4%	1.6%
64. Emergency maintenance is handled promptly.	5.4%	58.2%	21.7%	11.4%	3.3%
65. The division has an effective energy management program.	9.8%	59.8%	13.0%	11.4%	6%

**G. FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT**

Survey Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
66. Site-based budgeting is used effectively to extend the involvement of principals and teachers.	0.5%	29.4%	44%	21.7%	4.4%
67. Campus administrators are well trained in fiscal management techniques.	2.2%	31.5%	58.2%	7.1%	1.1%
68. Funds are managed wisely to support education in the school division.	1.6%	46.2%	27.7%	20.1%	4.4%
69. The division's financial reports are easy to understand and read.	0.5%	28.8%	57.6%	10.9%	2.2%
70. Campus and program administrators have sufficient access to the financial data they need.	1.1%	28.3%	67.4%	3.3%	0%
71. Financial reports are made available to community members when asked.	1.6%	27.7%	69.0%	1.1%	0.5%



## H. PURCHASING

Survey Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
72. The Purchasing Office gets me what I need when I need it.	5.4%	58.2%	20.6%	12.0%	3.8%
73. The school division purchases the highest quality materials and equipment at the lowest cost.	2.7%	32.1%	40.2%	19.0%	6%
74. The purchase order process is efficient and effective.	5.4%	62.0%	20.1%	9.8%	2.7%
75. The division provides teachers and administrators an easy-to-use standard list of supplies and equipment.	2.2%	34.8%	30.4%	26.6%	6%

## I. TRANSPORTATION

Survey Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
76. Students are often late arriving to and/or departing from school because the buses do not arrive to school on time.	0.5%	4.4%	7.1%	67.9%	20.1%
77. There are sufficient buses to meet extracurricular needs of students.	4.9%	39.1%	34.8%	18.5%	2.7%
78. Buses are often broken down, disrupting services.	1.6%	3.8%	23.4%	59.8%	11.4%
79. The process for requesting a field trip is efficient and effective.	3.8%	60.9%	26.6%	7.6%	1.1%
80. Bus drivers effectively handle discipline issues on the buses.	1.1%	29.4%	52.7%	13.6%	3.3%
81. Students do not feel safe riding school division buses.	0.5%	8.7%	35.3%	44.6%	10.9%

## J. FOOD SERVICES

Survey Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
82. The Food Services Department provides nutritious and appealing meals and snacks.	4.4%	33.7%	14.1%	34.2%	13.6%
83. Vending machines are not available to students during lunch periods.	21.7%	57.1%	13.6%	4.9%	2.7%
84. Snacks and drinks available through the vending machines are nutritious.	3.3%	24.5%	35.3%	26.1%	10.9%
85. Bus riders get to school with enough time to eat breakfast.	7.6%	56.5%	20.1%	14.1%	1.6%
86. Cafeterias are calm environments in which to eat.	2.2%	29.4%	12.5%	35.3%	20.6%



**K. TECHNOLOGY MANAGEMENT**

Survey Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
87. Students regularly use computers.	19.0%	65.2%	4.9%	10.9%	0%
88. Teachers receive training in how to integrate technology into the classroom.	15.2%	72.8%	3.3%	7.6%	1.1%
89. Teachers are expected to integrate technology into the classroom.	17.4%	76.6%	3.8%	2.2%	0%
90. Teachers know how to use computers in the classroom.	14.7%	70.6%	6.0%	8.2%	0.5%
91. The division Web site is a useful tool.	10.9%	62.0%	16.3%	8.7%	2.2%
92. I get assistance quickly when I have a computer problem.	5.4%	42.4%	7.6%	28.8%	15.8%
93. The school division provides adequate instructional technology.	7.6%	68.5%	7.1%	13.6%	3.3%
94. The school division provides adequate administrative technology.	3.8%	40.8%	45.6%	7.6%	2.2%
95. I have adequate equipment and computer support to conduct my work.	5.4%	56.5%	2.2%	21.7%	14.1%
96. Teachers and students have fast and easy access to the Internet.	8.2%	66.3%	3.3%	15.8%	6.5%
97. Most administrative process (purchasing, payroll etc.) are done on-line.	2.2%	10.3%	77.7%	6.5%	3.3%

**L. OVERALL OPERATIONS**

School Division Operation	Should Be Eliminated	Needs Major Improvement	Needs Some Improvement	Adequate	Outstanding
a. Strategic Planning	0%	6.5%	45.1%	45.1%	3.3%
b. Curriculum Planning	0%	5.4%	26.6%	57.6%	10.3%
c. Facilities Planning	0%	35.3%	22.8%	39.7%	2.2%
d. Budgeting	0.5%	13.6%	30.4%	51.1%	4.4%
e. Financial Management	0.5%	8.2%	32.1%	55.4%	3.8%
f. Asset Management	1.6%	6.0%	29.4%	61.4%	1.6%
g. Risk Management	1.1%	6.5%	29.4%	62.0%	1.1%
h. Community Relations	1.1%	8.7%	27.7%	55.4%	7.1%
i. Program Evaluation	0%	4.9%	26.6%	64.7%	3.8%
j. Instructional Coordination	0.5%	9.8%	24.5%	60.9%	4.4%
k. Student Support Services	0%	6.5%	33.2%	56.0%	4.4%
l. Federal Programs (e.g., NCLB) Coordination	4.4%	8.7%	24.5%	57.6%	4.9%
m. Instructional Technology	0.5%	12.0%	28.3%	53.3%	6%
n. Administrative Technology	0%	4.9%	28.8%	63.6%	2.7%
o. Grants Administration	0.5%	9.8%	27.7%	58.2%	3.8%
p. Personnel Recruitment	1.1%	8.2%	23.9%	63.6%	3.3%
q. Personnel Selection	0.5%	7.1%	28.3%	60.3%	3.8%



<b>School Division Operation</b>	<b>Should Be Eliminated</b>	<b>Needs Major Improvement</b>	<b>Needs Some Improvement</b>	<b>Adequate</b>	<b>Outstanding</b>
r. Personnel Evaluation	0.5%	7.6%	21.2%	65.2%	5.4%
s. Personnel Retention	1.6%	14.7%	27.2%	53.8%	2.7%
t. Professional Development	1.1%	6.5%	30.4%	54.4%	7.6%
u. Safety And Security	1.1%	12.5%	19.0%	62.0%	5.4%
v. Facilities Maintenance	1.1%	24.5%	27.2%	43.5%	3.8%
w. Custodial Services	0.5%	21.2%	31.0%	43.5%	3.8%
x. Food Services	1.6%	16.3%	32.1%	45.1%	4.9%
y. Transportation	0%	1.1%	22.8%	70.1%	6.0%
z. Purchasing	0%	4.4%	31.5%	63.0%	1.1%

