Performance Review of the Glades County School District

May 15, 1998

Conducted by David M. Griffith & Associates, Ltd.
under contract to the Florida Office of Program Policy Analysis and Government Accountability (OPPAGA)

GLADES COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT
PERFORMANCE REVIEW

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Executive Summary

A. Project Background

In 1996, the Florida Legislature established a performance review process for school districts throughout the state. In November, 1997, pursuant to a request from the Glades County School District (the District), the Office of Program Policy Analysis and Government Accountability (OPPAGA) selected David M. Griffith & Associates, Ltd. to conduct a performance review of the District. The goal of the review is to support efforts to improve schools through greater effectiveness and efficiency.

This District, like any other, must continually reexamine its mission and programs. To that end, this report should be reviewed by the District's board, management, staff and constituents only as a departure point for the District's future improvement initiatives. The overriding objective of this report is prospective--to maximize the District's potential, rather than to document historical deficiencies.

B. District Profile

Glades County School District serves Glades County, a rural county of 7,591 people situated in south-central Florida between Fort Myers on the west and West Palm Beach on the east. With a size of 763 square miles and a mean population density of 10 persons per square mile, Glades County is one of the least populated counties in the state. Glades County's only town is Moore Haven, which also is the county seat.

The District is the second smallest school district in Florida. The District's boundaries are coterminous with those of Glades County. The District is directed by an elected school board and an elected superintendent. Other key operating characteristics include:

- The District operates three schools, an elementary school, a combined middle-high school and an adult education center
- The District has 1,148 unweighted full-time equivalent (FTE) students
- The District has 132 FTE employees, of which there are 91 instructional staff, 26 pupil support staff and 15 administrative staff
- For the year ended June 30, 1997 (FY97), the District received $6.9 million in operating revenues, including $3.4 million in state revenues, and used over $400,000 in operating transfers
- For FY97, the District expended $7.3 million of which at least 60 percent was for instruction and instructional support activities

Adjoining school districts include the Hendry County School District (7,200 students) and Okeechobee County School District (6,300 students). A more detailed description of the District and its operating environment is presented in Section II of this report.

C. Findings and Commendations

As the second smallest school district in Florida, Glades County Schools faces many challenges. The District must satisfy the same state mandates that large districts meet, but with fewer staff. The District lacks the critical mass and economies of scale that enable larger districts to maintain specialized

capabilities in such areas as technology, human resources, community relations, special education and vocational education.

The District's small size is both a blessing and a curse. On one hand, its low student enrollment, compact campus and small class sizes are the characteristics that the District's parents and teachers enjoy most. On the other hand, the District's small student body limits funding and its rural isolation further impairs its ability to attract and retain specialized instructional resources.

Further, due primarily to its size, the District has relatively high expenditures per student and a relatively high number of administrators per instructional staff position. In FY96, the District's expenditures per student FTE were $5,567, about 10 percent higher than the statewide average. This does not necessarily mean that the District was inefficient in FY96. To the contrary, we believe that the District is generally quite efficient. Rather, it reflects the natural economies of scale that many larger districts enjoy and that Glades does not.

To further illustrate this point, school boards in Florida, unlike most other states, receive salaries and benefits. This represents a fixed cost of about $115,000 per year for the typical school district. For Glades, this fixed cost represents about $100 per student while for a larger district like Lee County School District, school board salaries and benefits represent only about $2.25 per student. Such fixed costs, when allocated among so few students, have an inordinate impact on the District's unit costs. It is this principle that makes it so difficult for the District to maintain the kind of capabilities it needs.

As discussed throughout this report, we believe that the District has achieved a great deal with the resources at its disposal. However, unless the District is able to diversify and strengthen its capabilities, it may find it increasingly difficult to meet the needs of its students. Since the District already has relatively high expenditures (on a per student basis) it will find it difficult to enhance resources without increasing student enrollment.

This study resulted in 34 distinct findings in four functional areas--district management, instructional support, pupil support and financial services. These findings are summarized below and presented in more detail in Section III of this report.

Summary of Findings

No.	Statement of Finding
1.1	The District needs a strategy for addressing future enrollment trends.
1.2	Collaboration with other school districts is a cost-effective strategy.
1.3	A district-wide planning and performance monitoring system is needed.
1.4	Friction between the school board and superintendent is counter-productive.
1.5	Many teachers are concerned about the board's commitment to school-based management.
1.6	A coordinated program is needed to recruit and retain the best human resources.
1.7	The District lacks sufficient technology resources and expertise.
1.8	The District's technology plan, while an important first step, needs to be refined.
2.1	Curricula and other instructional tools could be improved.
2.2	Student performance is below target, but the District is striving to meet this challenge.
2.3	A more efficient use of guidance counseling resources could improve services.
2.4	The District has difficulty recruiting and retaining teachers, due in part to low salaries.
2.5	The District needs a comprehensive and well-organized community involvement program.
2.6	The parental involvement program could be strengthened.
2.7	Teachers and students could benefit from more volunteer resources.

Summary of Findings (cont.)

No.	Statement of Finding
3.1	The transportation program is relatively cost-effective given the age of its bus fleet.
3.2	An new bus maintenance facility and bus replacement strategy are needed.
3.3	A realignment of transportation management duties would be beneficial.
3.4	Current menus could hamper student participation in the District's meal programs.
3.5	The cafeteria facility cannot accommodate student needs, and may hurt participation.
3.6	The food service deficits could continue if participation rates do not outpace cost increases.
3.7	The facilities planning process needs community input and automated support.
3.8	Inadequate data and standards are maintained for construction projects.
3.9	Facilities maintenance services are effective, but facility costs are relatively high.
3.10	A structured preventive maintenance and automated work order system is needed.
3.11	Custodial resources are misallocated among schools and custodial training is inadequate.
3.12	Energy costs are similar to national norms, but higher than those of peer districts.
3.13	The cooperative risk management program is good, but some safety issues remain.
3.14	The District is well-positioned to address security problems should they arise.
4.1	Limited staff makes it difficult to document and maintain effective internal controls.
4.2	The District makes appropriate use of lottery funds.
4.3	The cash management strategy is effective, but property inventory records are not current.
4.4	The cooperative worker compensation and property insurance agreement is cost-effective.
4.5	The purchasing process is manual, but a cooperative purchasing program is underway.

District officials with whom we met, including the superintendent and individual board members, are aware of many of the issues discussed above and, in some instances, have begun taking steps to address these issues. We applaud these initiatives.

D. Recommendations

The Glades County School District faces many uncertainties. Will student enrollment grow or decline? If there is growth, in what parts of the County will it occur? Will new school facilities be required and, if so, where? If not, will it be more cost-effective to serve students in those areas through service arrangements with adjoining school districts? Will cooperative arrangements with other school districts give the District access to the resources it will require to succeed?

Glades County School District, because of its limited size and resources, is particularly vulnerable to the future's uncertainties. New federal and state mandates must be reviewed and implemented by administrators who are already performing a wide variety of duties. Relative small changes in enrollment or the composition of students can have a dramatic impact on funding and expenditures. In the coming year, the school board's most critical task should be to establish a coherent community-based strategic plan and a practical, board-level performance monitoring system. This will give the District the focus it will require to achieve its objectives with limited resources.

This study resulted in 22 major recommendations in four functional areas--District management, instructional support, pupil support and financial services. These recommendations are summarized in the table on the next page and presented in more detail in Section IV of this report. Estimated net benefits (costs) are presented for the next five years. While an estimated first-year investment of $65,800 will be required, we believe strongly that the recommendations will result in significant improvements to the District's instructional program and non-instructional services. Quantifiable benefits will exceed costs in the second year and each year thereafter.

Summary of Recommendations and Net Benefits (Costs) By Year

Recommendation	Page	FY99	FY00	FY01	FY02	FY03
1.1 - Establish planning system	IV-1	($11,000)	- 0 -	- 0 -	- 0 -	- 0 -
1.2 - Refine board roles	IV-3	($3,900)	- 0 -	- 0 -	- 0 -	- 0 -
1.3 - Upgrade personnel program	IV-4	($5,000)	- 0 -	- 0 -	- 0 -	- 0 -
1.4 - Upgrade technology plan	IV-6	($57,500)	($50,000)	($50,000)	($50,000)	($50,000)
2.1 - Refine instructional program	IV-8	($32,000)	($17,000)	($17,000)	($17,000)	($17,000)
2.2 - Strengthen teacher recruitment	IV-10	($39,000)	($11,000)	($11,000)	($11,000)	($11,000)
2.3 - Improve community input	IV-11	- 0 -	$2,500	$5,000	$7,500	$7,500
3.1 - Modify bus program	IV-14	($15,000)	$9,600	$9,600	$9,600	$9,600
3.2 - Upgrade bus fleet & facility	IV-15	$60,000	$12,000	$12,000	$12,000	$12,000
3.3 - Diversify menus	IV-17	- 0 -	- 0 -	- 0 -	- 0 -	- 0 -
3.4 - Upgrade cafeteria facilities	IV-19	($13,700)	($2,000)	($2,000)	($2,000)	($2,000)
3.5 - Reduce food service costs	IV-20	$34,000	$34,000	$34,000	$34,000	$34,000
3.6 - Upgrade facilities planning	IV-22	($7,500)	$25,900	$25,900	$25,900	$25,900
3.7 - Improve work order system	IV-23	- 0 -	- 0 -	- 0 -	- 0 -	- 0 -
3.8 - Reallocate custodial staff	IV-25	- 0 -	- 0 -	- 0 -	- 0 -	- 0 -
3.9 - Reduce energy costs	IV-26	$27,200	$27,200	$27,200	$27,200	$27,200
3.10 - Correct safety problems	IV-27	- 0 -	- 0 -	- 0 -	- 0 -	- 0 -
4.1 - Develop desk procedures	IV-28	- 0 -	- 0 -	- 0 -	- 0 -	- 0 -
4.2 - Improve internal controls	IV-28	- 0 -	- 0 -	- 0 -	- 0 -	- 0 -
4.3 - Offer direct payroll deposit	IV-29	($2,400)	($3,600)	($3,600)	($3,600)	($3,600)
4.4 - Update property records	IV-30	- 0 -	- 0 -	- 0 -	- 0 -	- 0 -
4.5 - Improve purchasing system	IV-30	- 0 -	- 0 -	- 0 -	- 0 -	- 0 -
Net (costs)/benefits		($65,800)	$27,600	$30,100	$32,600	$32,600

These initiatives will strain the District's resources. As such, the District should strongly consider expanding its use of regional cooperatives for such areas as technology assistance, personnel recruitment, staff development and purchasing. It also should pursue joint educational programs with adjoining school districts, as well as joint facilities ventures with other public entities in the area. Cooperative ventures such as these provide a proven way to broaden the District's capabilities at a more reasonable cost.

Over time, if such strategies fail to address the District's needs, and student performance levels do not rise appreciably, the board should consider a local property tax increase or a merger with an adjoining school district. We understand that many residents of Glades County would be reluctant to lose control over their school district, and that a small school district offers certain advantages. Nevertheless, there is a price to be paid for maintaining one of the smallest school districts in Florida and, at a minimum, that price is likely to be higher local property taxes. The other price, the costs of limited educational resources and opportunities, is far more difficult to calculate.

However, if such strategies fail to address the District's long-term needs, and student performance levels do not rise appreciably, the board should consider the feasibility of a merger with an adjoining school district. We understand that this idea would probably encounter substantial community resistance, but poor student performance and high unit operating costs would be a high price to pay for local control.

I. Project Approach

In 1996, the Florida Legislature enacted Section 11.515 of the Florida Statutes to establish a performance review process for school districts throughout the state. In November, 1997, under the auspices of FS§11.515, the Office of Program Policy Analysis and Government Accountability (OPPAGA) selected David M. Griffith & Associates, Ltd. to conduct a performance review of the Glades County School District (the District). The performance review was formally requested by the District's School Board in the fall of 1997.

According to Section 230.2302, Florida Statutes, the purpose of the performance review is to help the District "identify ways [to] save funds, improve management and increase efficiency and effectiveness." OPPAGA selects the consultant, funds the study and monitors the consultant's work. The District assists with the project, provides information to the consultant and receives the benefits of any recommendations implemented thereafter.

As required by FS§11.515, the scope of this performance review included the following topics:

- District management (i.e., organization, management and personnel management)
- Instructional support (i.e., educational services delivery and community involvement)
- Pupil support (i.e., transportation, food, facilities management and safety and security)
- Financial services (i.e., financial management, asset and risk management and purchasing)

We commenced the project on December 18, 1997 via a conference call meeting with representatives of the District and OPPAGA. At that time, we requested numerous materials from the District, including the following:

- District policies and procedures, selected board minutes and key contracts and agreements
- District-level materials disseminated to the community (e.g., surveys, flyers, newsletters) and copies of volunteer sign-in sheets for last 3 months
- School improvement, community involvement, capital and technology plans
- District organization charts, employee listings and classification/compensation plans
- Student enrollment, participation and performance data
- Fiscal data (e.g., audited financial reports and operating budgets for the last 5 years, bank accounts, State Board investment performance data, health insurance premium contributions and coverage, workers compensation claims and costs for the last 3 years)
- Facility data (e.g., inventory, capacity and occupancy rates, preventative maintenance schedules, most recent facility survey, construction costs and energy usage)
- Transportation service, financial and logistical information (e.g., costs, location of programs, schools, bell times, fleet size)
- Food service data (e.g., labor hours, labor costs, staffing, revenues, meals, federal/state reimbursement rate, inventory of cafeteria facilities, equipment and technology and menus)
- Security data (e.g., recent annual Florida Department of Education safety inspection, crimes reported, security response time, security costs, security incidents and student arrests)

We began our field work during the week of January 12, 1998 and conducted subsequent site visits in January and February. We delivered a preliminary draft of our final report the week of March 4th for

District staff comment on data validity and related issues. We delivered the second draft of the final report the week of April 13th and plan to distribute the final report to the Board by the end of April.

In accordance with OPPAGA's requirements, this report is organized into the following sections:

Report Sections

I. Project Approach - a summary of the project objectives and scope
II. District Profile - background information pertaining to the District
III. Findings - conclusions, commendations and related explanatory notes
IV. Recommendations - recommended improvements, including estimated benefits and costs and implementation strategies

All findings and recommendations are organized in accordance with the four major study areas discussed above (i.e., District Management, Instructional Support, Pupil Support and Financial Services). In addition, an Executive Summary of key findings and recommendations is presented immediately after the Table of Contents.

In conducting this performance review, we performed several activities, including the following:

- Reviewed relevant laws, regulations and studies to obtain an understanding of the school district financing and operating environment in Florida
- Reviewed available information concerning the District's operations (e.g., staffing lists, operating policies, audited financial reports, operating budgets and education reports)
- Reviewed available performance data (e.g., cost, service and student performance data)
- Interviewed all members of the District's school board and reviewed the board minutes for all regular and special board meetings held during 1997
- Interviewed District personnel at all levels, including administrators, teachers, instructional support staff, pupil support staff and other staff, and attended teacher staff meetings at the high school and elementary school
- Interviewed selected representatives of the community and held a "town hall" meeting for members of the community to voice their concerns about the District
- Conducted an opinion survey of parents and teachers
- Conducted multiple site visits to observe the use of facilities, equipment and other resources and other selected functions (e.g., food service)
- Conducted a benchmarking survey of ten similar school districts (selected based on such factors as demographics, enrollment and operating characteristics) using data provided by the District and the Florida Department of Education (DOE)
- Analyzed the January, 1998 menu using a USDA-approved software package
- Evaluated current management practices using our professional judgment and checklists developed by our firm and OPPAGA (e.g., facilities management checklist)
- Summarized key findings and recommendations in a report to the District

The opinion survey of parents and teachers used a one-page survey instrument with 20 questions covering all topics included within the scope of this project. The first 18 questions were presented as affirmative statements with instructions for respondents to signify the extent of their agreement with those statements (i.e., strongly agree, agree, neutral, disagree and strongly disagree). The last two questions requested open-

ended responses as to the strengths of the District and the best opportunities for improving the District. With the District's assistance, we distributed 300 survey forms to about 240 children in Grades 5, 8 and 11 and 60 teachers. For each survey form, we provided an addressed and stamped envelope to be returned to our office in North Carolina. We received 69 responses (a 23 percent response rate).

The peer school districts used for the benchmarking survey were Dixie, Franklin, Hardee, Hendry, Highlands, Lafayette, Liberty, Okeechobee and Union. Several of these districts are located either adjacent to or within the same region as Glades County School District. All of the districts selected for the peer district analysis are similar to Glades in terms of size (e.g., student enrollment), demographic characteristics and other operating characteristics.

In compiling peer school district data, we relied primarily on DOE data presented in such reports as: *Financial Profiles of Florida School Districts, Staff and Student Profiles of Florida School Districts, Cost Indicators, Vital Signs, Profiles of Florida School Districts, The Annual Report of Child Nutrition Programs, Cost Report and Participation and Earnings, The Quality Link, Florida School District Transportation Profiles* and *School Public Accountability Report.* For each benchmark, we calculated a peer average including Glades County School District and presented the appropriate state indicator (usually a statewide average).

Throughout this project, we strove to reconcile national and state performance standards with the inherent constraints of the Glades County School District's operating environment. Most national and state performance standards are based on experience with large urban and suburban school districts. Such entities usually possess greater resources to meet such standards. In contrast, small and rural school districts such as Glades County often find such standards beyond their capabilities. This dichotomy represents the greatest challenge facing the District.

This District, like any other, must critically and continually reexamine and refine its mission, programs and services. To that end, this report should be reviewed by the District's board, management, staff and constituents in the proper context. It is not intended as a report card on the performance of management or staff, but rather as a tool to support subsequent efforts to improve the District. In other words, this performance review is merely a departure point for the District's future improvement initiatives.

In summary, the overriding objective of this report is prospective--to maximize the District's potential, rather than to document historical deficiencies. This report, especially the recommendations set forth herein, is offered as a preliminary blueprint for the continued and measurable improvement of the District's services to its students.

II. District Profile

A. Overview

Glades County is a rural community of 7,591 people situated in south-central Florida between Fort Myers on the west and West Palm Beach on the east. With a size of 763 square miles and a mean population density of 10 persons per square mile, Glades County is one of the least populated counties in the state. Glades County's only town is Moore Haven, which also is the county seat.

The county's major industries are honey, cattle, sugar cane, fishing, citrus and produce and its largest employer is Wackenhut, the operator of the Moore Haven Correctional Facility. Most households have televisions, but many do not have phones and most do not have computers. The closest community colleges serving the County are branch campuses of Edison Community College in Hendry County and Indian River Community College in Okeechobee County. Media in the County include Cablevision Industries and the Glades County Democrat.

Glades County School District is the second smallest school district in Florida. The District's boundaries are coterminous with those of Glades County. The District is directed by an elected school board and superintendent. Other key operating characteristics are summarized below:

- The District operates three schools, an elementary school, a combined middle-high school and an adult education center
- The District has about 1,148 unweighted full-time equivalent (FTE) students
- The District has about 132 FTE employees, of which there are 68 teachers, 14 teacher aides, 9 instructional support staff, 7 transportation workers, 7 food service workers, 12 facilities staff and 15 administrative staff (see Appendix A)
- For the year ended June 30, 1997 (FY97), the District received $6.9 million in revenues, including $2.9 million in local property taxes, $3.4 million in state revenues and $0.6 million in federal funds (see Appendix B)
- For FY97, the District expended $7.3 million of which at least 60 percent was for instruction and instructional support activities; other major cost items included plant operation and maintenance, food services and transportation

Adjoining school districts serving the region include Hendry County and Okeechobee County school districts. Hendry County has 7,198 students, 5 elementary schools, 2 middle schools, 2 high schools and two adult schools, including schools serving the Clewiston and LaBelle communities (see Appendix C). Okeechobee County has 6,286 students, 6 elementary schools, 2 middle schools, 2 high schools and two adult schools (see Appendix C).

In other parts of the nation, there has been a gradual but deliberate trend for small school districts to merge with adjoining school districts. In Florida, however, the State Constitution (Article 9, Section 4a) provides for each county to have its own school district. As a result, Florida to this day has 67 counties and 67 school districts. While this provision allows two or more contiguous county school districts to merge (subject to voter approval), no districts have done so.

B. External Operating Environment

At the national level, pressure continues to mount to improve the performance of public school districts. The focus of many national strategies is on establishing national performance standards and standardized tests to monitor the performance of our students and schools. Goals 2000, the national education reform strategy signed by President Clinton in 1994, was intended to establish national standards as well as transform the federal role in education.

Concurrently, federal legislation continues to increase attention, resources and mandates on specialized student populations. Federal laws and programs such as the Title 1 Program and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) can have the unintended effect of dissipating scarce public education resources at the state and local levels, perhaps even slowing efforts to improve overall school performance. Nevertheless, a growing number of states have heeded national calls for school improvement and enacted sweeping legislation designed to reform public school systems and improve performance.

In 1991, the Florida Legislature enacted a school improvement and accountability initiative, called the System of School Improvement and Accountability (generally referred to as "Blueprint 2000"). The primary intent of Blueprint 2000 was to return accountability for education closer to the students (i.e., students, teachers and parents). To that end, Blueprint 2000 established seven broad statewide educational goals as follows:

- Readiness to start school
- Graduation rate and readiness for post-secondary education and employment
- Student performance
- Learning environment
- School safety and environment
- Teachers and staff
- Adult literacy

The legislation also was intended to spur local school improvement initiatives. These local initiatives are to be articulated in School Improvement Plans (SIPs). In 1995, the State Board of Education revised Blueprint 2000, adding an eighth educational goal--parental involvement.

Blueprint 2000 provides guidelines for local school districts to use in preparing their SIPs. The key components for each goal and initiative are performance standards and outcomes, assessment, adequate progress, public reporting and rewards, incentives and action guidelines. In April, 1996, the State Legislature's Office of Program Policy Analysis and Government Accountability (OPPAGA), conducted a performance review of the implementation status of Blueprint 2000. Its findings included the following:

- The total number of SIP initiatives decreased as school districts focused more on higher-priority student improvement goals (rather than such goals as adult literacy)
- The most common initiatives related to special academic programs, curriculum changes, academic incentives, teacher training and parental/community involvement
- Over 50 percent of local SIPs were vague as to how to evaluate the impact of initiatives
- High mobility rates during the school year made it difficult to evaluate the impact of SIP initiatives (mobility rates range from 19% to 79%)

- Many School Advisory Committees (SACs) lacked the desired representation from business and community leaders and were dominated by school employees; many were plagued by high turnover and poor attendance (40%-75%)

In OPPAGA's view, the most significant impact of Blueprint 2000 was that it provided focus for SIPs and increased parental and community involvement in education.

While federal and state legislative school improvement initiatives are laudable and well-intentioned, it is the manner in which public education is financed that continues to have the greatest impact on the day-to-day school district operations. In Florida, the Florida Education Finance Program (FEFP) drives the planning and decision-making of most school boards and superintendents.

FEFP was created in 1973 to promote equity (i.e., the extent to which the funding system provides student access to programs to meet educational needs and adjusts for a particular district's student needs and affluence). FEFP changed the primary funding basis from teachers and classrooms to student participation programs. For FY98, FEFP generated $8.9 billion comprising $5.2 billion in state funds (59%) and $3.7 billion in local funds (41%).

In contrast to other state education financing systems, FEFP is a minimum foundation "capped" approach (i.e., the State determines the minimum level of state and local funding). While this approach limits local flexibility, it further reduces the disparity between high and low wealth districts. Florida's system promotes equity by adjusting funding for student need and demographic factors (e.g., student population, cost of living, sparsity and enrollment declines). Like many states, Florida separately funds districts for transportation and capital outlays. Florida also has a hold harmless provision to guarantee each district an increase over prior year funding.

The major components of the FEFP are as follows:

- Full-Time Equivalent (FTE) Enrollment - the Florida Consensus Estimating Conference annually projects statewide FTE enrollment for numerous programs (one FTE = 25 instruction hours per week)
- Program Cost Factors - the Department of Education (DOE) develops cost factors based on 3-year average costs for each program (for FY98, the FTE cost for the Basic Grades 4-8 Program was set at 1.000 and other cost factors ranged from 1.054 for the Basic K-3 Program to 6.860 for the Exceptional Student Support Level 5 Program)
- Weighted FTEs - local districts estimate FTEs to be enrolled in each program and multiply FTEs by Program Cost Factors to arrive at Weighted FTEs
- Base Student Allocation (BSA) - the Legislature sets the BSA annually (for FY98, each WFTE was assigned a BSA of $3,035)
- District Cost Differentials (DCDs) - DOE computes DCDs as the average of the last 3 annual Florida Price Level Indices (for FY98, Glades' DCD was 0.9826)
- Base FEFP - DOE multiplies the DCD by the product of each district's WFTE and BSA to calculate the base funding for each district

According to a 1996 report by OPPAGA on Florida's education funding system, the DCD contributes significantly to variations in district funding. This study also found that a district's classification and use of weighted programs (e.g., At-Risk Student, Dropout Prevention, English for Speakers of Other Languages, Exceptional Student and Vocational programs) have a profound impact on FEFP revenue generation.

Additional components are then added to the Base FEFP to compute a Total FEFP. These components, which reflect certain policies established by the Legislature, include the following:

- Declining Enrollment Supplement - to compensate districts for fixed costs carried in spite of declining student enrollment
- Sparsity Supplement - to compensate small, geographically dispersed districts (for FY98, districts were allocated $20 million)
- Safe Schools Allocation - to fund at-risk student, security and alternative school programs (for FY98, districts were allocated $50 million)
- Remediation Reduction Incentive - for FY98, districts were allocated $30 million based on the students passing college placement tests and enrolling in math and English courses
- Dropout Prevention Incentive - based on the performance of students in grades 8-11 enrolled in educational alternative programs
- Hold Harmless Adjustment - to ensure that districts receive at least a 1.0% increase over their funding for the prior fiscal year

In order to receive the FEFP, each district must raise a certain amount of local property tax revenues. This amount, the Required Local Effort (RLE), is set via district millage rates. For FY98, the average RLE millage rate was 6.529. The net state FEFP allocation (i.e., the amount of money provided by the state) is then calculated by subtracting the RLE from the total FEFP. No district may raise more than 90% of the FEFP with local dollars.

Local school districts can, however, provide additional local support through the Discretionary Local Effort (DLE). Each district may levy a school tax up to 0.51 mills for operations and, if they levy the full 0.51 mills, an additional 0.25 mill supplemental tax (the supplemental tax is limited to $50 per FTE). For districts that levy the 0.25 supplemental rate, but do not generate the full $50 per FTE, the state funds the difference (however, the state does not equalize the 0.51 mill discretionary tax).

In addition to the FEFP, Florida provides other revenues to local school districts. The state provides categorical funding for transportation, instructional materials, pre-school projects and certain initiatives (e.g., safe schools and class size reduction programs). Transportation is funded on a qualified pupil basis (not FTEs). For FY98, major categorical and special allocations are:

- Public Education Capital Outlay (PECO) for construction - $205 million
- Public Education Capital Outlay (PECO) for remodeling - $90.1 million
- Public Education Capital Outlay (PECO) for special facility construction - $40.7 million
- Instructional Materials - $158.6 million
- Student Transportation - $375.1 million
- Grades K-8 Summer School - $83 million
- Pre-K Early Intervention - $97.1 million
- Public School Technology - $80 million
- Class Size Reduction - $100 million
- School Infrastructure Thrift Program (SIT) - $501 million

Other important sources of funding for public education in Florida include lottery funds and special incentives. For FY98, DOE distributed $412 million in Florida Discretionary Lottery Funds to districts.

These funds are allocated in proportion to base FEFP funding levels. Florida also is one of the few states providing performance incentive funding. In FY98, these programs included the Advanced Placement, International Baccalaureate and Performance Based incentive programs.

In 1997, the Legislature enacted several changes to the school finance program for FY98:

- It segregated the FEFP and funding for Post-secondary Vocational and Adult General Education programs and increased funding linkages for adult programs to performance
- It linked base funding for the ESE program to meeting student needs
- It incorporated funding incentives for 9-12 Educational Alternatives
- It established a single cost factor for 6-12 Vocational Education
- It tied Dropout Prevention funding to the performance of grade 8-11 students enrolled during FY94 in educational alternatives programs

Finally, the 1997 legislation required school boards to allocate at least $10 per unweighted FTE to be used at discretion of SACs for school improvement.

In October, 1997, the Governor's Education Commission, a panel of education experts in Tallahassee, recommended constitutional amendments giving voters in each county the option to subdivide school districts and encouraging school districts to switch from elected to appointed school superintendents. The status of these recommendations is not known at this time.

C. District Management

1. Management and Organization

Like most other public school districts, the Glades County School District is directed by a school board and superintendent. The school board has five members who are elected to staggered four-year terms by the voters of Glades County. The superintendent also is elected to a four-year term. Florida is one of only three states where districts may elect superintendents. While two-thirds of Florida's districts (mostly small rural districts) have elected superintendents, appointed superintendents serve over 80% of the students statewide.

Florida law establishes the local school board as the principal authority over local school board operations. Under FS §230.35, the law provides that "all public schools ... shall be under the direction and control of the school board with the superintendent as executive officer." While this language is ambiguous, it appears to subject the superintendent to the ultimate authority of the school board. This language poses inherent conflicts for districts with elected superintendents who are, like the school boards, directly accountable to the voters.

Under FS §230.22, the school board, after considering the superintendent's recommendations, is empowered to adopt operating policies and programs, adopt improvement standards, serve as the District's legal agent and assign students to schools. Under FS §230.23, the school board is required to perform the following duties:

- Maintain a system of school improvement and accountability
- Adopt school organizational structures, operating plans, programs, enrollment plans, student conduct codes, school opening and closing dates, designate holidays

- Provide for pupil attendance areas, controls and enforcement procedures
- Approve the annual budget, tax levies, investment policies, debt issuance, property controls, facility plans and systems of accounting and budgetary control
- Determine the positions to be filled, prescribe qualifications, establish a staff development program, and act on recommendations for compensation, appointments, disciplinary actions, promotions and transfers

Under Florida law, the school board's authority is broad, especially concerning personnel actions. While the superintendent recommends appointments, transfers and promotions, the school board may reject for good cause any recommendation by the superintendent. Moreover, after three such rejections and the superintendent's failure to submit nominations within a reasonable time, the school board may actually fill a vacancy.

The Glades County School District's current board policies emphasize the policy-making role of its school board. Section 1.03 states that:

> the school board is responsible for the organization and operation of the ... schools ... and is empowered to determine ... policies ... for the effective operation and ... improvement of the school system. The school board shall limit its actions to establishing policy and to meeting the requirements prescribed by law and rules of the State Board of Education.

Current Florida law accords the superintendent an administrative role. Under FS §230.32, for example, the superintendent is empowered to exercise general oversight over the schools and recommend policies, actions and minimum standards to the school board. Under FS §230.32, the superintendent shall perform the following duties:

- Enforce state laws and school board rules, cooperate with the school board as practical to improve the schools and call, facilitate, attend and record board meetings
- Prepare and recommend school operating plans (e.g., schools, classes, services, curriculum, textbooks and other instructional aids) and a system of school improvement and accountability
- Recommend school attendance controls and student expulsions
- Prepare and recommend annual budgets, tax levies, investment policies, borrowing, contracts and facility plans, maintain accounting records, prepare financial reports, and serve as custodian of school property
- Supervise personnel and recommend positions, qualifications, candidates, employee contracts, salary schedules, promotions, transfers and disciplinary actions

The Glades County School District's Board policies clearly establish the superintendent as the District's chief executive officer. Section 1.01 (3) states that the "responsibility for the administration of the schools and the supervision of all personnel and programs ... is vested in the Superintendent." Similarly, Section 1.20 states that the "Superintendent shall be the chief executive and administrative officer of the Board and shall have ... all executive and administrative powers ... which are not required by statute to be exercised directly by the Board..."

The District's superintendent maintains a small management team to supervise the District's 132 employees. This team includes five positions with the following roles:

- Instructional Service Coordinator - accountability, staff development, instructional materials, Title I, dropout prevention, pupil progression plan, health education, drug free schools, middle school program, ESOL and MSTET
- Director of Administrative Services - transportation, food, facility management, environmental coordination, risk management, vocational education, Title II and Title VI
- Finance Director - financial reporting, data collection, reports and forms, data processing, cost accounting, MIS contracts and FTE data
- Principals (2) - high/middle school and elementary school management

The above five managers report directly to the superintendent. The two principals supervise nearly 70 percent of the employees (68 teachers, 14 teacher aides and 9 instructional support staff). The Director of Administrative Services supervises 22 percent of the employees (10 transportation workers, 8 food service workers and 11 facilities staff). The Finance Director supervises 4 administrative staff and the Instructional Service Coordinator supervises one employee.

Some critical management functions that are supervised by central administrative units in many school systems are distributed to many individuals in Glades County School District. For example, the District has neither a Technology or Human Resource department.

2. Personnel Management

The personnel management function is extremely decentralized, with responsibilities for recruiting, hiring and other personnel transactions assigned to the two principals, three department heads and a Superintendent. Each manager maintains employee files for their respective employees. The principals are responsible for most of the District's employees and maintaining a core group of five substitutes used for general classroom needs.

There is a policy manual that provides guidelines for implementation of the personnel system, including personnel processes and grievance procedures. The new Human Resource Management Development Plan (adopted by the School Board and under review by the state) focuses on selection, development and appraisal of Principals and Assistant Principals. This plan provides documentation for ensuring that the District has met state requirements for these positions. In 1997, a compensation plan and job descriptions were prepared by a consultant on a grant from DOE to the Florida Association of District School Superintendents. The performance appraisal forms are behaviorally anchored rating systems.

Each year, in the spring, principals are required to recommend staff, at all levels, for continued employment for the following school year. The School Board must then confirm each incumbent for continued employment. Employee benefits include medical and life insurance, dental option, annual leave, sick leave, and Florida retirement system contributions. Employee data are maintained through the Lee and Highlands county school districts.

3. Technology Management

The District does not have a Management Information System (MIS) unit or even a technology coordinator. The Director of Administrative Services is responsible for developing the District's technology plan. Last year, the school board adopted its first technology plan. That plan contains several elements, including a

mission statement, needs assessment, goals, funding plan, acquisition plan, security issues, functionality, user support plan and training plan.

Glades uses Lee County School District's data center for most of its automated financial management applications, including general ledger, payroll and property inventory, and maintains employee records through a database link. Highlands County School District's data center maintains the District's student records. However, the District plans to implement its own financial and administrative software system.

The District has committed significant resources to expand the technology available to its students. At the elementary school, computer and technology labs are available for student use on a rotating schedule. Students can use computers in some classrooms and the media center. The middle/high school has a computer laboratory for students and a technology lab. The Performance Based Credit Lab (PBC) for at-risk students contains networked computers with an Instructional Learning System (ILS). A video-production lab is available. All wiring has been installed for a network to promote electronic communications among staff members and shared instructional programs.

D. Instructional Support

1. Educational Services

The District operates two schools co-located in Moore Haven--Moore Haven Elementary School for grades K-6 and Moore Haven Middle/Senior High School for grades 7-12. An Adult Education Program operates on the Middle/High School campus in the evenings. The school district also contracts with the Redlands Christian Migrant Association for a pre-kindergarten program for students at a facility co-located with the elementary school campus, and for pre-kindergarten services delivered to children at the child development center in Washington Park.

As depicted in the Table below and Appendix C, the District's student membership has risen slightly from 1,009 in FY93 to 1,148 in FY97. According to District estimates, about 65% of the students live in Moore Haven, 10% in Washington Park, 5% in Palmdale (north of Moore Haven), 3% between Moore Haven and Clewiston, 7% in the North LaBelle/Muse area, 7% in Lakeport (between Buckhead Ridge and Moore Haven) and 2% in Buckhead Ridge.

The District's student body is 27% Black Non-Hispanic, 21% Hispanic and 51% White. For FY97, 3% of the students were classified as Limited English Proficiency, 20% were identified for placement in Title I, 11% were placed in Exceptional Student Education programs, and 58% qualified for Free/Reduced Lunch (the District has estimated the participation at 75%).

Characteristics of Glades County Students by Year

Characteristic	FY93	FY94	FY95	FY96	FY97
Student Membership	1,009	1,091	1,102	1,149	1,148
Percent Limited English Prof.	2.5%	2.1%	4.4%	4.4%	3.0%
Percent Title I Program	25.2%	28.6%	23.8%	22.2%	19.7%
Percent Free/Reduced Lunch Elig.	63%	65%	60%	65%	75%
Percent ESE Programs	9.7%	8.8%	10.5%	11.5%	11.2%
Percent ESE Program > 25 hours	2.1%	1.6%	6.6%	3.2%	2.6%

The Florida Department of Education (DOE) generates yearly reports documenting the academic performance of students for school districts to use in making improvements in their instructional programs. School districts are encouraged to use this information as part of a continuous improvement program to increase the academic skill levels of their students.

Comparing Glades County School District against state average performance indicators for FY97, the following distinguishing characteristics emerge about the District's instructional program:

- Lower-than-average out-of-school suspension rates
- A relatively high share of students absent more than 20 days at the elementary and high school levels, but relatively low at the middle school level
- Low promotion rates at the elementary and middle school levels
- Low graduation rates and high dropout rates at the high school level
- A high percentage of students qualify for the Free/Reduced Price Lunch Program

The Glades County School District did not report any gifted students in FY97, but this is at least partly because the District did not offer a gifted program in FY97.

The District's reported mobility rates at the elementary school (46%), middle school (36%) and high school (30%) are relatively high. High mobility rates make it very difficult to improve student performance regardless of the instructional strategies and resources employed.

School Performance Indicators - FY97

Indicator	Glades Elem.	State Elem.	Glades Middle	State Middle	Glades High	State High
Out of School Suspension Rate	0%	1%	6%	14%	6%	13%
% Absent > 20 days	14%	9%	20%	15%	28%	18%
Dropout Rate					6%	4%
Promotion Rate	89%	98%	85%	97%		
12th Grade Graduation Rate					85%	96%
% Free/Reduced Lunch Eligibility	86%	56%	60%	48%	60%	28%
% Students Minority	50%	35%	45%	32%	42%	30%
% Mobility	46%	32%	36%	29%	30%	28%
% Instructional Staff Turnover	11%	13%	22%	16%	22%	14%

Source: Florida DOE "School Accountability Report for Glades County," updated November, 1997

The District's teaching staff is considerably less experienced than teachers statewide at the elementary school level (e.g., 8.1 years of experience at the elementary school level compared to a statewide average of 12.8 years). The District also has a relatively low percent of teachers with masters degrees compared to teachers statewide at the elementary school level.

The School Board sets educational policy for the District. Last year, for example, the School Board implemented a new policy at the high school level in which no student can be denied entry in any course for failure to take a previous course, thus eliminating all high school prerequisites. The Instructional Services Coordinator oversees the content of curricula and textbooks and the principals direct day-to-day instructional activities for each school. Instructional materials and supplies are procured on a departmental basis; department heads are given a budget from which they order materials and supplies for the whole team.

This District provides a certified guidance counselor at each school and a school nurse shared by the two schools. Psychological services are provided on a consultant basis by a certified school psychologist and group and individual sessions are available at each school. A major portion of the guidance staff time at the middle/high school is dedicated to scheduling students for classes. Student scheduling is still being conducted by hand using a master schedule.

2. Community Involvement

The strong interlinking of Florida's public schools and communities is emphasized in Goal 8 of Florida's system of School Improvement and Accountability. Goal 8 states that "Communities, school boards and schools provide opportunities for involving parents and guardians as active partners in achieving school improvement and education accountability."

The Glades County School District has a limited community involvement program, but its board and superintendent recognize the value of effective community involvement. Current board policies provide

for advisory committees. Section 4.10 establishes SACs as advisory boards to each principal. Each SAC is to have at least 10 members with members selected by peers, after nominations are submitted to the school principal. Section 4.07 provides for a County Advisory Committee comprising the SAC chairs, the Vocational Advisory Committee Chair, the ESE Parent Advisory Committee Chair, an ESOL Parent Advisory Committee member, the Migrant Education Parent Advisory Committee Chair, four at large members and four student members.

E. Pupil Support

1. Transportation

The District operates three core transportation programs--regular education, exceptional education, and extra-curricular and activity busing. In FY96, 758 of the 1,149 enrolled students (about 66 percent) were bused. These included 290 students (38 percent) who reside within the State-mandated two-mile walking limit. They are ineligible for transportation services under the State funding guidelines, but are provided courtesy transportation at local expense.

Other key operating characteristics of the District's transportation program include:

- Students are transported to 3 schools on 15 routes using 8 daily service buses, traveling a total of 134,000 miles annually
- The bus fleet's median age is 8 years for daily service buses (15 years for spare buses) and 50% of the daily service buses (and all spare buses) have over 120,000 accumulated miles
- The average trip load is 54 students per bus
- Half of the daily service buses perform multiple trips (the remaining single trip routes are combination routes that transport students of all grade levels on the same route)
- Half of the assigned route buses are staged at drivers' homes to minimize deadhead miles
- Transportation costs for FY96 were $240,000, about 4 percent of the District's total costs
- Transportation costs per student were $512, a reduction of 20 percent from FY93 (concurrent with a 53 percent reduction in the bus fleet during the same time period)
- Average operating costs per daily service bus were $30,000 (estimated at $34,000 to $35,000 per bus including depreciation with an assumed 12 year service life)
- Wages and benefits totaled $183,900, about 77% of total transportation operational costs
- The State funds about $1.95 for every local dollar expended for student transportation

The school bus fleet, which is District-owned and operated, consists of 16 vehicles – 8 daily service buses, 5 spares, and 3 inactive (parked) units to be surplused. The spare bus ratio is 31 percent, meaning that the District retains a backup bus for every 1.6 buses assigned to a daily route. In addition, the Transportation Division maintains 8 District cars and support vehicles. Neither fleet maintenance activities nor bus routing and scheduling are computerized. The current bus replacement policy calls for a bus to be replaced every three years.

The Administrative Services Director, who spends 50 percent of his time on other management areas, is the Transportation Division's only supervisory position. The transportation staff consists of 18.5 positions as summarized below.

Transportation Staffing - FY97

Position Classification or Type	FTEs
Regular assigned drivers	8.0
Substitute drivers	7.0
Bus attendants*	1.0
Maintenance personnel	2.0
Total	18.5

** The bus attendant position was eliminated for FY98.*

Drivers assigned to daily routes are paid a flat 4 hours per day (2 hours for the morning route and 2 for the afternoon route). Several of the drivers are also employed in food service between driving shifts. This has resulted in a low turnover rate for assigned drivers.

2. Food Services

The District's food service program offers a traditional menu at a single cafeteria facility which serves both schools. All students participating in the program must do so at this facility. Due to growth, this limitation has resulted in serving times for lunch being moved up to as early as 10:30 AM. The school board plans to enlarge the current facility in the near future.

Most offerings are based on standard menus, but some vending and a la carte food items are available. Portion control procedures are used to some extent for grades K-3, while grades 4-12 have some self-service opportunities. There are no pre-plated meals. The District's traditional menu relies heavily on USDA commodities which typically result in a higher starch content.

The food service staff includes a food service manager, who reports to the Director of Administrative Services, and 5.8 FTE cafeteria workers. The current food services budget is $326,000. In recent years, the food services special revenue fund has experienced fund balances of up to $50,000 to $60,000. Capital items have been purchased outright and food prices have been reduced. The District does not provide any subsidy. Indirect costs are considered, although the costing methodology is not highly structured.

The District has a relatively high free/reduced student enrollment. Districts with 50% or more free/reduced participation enjoy a financial advantage since the federal government provides a minimum reimbursement of $1.89 per free lunch and $1.04 per free breakfast. State meal reimbursements and USDA allocations (which average about 15 cents), plus profits from a la carte sales usually more than make up any difference between cost and revenue.

3. Facilities Management

The District maintains 3 schools, a school board conference room and an administration building which houses the Superintendent's office, administrative functions and transportation maintenance functions. Additionally, the District owns the Booker T. Washington complex, which is leased to Henry/Glades County Mental Health Services as a day care center. Together, these facilities encompass approximately 221,900 gross square feet of space. The FY98 budget allocates $461,597 for capital projects and $836,652 for maintenance and operations costs. General facility data is summarized below for the District and selected peers.

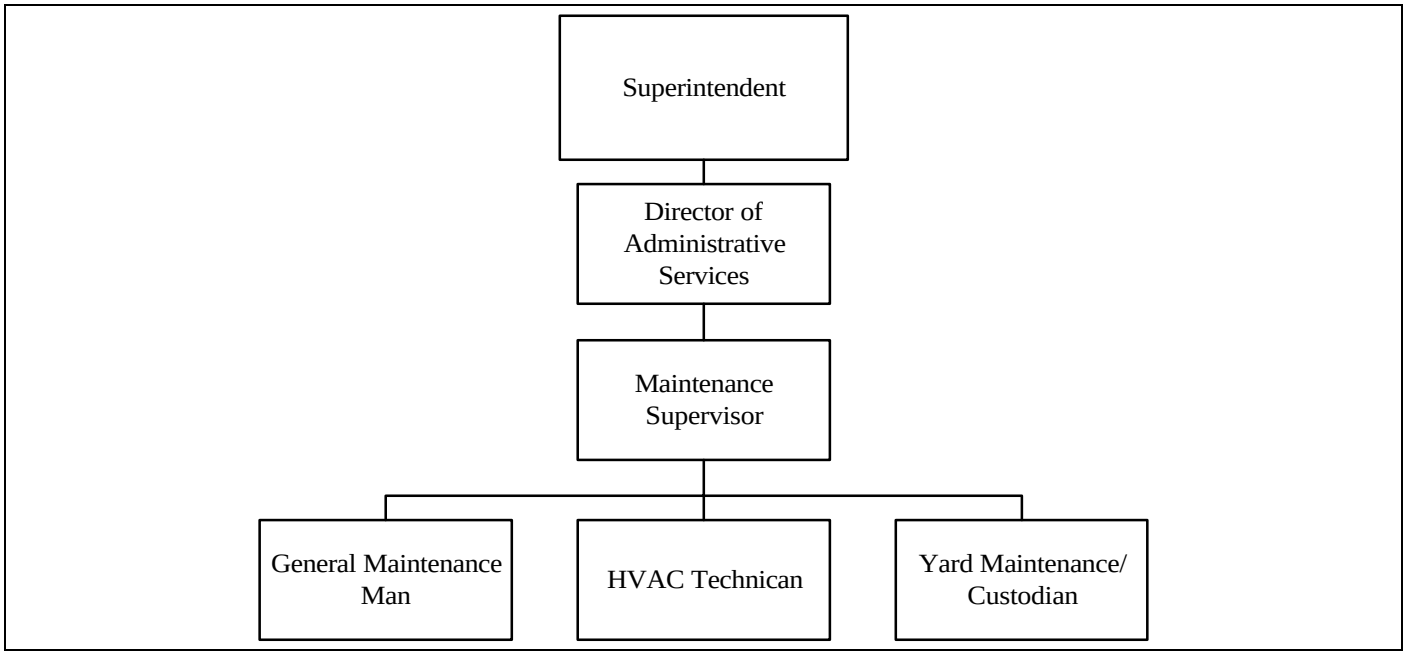
Facilities-Related Data for Glades and Selected Peer Districts (FY97)

District	Number of Schools	Student Full-Time Equiv. (FTE)	Gross Square Footage	Number of Permanent Classrooms	Number of Temporary Classrooms	Average Age of Facilities
Franklin	4	1,524	360,932	109	1	29
Liberty	3	1,165	226,555	53	9	29
Lafayette	3	1,075	177,846	64	3	21
Glades	2	1,076	221,912	87	4	30
Ave. w/o Glades	3.3	1,255	240,930	75	4.3	26

Source: Florida Department of Education - Florida Inventory of School Houses (FISH) 1996-97

The Director of Administrative Services has day-to-day responsibility for all facilities management functions, including maintenance, custodial and energy management. Energy management responsibilities include accountability for energy consumption at every level in the district, and developing and monitoring the district's energy management program. The maintenance functions are performed by a staff of four which consists of a supervisor (general maintenance), general maintenance worker, a heating, ventilation and air conditioning (HVAC) technician and a yard maintenance man/custodian assigned to the administrative building. The District's facilities management functions are organized as indicated below.

Current Organization Chart - Facilities Management



Source: Management Review Team

The Director of Administrative Services acts as the district's project manager for all facilities construction and renovation projects, ensuring project quality and timeliness of completion. The Finance Director administers construction and renovation project budgets, ensuring that projects are completed within budget and vendors are paid based on work completed. The District engages an architectural firm to plan and design the school board's approved projects. Recently, the district started using a construction management firm to manage projects of $200,000 or larger.

The Maintenance Foreman, who reports to the Director of Administrative Services, supervises the facilities maintenance program. The Foreman's 3 maintenance staff are responsible for all general maintenance repairs, minor renovations, and groundskeeping activities. In December 1997, the Maintenance Foreman assumed responsibility for monitoring building cleanliness standards, while school principals continued to issue daily work assignments. The Maintenance Foreman is also responsible for ordering custodial equipment and supplies and ensuring that custodians are adequately trained. There are 8.5 FTE custodians who are assigned to the two campuses.

4. Safety and Security

The Director of Administrative Services oversees the District's safety program. His safety-related duties include updating student safety regulations, coordinating employee vaccinations, coordinating safety inspections, acquiring safety equipment (e.g., safety belts for maintenance workers) and coordinating safety training programs. Such training programs include job-specific safety training for transportation, custodial, facility, food service and classroom personnel and general training (e.g., blood-borne pathogens and fire extinguishers).

The Director of Administrative Services chairs the District Safety Committee, which meets quarterly. The District Safety Committee comprises 13 members, including principals, teachers, school district administrators, and the maintenance supervisor. Its objectives include providing a safe educational environment for students, a safe work place for employees and safe facilities for the general public. Each school principal is responsible for implementing safety measures on the two campuses (e.g., bus evacuation, building evacuation, fire and tornado drills).

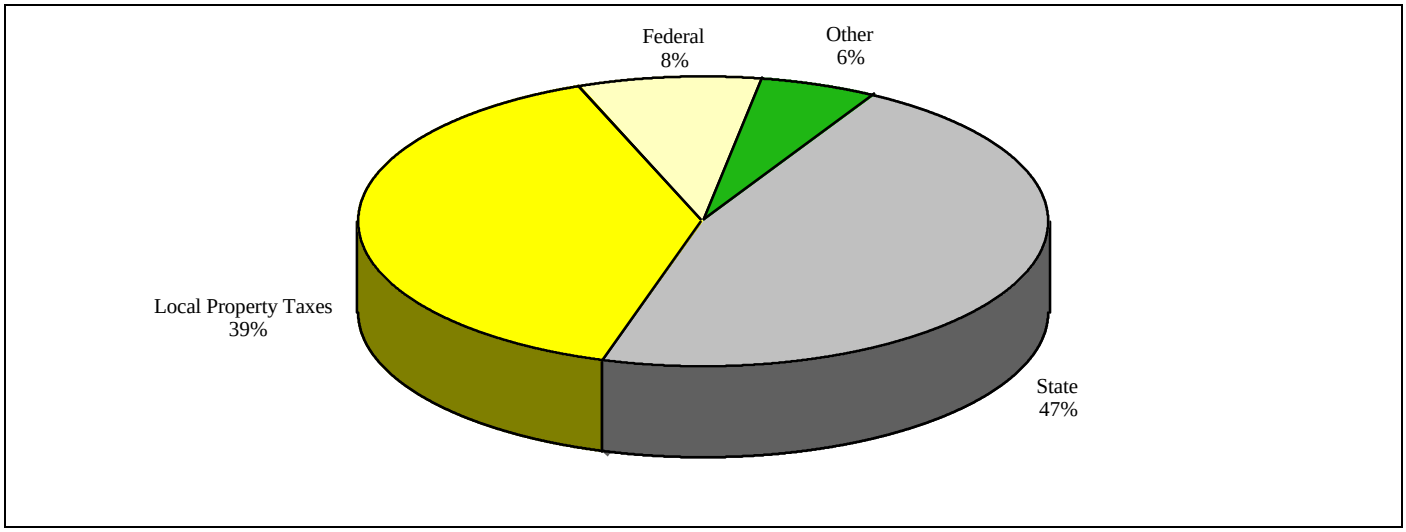
The Director of Administrative Services directs the security program. Security functions include monitoring student disciplinary incidents, ensuring that school buildings are adequately secured and alarmed, and coordinating security for school activities with the Glades County Sheriff's Department. In addition, a School Resource Officer (SRO) is provided for Moore Haven Junior-Senior High School by the Glades County Sheriff's Department to address security and safety issues with students. The Glades County Sheriff's Department also provides a crossing guard for both the elementary and junior-senior high school at no cost to the district.

F. Financial Services

1. Financial Management

In FY97, the District received $7.3 million in revenues, including $3.4 million in state revenues, $2.9 million in local property tax revenues, $0.6 million in federal revenues and $0.4 million from operating transfers. The exhibit below illustrates the District' FY97 revenue by source.

Revenues By Source (FY97)



Source: Statement of Revenues, Expenditures, and Changes in Fund Balance for fiscal year ended 6/30/97

About 81 percent of local revenues are generated by property taxes and allocated among the general, debt service and capital project funds. The most important state revenue sources include FEFP funding, categorical educational programs, gross receipts taxes (i.e., Public Education Capital Outlay dollars), Pari-Mutual taxes and Discretionary Lottery Funds. The largest federal revenue sources include USDA Food Distribution, School Breakfast and National School Lunch Programs, and USDoE Impact Aid, Title I, Special Education and Vocational Education Grants.

The District's governmental fund revenues increased by nearly 3 percent from FY96 to FY97, but governmental fund expenditures increased by 13 percent. As a result, the District's FY97 expenditures exceeded operating revenues by about $400,000. The District used operating transfers to bridge this operating deficit.

As illustrated by the next table, nearly 55 percent of the District's budgeted FY98 expenditures in the general and special revenue funds is allocated to direct instruction. Other significant functions include Plant Operation (7.1%), Plant Maintenance (5.4%), Food Services (4.9%), Pupil Transportation Services (4.3%) and School Administration (3.9%). These percentages are consistent with national and state norms.

Some of the District's expenditures, at least as a percentage of total budget, appear out of line with established norms. Community Services expenditures, at 0.1% of total expenditures, and Facilities Construction expenditures, at 0.2%, are quite low compared to other districts. More interestingly, the District's board expenditures, at 3.0% of total expenditures, are extremely high compared to most other districts. This is due in part to the fact that in Florida, unlike most other states, school districts pay salaries and benefits to their school board members.

Expenditures By Function, General and Special Revenue Funds (FY98)

Function	Amount	% of Total
Instruction	$3,660,800	54.7%
Pupil Personnel Services	329,613	4.9%
Instructional Media Services	158,348	2.4%
Instruction & Curriculum Development Services	169,440	2.5%
Instructional Staff Training Services	88,523	1.3%
Board	198,581	3.0%
General Administration	149,325	2.2%
School Administration	263,749	3.9%
Facilities Acquisition & Construction	13,000	0.2%
Fiscal Services	198,759	3.0%
Food Services	324,546	4.9%
Central Services	1,500	0.0%
Pupil Transportation Services	290,333	4.3%
Operation of Plant	475,117	7.1%
Maintenance of Plant	362,535	5.4%
Community Services	7,202	0.1%
Debt Service	-	0.0%
Total Expenditures	$6,691,371	100.0%

Source: Calculated from FY98 Summary Budget

General and school administration account for approximately 6 percent of total budgeted expenditures, while plant maintenance and operations expenditures account for almost 12 percent of total budgeted expenditures.

As is the case with most school districts, personnel costs represent the District's largest cost. Salaries and employee benefits represent 72 percent of budgeted expenditures (see table below), while purchased services represent 14 percent of budgeted expenditures for FY98.

Budgeted Expenditures By Object - All Funds (FY98)

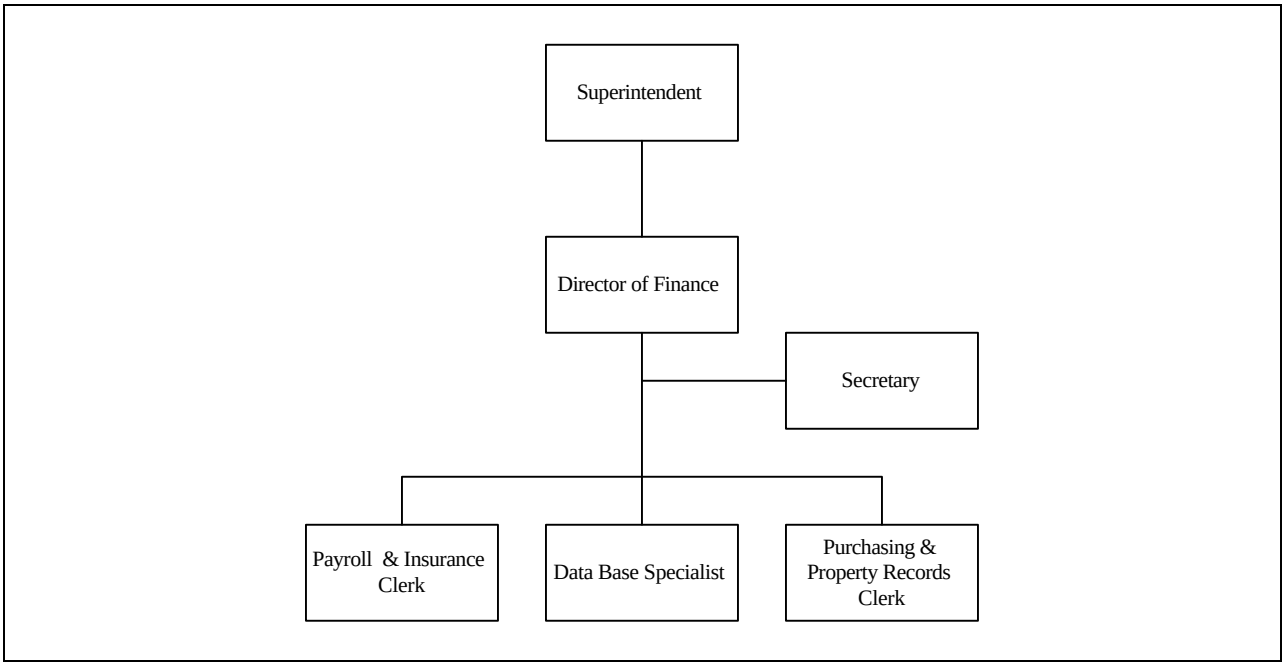
Object Classification	Amount	% of Total
Salaries	$3,648,026	54.5%
Employee Benefits	1,186,417	17.7%
Purchased Services	965,166	14.4%
Energy Services	207,650	3.1%
Materials & Supplies	462,378	6.9%
Capital Outlay	76,166	1.2%
Other Expenses	145,568	2.2%
Total	$6,691,371	100.0%

Source: Calculated from FY98 Summary Budget

The Director of Finance supervises the District's financial management function. Her duties include financial management, financial reporting, budget management, cash management and accounting (e.g., payroll, accounts payable, grants accounting, fixed assets accounting and position control). The Director of Finance accesses the Lee County School District's data center via remote terminals to enter budget and actual financial data. General ledgers and financial reports are generated and transmitted back to Glades. The Director of Finance manipulates financial reports manually to produce management reports for board members, administrators and principals.

The Director of Finance reports directly to the superintendent and has a staff of four. The Finance Department's table of organization is depicted below.

Finance Department Organization



Source: Management Review Team

The Secretary processes vendor payments and payroll deductions, accepts and records cash receipts, makes bank deposits, and reconciles the bank accounts. The Payroll & Insurance Clerk prepares payroll, processes payroll data for new employees and prepares bid packages for the insurance program. The Data Base Specialist serves as a "help desk" for computer-related inquiries, reports student data to the State,

prepares the facility inventory, processes lunch subsidy applications, and prepares federal reimbursement requests for the lunch program. The Purchasing & Property Records Clerk ensures funds availability for purchases, processes purchase requisitions, assists with preparing bid packages, and handles all property inventories.

The budget process begins in March of each year with the distribution of budget preparation worksheets to principals and department heads. Budgets are developed using the previous year's budget as a base. Principals and department heads may request budget increases, so long as they are prioritized based on school or departmental plans. The school board reviews the proposed budget during workshops and approves or disapproves requests above the prior year's budget.

The District follows the Truth in Millage (TRIM) timetable for certifying taxable property values and millage rates and formal budget adoption. The TRIM timetable uses July 1 as the target date of tax roll certification and provides a range of dates for budget adoption and final millage rate certification. A range of dates is used in case there is a delay in certifying tax rolls. According to the TRIM timetable, the District should tentatively adopt millage rates and its budget at a hearing between July 31 and August 3. Final adoption of the budget would take place one month later, but no later than September 18. Once the final budget is adopted by the board, subsequent amendments must be approved by the board.

2. Asset and Risk Management

The District maintains only three operating accounts with Barnett Bank in Moore Haven. These accounts are for payroll, accounts payable, disbursements and special revenues (e.g., property taxes, food service funds, grant funds and fingerprint fees). The District's fixed asset program is administered by the Finance Department, with individual responsibility delegated to the Purchasing and Property Records Clerk. The District uses Lee County School District's financial module to maintain property records. The District's threshold for capitalizing fixed assets is $500.

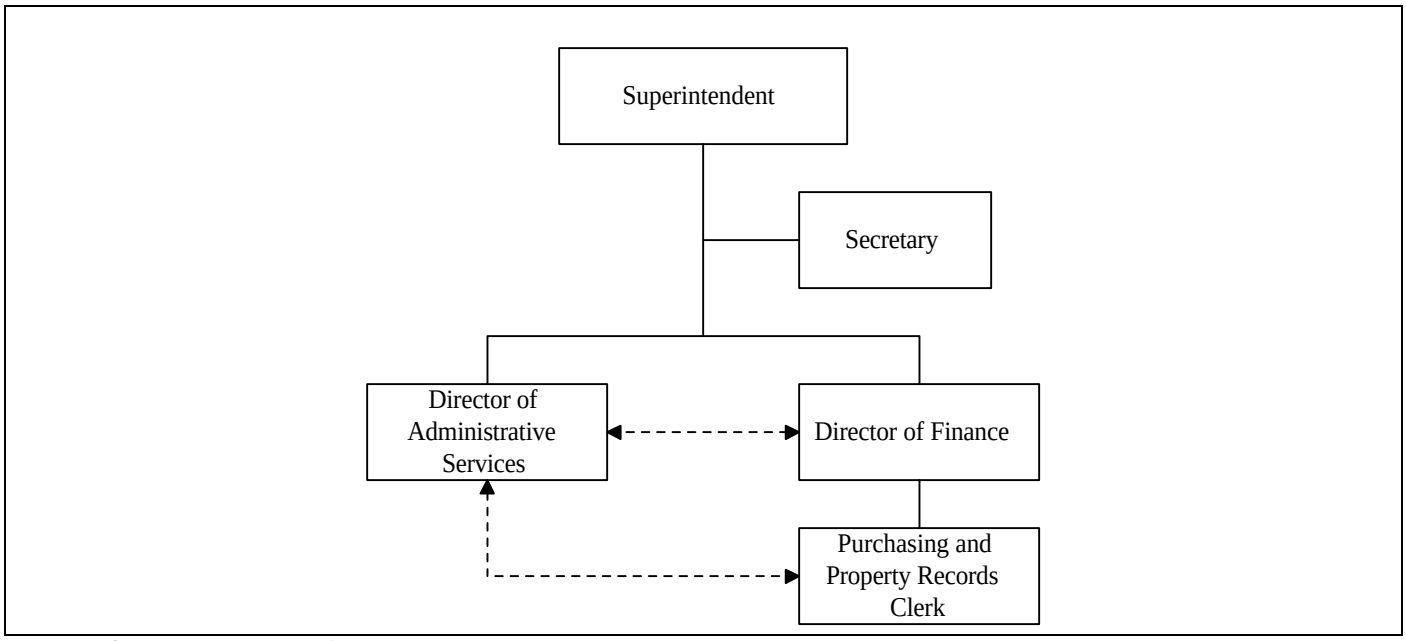
The Director of Administrative Services supervises the risk management function. The District uses risk management support services provided through the South Central Educational Risk Management Program (SCERMP). The SCERMP is a consortium of 10 county school districts in Florida. In addition to providing workers' compensation and property coverage for consortium members, the goal of the SCERMP is to provide guidelines and standards to improve safety, health and welfare of employees and students through management control of losses.

The District identifies and controls fixed assets by either affixing metal tags or using permanent markers to record property control numbers for all tangible personal property purchased by the district. Tag control numbers, property descriptions, and costs are entered into the district's property records system that is processed at Lee County School District's data center.

3. Purchasing

The District's purchasing function is the primary responsibility of the Director of Finance, with specific purchasing activities performed by the Director of Administrative Services and a Purchasing and Property Records Clerk. The Director of Administrative Services reports to the Superintendent and the Purchasing and Property Records Clerk reports directly to the Director of Finance. The current organizational structure is illustrated on the next page.

Current Organization Chart - Purchasing



Source: Management Review Team

The Director of Finance is responsible for ensuring that purchases of supplies, materials, equipment, and services are made in accordance with Florida Statutes, DOE rules, and School Board Rules. The Director of Administrative Services is responsible for preparing competitive sealed bidding packages and the Purchasing and Property Records Clerk is responsible for processing purchase orders, buying office and instructional supplies through the district's purchasing consortium contract, and maintaining purchasing records.

Purchase requisitions are processed manually. Manual requisitions are prepared at each school, where secretaries type purchase requisitions and send them through interoffice mail to the Purchasing and Property Records Clerk. Administrative department purchase requisitions are manually typed by the Purchasing and Property Records Clerk. Purchase requisitions are approved by school principals or department heads/supervisors. The Purchasing and Property Records Clerk or Director of Finance verifies the coding of each purchase requisition, the availability of funds and appropriate approvals.

Current purchasing policy requires principal or department head approval for purchases up to $1,499, with the exception of open purchase orders authorized for maintenance and transportation personnel (for purchases up to $500, they may use "open" purchase orders with designated vendors without obtaining prior approval, a price quotation or a bid). The District requires three telephone quotes or written price quotations for purchases between $1,500 and $2,999, competitive bids for all purchases over $3,000 and school board approval for all purchases and contracts over $7,000.

A purchasing consortium contract with the Heartland Consortium is used for certain items (e.g., office and instructional supplies). In addition to Glades, school boards participating in the consortium include Charlotte, DeSoto, Hardee, Hendry, Highlands, Indian River, Martin, Osceola, and St. Lucie county school districts.

III. Findings

A. District Management

1. Management and Organization

Finding 1.1 - Glades County School District needs a comprehensive strategy for addressing future enrollment trends and the inherent challenges posed by its size and remoteness.

As the second smallest school district in Florida, Glades County Schools faces many challenges. The District must satisfy the same state mandates and reporting requirements that large districts meet, but with fewer personnel to do the work. The District lacks the critical mass and economies of scale that enable larger districts to maintain specialized capabilities in such areas as technology, human resources, training, community relations, special education and vocational education.

As discussed throughout this report, the District has achieved a great deal with the resources at its disposal. Looking forward, however, unless its student enrollment and funding increase, the District's resources for meeting its ever-increasing needs may be insufficient. The District is not likely to dramatically improve student performance without an infusion of curriculum development resources. It is not likely to effectively implement and manage new technology without on-site technology resources. It is not likely to recruit and retain the best instructional personnel without professional human resource management and competitive salaries and benefits.

Unfortunately, the District already has relatively high expenditures per student FTE. According to our Peer Survey (Appendix C), the District's expenditures per student FTE for FY96 were $5,567 (in contrast, the peer average was $5,284 and the statewide average was $5,026). The District also has an excessive number of administrators relative to other school districts (its ratio of instructional staff to administrative staff is 8.5 compared to 10.4 for its peers and 15.8 for the state). This makes it difficult for the District to add administrative personnel regardless of its needs.

This does not necessarily mean that the District was inefficient in FY96. To the contrary, we believe that the District is generally quite efficient. Rather, it reflects the natural economies of scale that many larger districts enjoy and that Glades does not. To further illustrate this point, school boards in Florida, unlike most other states, receive salaries and benefits. This represents a fixed cost of about $115,000 per year for the typical school district. For Glades, this fixed cost represents about $100 per student; for a larger district like Lee County School District, school board salaries and benefits represent only about $2.25 per student. These fixed costs, when allocated among so few students, have an inordinate impact on a district's unit costs. It is this principle that makes it so difficult for the District to maintain the kind of capabilities it needs.

Population growth could enable the District to obtain greater resources and, at the same time, reduce its operating costs on a per student basis. Stable or negative population trends, by further straining the District's resources, could impair the District's operating efficiency and make it more difficult to obtain the specialized resources it needs. Continuing to allow some students in outlying areas of the County to attend schools in adjoining districts will also hurt the District's operating efficiency. Clearly, the District needs to understand where growth will occur and develop strategies for addressing student needs in those areas.

The future holds many threats and opportunities for the District. However, the District cannot position itself for the future without devising strategies that anticipate such threats and opportunities. For the District to improve its short-term prospects for success and ensure its long-term viability, it must have a strategy for overcoming the resource constraints inherent in its size and remoteness. Regardless of what form that strategy takes, be it new schools, increased collaboration with other school districts or even a merger with another district, it should be clearly articulated based on thoughtful planning and meaningful community input.

Finding No. 1.2 - The District's collaboration with other school districts is commendable, and provides a cost-effective strategy for meeting some of its needs without adding staff.

As documented in our Peer Survey (Appendix C), the District has relatively high expenditures per student FTE as well as a relatively high number of administrators per instructional staff position. The District's FY96 expenditures per student FTE were $5,567 (the peer average was $5,284 and the statewide average was $5,026). The District's ratio of instructional staff to administrative staff is 8.5 (compared to 10.4 for its peers and 15.8 for the state).

Its administrators already must serve as generalists, performing many functions that are performed by specialists in larger school districts. Recognizing the need for other specialized resources, the District has pursued collaborative arrangements with other school districts.

The District, primarily through the Superintendent, has actively sought and used resources through collaborative ventures with other school districts to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of their programs. The District's collaborative arrangements have included the following:

- Heartland Consortium - a four-county, recently-formed consortium modeled after the North East Florida Education Consortium (NEFEC)
- School To Work/Tech Prep - a group committed to increasing collaboration between schools, business and industry
- Florida Diagnostic and Learning Resource System (FDLRS) - a training and technical assistance program for exceptional education teachers regarding students with disabilities
- Media Special Project Center in Punta Gorda - provides equipment repair, audio-visual materials and repairs equipment at cost
- DJJ Youth Task Force - a Department of Juvenile Justice multi-disciplinary review committee for Glades and Hendry Counties
- Teacher Education Council - a training and technical assistance group for teachers
- West Florida Management and Development Center - a school management training and technical assistance center at the University of South Florida for DOE Region 3
- Center for Educational Enhancement - a regional technical assistance center located at the University of South Florida

The Heartland Consortium is a relatively new organization, having been established less than two years ago. With two full-time professionals (co-located with FDLRS), it still has limited internal resources. However, as a broker to obtain funding and other resources for its member school districts, it already has produced impressive results (over $ 1 million in grants). According to the Consortium's Director, Glades has been very supportive of Consortium activities.

The Florida DOE has promoted the regionalization of functions to assist school districts, at least on a limited basis (e.g., by providing small grants). As depicted in the table below, these regional collaborations do not enjoy consistent participation among school districts. Nevertheless, it illustrates the Glades County School District has made a commitment to this approach.

Regional Collaborative Units by District

School District	Heartland Consortium	Tech Prep. School to Work	FDLRS	Media Special Project Ctr.	Teacher Education Council
Glades	X	X		X	X
Charlotte		X		X	
Collier		X			
Desoto			X	X	
Hardee	X				
Hendry	X	X	X	X	X
Highlands	X		X		
Lee		X			X
Okeechobee	X		X		

The District's collaborative efforts will not provide a panacea for all of its challenges. The District's participation in available consortia requires a great deal of administrative time, especially from the Superintendent. It must compete with other participating districts for each consortium's resources and, because most consortia receive limited State funding, these resources are scarce.

Commendation

The Glades County School District is commended for its efforts in collaborating with other school districts to share resources. The District should continue and expand these efforts.

In those areas of greatest need for Glades County School District, such as technology and curriculum development, it may be premature to calculate the full benefits of the consortia. Nevertheless, collaboration is a strategy worth pursuing. At a minimum, the District should start tracking the costs and benefits of such arrangements.

Finding No. 1.3 - The District has not yet linked an effective district-wide planning and performance monitoring system to its site-based planning and school improvement efforts.

An effectively managed school district should have a clear district-wide vision, a coherent community-based strategic plan, and a practical, board-level performance accountability system. Moreover, district-wide plans should be clearly linked to the annual capital and operating budget processes. While Glades County School District has produced school-based SIPs, it has not yet established an effective district-wide planning and monitoring tool.

Summary of Key Findings

A district-wide strategic plan or board planning process is needed
The board should establish measurable performance targets
The board needs a mechanism for monitoring performance against targets
The budget process is incremental rather than performance-based
The District's best planning is conducted at the school level, but the SIPs need measurable objectives, action steps and timelines

Glades County School District board policies call for site-based planning in conformance with state law. Section 2.03 requires a "comprehensive educational plan emphasizing a school-based management system in which school centers are the principal planning units." The board policy also mandates that the budget shall reflect the plan's goals. Unfortunately, with the exception of the school-based plans, this policy does not appear to be fully implemented.

The 1997-98 Moore Haven Middle-High School SIP establishes goals and needs for all eight state goals, but thoroughly addresses only one state goal--"Student Performance." The SIP offers measurable objectives, strategies, timelines and progress status for the "Student Performance" goal. However, it provides no measurable objectives, strategies, timelines or progress status for the "Readiness to Start," "Teacher and Staff," "School Safety," "Adult Literacy," and "Parental Involvement" goals. It provides some measurable objectives for the "Graduation Rate" and "Learning Environment" goals, but no other information.

The 1997-98 Moore Haven Elementary School SIP, like the High School SIP, establishes goals and needs for most state goals, but only provides measurable objectives, strategies, timelines and progress status for the "Student Performance" goal. It provides some measurable objectives for the "Learning Environment" goals, but no other information. It provides no measurable objectives, strategies, timelines or progress status for the "Readiness to Start," "Teacher and Staff," "School Safety," "Adult Literacy," and "Parental Involvement" goals. The 1994-95 Glades County Adult School Improvement Plan, which had relatively vague objectives, but surprisingly specific status indicators, has not been updated since 1995.

The two SIPs represent impressive efforts by the District and its SACs and staff to provide a vision for improving those schools. Their focus on student performance is prudent, particularly in the context of the District's limited resources. According to OPPAGA, many other SIPs in Florida have focused primarily on student performance. Ironically, the two SIPs underscore the need for a similar planning effort at the District level.

Finding No. 1.4 - The deteriorating relationship between the school board and superintendent threatens to undermine future board planning efforts, the superintendent's ability to manage and the school system's hopes for improving student performance.

The National Center for Nonprofit Boards recommends that an effective board focus on planning and policy more than day-to-day operations. Behind every successful school district there is usually an active board focused on planning, policy formulation and performance monitoring. That board should work effectively with a strong superintendent who manages day-to-day operations. Since the Glades County School Board has received training from the Florida Association of School Boards and the master board designation, it ought to understand the importance of an effective board-superintendent relationship.

Based on our interviews and other evidence (e.g., the current litigation between the Superintendent and board), we believe that the District no longer enjoys a productive relationship between its school board and its superintendent. Our project team found that the current friction has not only impaired the effectiveness of the board and superintendent, but begun to affect employee morale as well. In our community survey (Appendix D), the highest number of negative responses to the open-ended question on productivity improvement opportunities concerned the school board's role; about 22% of the respondents cited a need to improve the school board's planning and policy-making focus and reduce its involvement in administrative matters.

There are many possible explanations for the poor relationship that exists between the school board and superintendent in Glades County. Some of those are summarized below.

- State law requires school boards in Florida to approve actions (e.g., virtually every personnel action) that many other public bodies and most nonprofit organizations delegate to their chief executive officers
- State law provides school boards no mechanism for censuring or disciplining elected superintendents or resolving disputes with elected superintendents
- State law provides superintendents with little recourse but legal action to resolve outstanding disputes with boards
- The board's only recourse for articulating its disapproval is to reject the superintendent's recommendations on key decisions (e.g., personnel)
- State law encourages school board members to visit the schools and observe classroom activities, but offers no guidance on the risks of members functioning as individuals
- Without a formal district-wide mechanism for documenting parental complaints and other community input, board members may act unilaterally to address such issues
- Florida's Sunshine Law requires virtually all matters, including personnel matters, to be discussed in public meetings (the only exemptions are certain attorney-client, collective bargaining, risk management and student expulsion and placement matters)
- Discussing all disagreements in a public setting can exacerbate already intense divisions among school board members and staff

The Board has tried to use its time more efficiently. It uses a consent agenda for approving such items as minutes, monthly finance reports, warrants, invoices and budget amendments. Nevertheless, many of its board meetings in recent months have exceeded four hours in length. While many of the decisions reflected in board minutes are clearly board-level decisions (e.g., ratifying the labor contract, approving the FY98 budget and adopting new Board policies), its increasing preoccupation with personnel matters is diverting its time from other critical responsibilities (e.g., developing and monitoring district-wide plans).

Finding No. 1.5 - A significant number of teachers are concerned about the school board's commitment to school-based management policies.

Research on effective schools has documented that schools are more effective when decision-making is delegated to the principals and teachers are directly involved in decision-making. The Florida Department of Education has strongly supported this concept of facilitative leadership and has implemented statewide training to encourage school districts to implement school-based decision-making and facilitative leadership styles. Section 2.03 of the District's board policies also
promotes school-based management.

Each Glades County school has a certified principal and both are trained in facilitative leadership methods. The elementary principal has served in this position for many years, but the middle/high school principal was hired last year (the position has turned over four times in ten years). Several teachers in both schools stated that they are involved in decision-making through faculty and committee meetings. Many teachers describe the principals' management styles as facilitative and participatory and applaud open-door policies that allow them to state their views and suggestions.

Our interviews revealed broad-based concerns among teachers about school board intervention in school operations. Numerous examples were cited of board members interfering in decisions at the school level and intervening with teachers to change grades for students. Many teachers and staff perceive these actions as undermining the principals' decision-making authority, reducing the effectiveness of school management, and creating an atmosphere of divisiveness that disrupts classroom instruction. Regardless of their accuracy, these perceptions among teachers, to the extent they are widely held, could ultimately have a profound effect on student performance.

According to our interviews, school personnel receive limited training in budget preparation and monitoring. We found no evidence that new principals are provided any training in preparing or administering the school budget. Instead, budget management skills are acquired through trial and error while on the job. Decentralizing the budget process is essential to the success of school-based management, and effective training is needed to decentralize the budget process.

2. Personnel Management

Finding No. 1.6 - The District's personnel management program is fragmented and needs rigorous coordination to ensure the recruitment and retention of the best possible human resources.

The decentralization of the personnel management function is not necessarily an undesirable approach. However, if it diminishes human resource information, analysis, planning and programs, it can adversely impact the quality of teachers and other vital personnel. For example, a district that does not have a human resource administrator may fail to regularly analyze teacher recruitment barriers and conduct post-termination interviews of former teachers.

The most critical human resource issue facing school districts is the recruitment and retention of qualified teachers. In our community survey (Appendix D), our open-ended question on improving the District generated a significant number of responses urging stronger measures to recruit and retain qualified teachers. As we discuss in greater detail in Finding No. 2.4, the District has experienced moderate to high turnover rates among teachers. Our interviews indicated that math, science and ESE substitute teachers are particularly difficult to recruit and that the racial and ethnic composition of the District's teaching staff does not reflect the District's current percentages of Black (27%) and Hispanic (21%) students.

There may be several causal factors for these problems. According to limited peer district data (see Appendix C) and our interviews, teacher salaries offered by the District appear lower than those offered by most other districts. District administrators believe than many candidates may not want to live and work in a rural community. Concerns about tenure could also be a factor. Under Florida law, instructional staff are employed under annual contracts for first three years of employment and continuing (or professional service) contracts thereafter. The board must approve each annual contract and continuing contract.

The District has the framework of an effective personnel management system in place. Its Personnel Policy Manual is well-organized, comprehensive and well-conceived. It has established reasonable entry requirements for most positions. It recently completed a compensation plan and job descriptions and developed a Human Resource Management Development Plan for administrative positions. It has performance appraisal forms for supervisory use.

Still, there remain many opportunities for improving (or at least refining) the personnel management system, including those listed below:

- The high school degree requirement for custodians may increase the difficulty of recruiting candidates for custodial positions in this community
- The performance appraisal forms are not appropriate mechanisms for performance appraisal, feedback, guidance and objective setting
- The performance appraisal form for instructional personnel does not provide measurable or observable performance criteria
- The recently-completed compensation plan and job descriptions have not been fully implemented or communicated to staff
- The Human Resource Management Development Plan, which focuses on top positions, while comprehensive, would benefit from measurable appraisal indices
- Training for non-instructional staff is ad-hoc and lacks the benefit of a training and development plan
- An employee attitude survey has not been completed in recent years

Public sector agencies face broad exposure in the field of human resource management. Most personnel actions, such as hiring, compensation, position classification, performance appraisal and discipline, are fraught with legal and financial risk. Labor and personnel laws are dynamic and increasingly difficult to interpret. Based on our experience, we believe that professional, well-informed human resource management significantly reduces such risks.

3. Technology Management

Finding No. 1.7 - Despite its efforts to share resources with other districts, the District lacks sufficient resources and expertise to effectively implement and use the technology that it acquires.

Instructional technology can increase efficiency and effectiveness of education programs in many ways. Students can learn and progress more efficiently in many computer-based programs. Students can be exposed to a greater variety of cultures through media-based presentations and video-tapes. To compete in a technologically-sophisticated society, Glades County's staff and students need to learn how to use the many technologies that are available.

The District's technology needs and resources have outstripped the capacity of current staff to provide effective maintenance, training and support. In our community survey (Appendix C), 40% of the respondents indicated that the schools lack sufficient technology to meet student needs (this represented one of the highest negative responses we received to our survey questions). In response to our open-ended question about opportunities for improving the District, 10% of the respondents indicated that better technology coordination is needed. We believe that this is a significant indicator of problems in this area.

The District is expanding its use of instructional technology, but it lacks the expertise and capabilities to effectively implement and take advantage of this technology. For example, the District purchased an IBM AS400, but did not install it for at least a year, and still has not installed the financial and administrative software it intended to install. While this computer would enable the District to operate its own financial management, personnel and student data bases, the District lacked sufficient staff resources or technical expertise to install it on a timely basis.

It is very difficult for any school district, let alone a district as small as Glades, to keep pace with dynamic school technology needs. Without specialized staff or on-site resources, effective maintenance, training and support are extremely difficult to provide. Without an experienced technology coordinator, it is difficult to upgrade technology using a proven system planning or development methodology.

According to our interviews and site observations, the District has experienced several problems in the technology area, including the following:

- Some technology is or has been under-utilized (e.g., the AS400 was purchased without first defining software needs)
- Technology acquisitions have not always been effectively coordinated, thereby increasing the potential of system incompatibilities (e.g., between the computer and technology labs)
- Training resources are inadequate, making it difficult to provide sufficient training to ensure that new technology is fully utilized (e.g., the video production lab)

Nevertheless, despite these problems, the District's commitment to new technology is commendable and should be reinforced. This District has made a conscious decision to concentrate computers in labs for student use instead of dispersing them throughout classrooms. All students can use upgraded computers in the library during their lunch hour, during class (as approved by a teacher), and until 6:00 p.m. on Wednesday nights.

At the elementary school, every classroom has a computer (many, however, are obsolete). The school has a 25-computer lab network, a technology lab with 10 networked computers and a 20-computer network in the Title I program. The labs are used by students on a rotating basis so that all students have access to them. Upgraded computers are also available for use in the fifth and sixth grade classrooms. All classrooms have had the fiber optic wire installed for a school-wide network that will be installed next year down to the third grade.

At the middle/high school, 29 of 30 or 97% of the classrooms have computers. All classrooms have had the fiber optic wire installed for a school-wide network that will be installed next year. The upgrades for current computers have been received but are awaiting installation. The middle/high school also has computer networks available in the technology lab, computer lab and dropout prevention program that are available to many students.

Commendation

The School Board is commended for its ongoing commitment to increasing the access and quality of technology resources in the schools and entering into shared computer service arrangements with other school districts to meet its needs.

The District shares Lee County School District's data center because of limited financial resources to install its own system. Sharing computer resources has enabled Glades to efficiently and effectively process its financial transactions and produce timely management reports to facilitate informed decisions. The District appears satisfied with the level of service received from the shared computer services arrangements.

Finding No. 1.8 - The District's technology plan, while an important first step, needs to be refined to include all requisite elements of an effective technology plan.

Long-range technology planning is essential to identifying a school district's technology needs, establishing priorities, and delineating the action steps, timelines and resources required to meet those needs in an organized manner. The District's board and administration recognized the importance of technology planning and developed its first plan last year.

The District's 1997-98 Technology Plan provides a vision and series of generic goals for the future, but it lacks specificity as to implementation initiatives, timelines, or responsibility assignments. Some of the strategies are too ambiguous as illustrated by the table below.

Sample Goal Statements from 1997-98 Technology Plan

Goal No.	Sample Goal Statement
4.1	"continue the purchasing of technology ... as funds become available"
4.2	"search and plan for technology use in the schools" and "Decisions ... and long-range plans will be on everyone's agendas"
4.3	"Distance learning and telecommunications opportunities are the latest concerns." "Meetings have been held ... and will be held... "

The 1997-98 plan fails to address many of the critical elements of an effective technology plan, such as flexibility, longevity, upgradability and scalability. It glosses over other important issues such as support requirements and distance learning capabilities. Moreover, although potential funding sources are identified, there is no suggested allocation of financial resources to fund the District's technology needs. Consequently, the district does not know what the cost of implementing the technology plan will be. Finally, it appears to have a one-year planning cycle.

Ironically, the 1997-98 Moore Haven Elementary School Technology Plan is a more useful plan than the district-wide plan. It strives to outline strategies, budgets, funding sources and timelines for each goal. That plan, which is illustrated below, provides a concise format.

1997-98 Moore Haven Elementary School Technology Plan

Strategy	Budget	Funding Source	Time
1. Improve technology skills of staff			
• Provide technology training for teachers	$1,000	School-to-Work grant	1-98
• Promote alternative teaching methods	$1,000	School-to-Work grant	1-98
2. Increase student awareness of technology			
• Provide speaker program	$3,000	School-to-Work grant	3-98
• Provide distance learning opportunities	$2,000	School-to-Work grant	5-98
3. Integrate technology into SIP			
• Buy at least 2 PC's per K-4 classroom	$60,000	Technology grant	3-98
• Buy materials to complete network	TBD	Technology grant	4-98
• Buy career, math & lang. Arts software	$3,000	Technology grant	3-98
• Employ full-time computer technician	$20,000	Technology grant	3-98
• Install satellite dish for distance learning	$2,000	Technology grant	4-98
• Acquire VCR's and TV's for classrooms	$4,500	Technology grant	3-98
• Acquire projection system	$2,000	School-to-Work grant	2-98
4. Prepare students for post-secondary career			
• Increase career awareness via field trips	$1,000	School-to-Work grant	2-98
• Implement K-6 character educ. program	$0	Not Applicable	12-97

B. Instructional Support

1. Educational Services Delivery

Finding No. 2.1 - While the District's instructional programs, especially its small class sizes, enjoy broad community support, curricula and other instructional tools could be improved.

The Florida DOE has disseminated the Florida State Sunshine Standards and subject area Curriculum Frameworks to assist local school districts in designing and implementing appropriate curricula and instructional programs. The DOE has embraced the strategies for education delineated in the SCANS Report and provided technical assistance to integrate instruction across content areas and increase the relevance of instructional programs through work-based experience. These guidelines provide a framework of standards for all school districts in Florida.

Our community survey (Appendix D) reveals high parental satisfaction with the District's instructional programs. Of the responses we received, 75% agreed that the instructional curriculum is appropriate, 60% indicated that students are learning what they need to succeed in life and 80% agreed that the District does a good overall job in educating children. Only 13% agreed that they would send their children to other school districts. In response to our open-ended question about the District's strengths, 59% of respondents wrote that they most appreciate the District's small classes and family atmosphere. Parents, staff and community members we interviewed also expressed strong support for the District's small class sizes and positive learning environment.

Our high-level review of the District's educational programs relied heavily on our interviews with instructional personnel and our knowledge of state requirements and other programs in the state. It was not a detailed program audit. Our key findings are summarized in the next table.

Summary of Key Findings

Most teachers use the Florida State Sunshine Standards, but rely on textbooks as the sole curriculum guide

The new policy eliminating high school prerequisites should be revisited

Although wide access to courses should be provided to qualified students, some courses may require prerequisites

The small number of high school students and teachers has restricted the number of course offerings available to high school students

The District needs more help to develop and implement integrated, work-related curricula within and across content areas

The Glades County School District has made good efforts to generate and implement curricula in subject areas that will reflect progress on the previously-used academic achievement tests. The Florida DOE, however, is in the process of changing the assessment tests used to measure student academic progress, and has already changed the state standards for performance and state curriculum guides.

Although the District's teachers that we interviewed indicated their awareness of the new Florida State Sunshine Standards, most of them continue to depend on textbooks as the primary instructional tool. The District's current textbooks alone will not prepare students for the new integrated assessments that will be reflected on the FCAT, nor ensure the level of academic performance that is expected on the Florida State

Sunshine Standards. The District's teachers believe that the District needs more help to develop and implement integrated, work-related curricula within and across content areas.

The District's instructional staff understands that the small number of high school students and teachers has restricted the number of course offerings available to high school students. Still, they believe that students at the junior and senior levels need more course offerings to tailor the academic program to their needs. Our community survey (Appendix D) indicated that some citizens believe that the curriculum could be improved and course offerings expanded. Examples of additional courses requested included art, foreign language and driver's education.

Our interviews disclosed broad concerns among teachers about the board's recent policy eliminating high school prerequisites. Some teachers believe that this policy has left some students in upper level courses with insufficient knowledge to master their courses. Although wide access to courses should be provided to qualified students, some courses may require prerequisites. For example, the content of chemistry incorporates algebra for many instructional sequences. If a student takes chemistry without first completing algebra, the student will often struggle to solve problems that can only be solved by algebraic formulae. The teacher must then teach algebra to the student without the prerequisite (holding up the rest of the class) or drop the sections of the course that require algebra (placing the course out of compliance with state standards).

While we did not conduct a detailed audit of the special education program, we observed no glaring deficiencies in this program. The District does not have a large profoundly handicapped population (0.3% of its enrollment compared to 0.2% for its peers and 0.5% statewide), but one new child can dramatically impact these rates and influence the need for specialized resources. At the elementary school, there are 2 varying exceptionalities teachers, each with class sizes of up to 30 part-time and full-time students. There are plans to hire an additional ESE/VE teacher for next year and 2 ESE aides to reduce the class loads.

We do have two concerns about the special education program. The placement of all Middle/High School special education classrooms in one wing represents a potential violation of the Florida DOE directive on the integration of programs/classes. Additional in-service training time for teachers on Special Education issues would be beneficial. Such training is available from the FDLRS center in Highlands County (co-located with the Heartland Consortium).

According to our Peer Survey (Appendix C), Glades has few gifted students (none reported in FY97 compared to 1.1% for peer districts and 3.8% statewide). This could reflect a lack of gifted programs or student resistance to such programs. The District did not offer a gifted program for two years, but resumed it this year. They shared a teacher with Highlands County who comes to Glades two days a week. Fourteen elementary school children receive instruction on Tuesdays and nine middle students receive instruction on Thursdays.

There is no high school gifted program (only 8-10 students are eligible), but students may attend dual enrollment programs at high schools in Clewiston, LaBelle and Fort Myers. The District does not yet have its own dual enrollment program, but plans to offer dual enrollment next year in Music Appreciation, Health and Introduction to College (study skills/organization). This strategy is reasonable, but poses some challenges. The District loses FTEs when it sends students to other high schools. The District must have teachers with masters degrees and college certification to maintain its own dual enrollment program. Dual enrollment program activities must be coordinated with regular classroom activities to minimize content duplication and student make-up time (pull-out programs across the nation face a similar challenge).

During our interviews, teachers were very supportive of the District's current approach for acquiring instructional materials. The decentralized, departmental system for ordering instructional materials is operating effectively to supply teachers with appropriate materials.

Finding No. 2.2 - The District's student performance, as measured by standardized tests and other indicators, is below target, but it is taking measures to address this issue.

The District administers the required Florida Writes! Program in Grades 4, 8 and 10 and the High School Competency Test. The District also uses the Comprehensive Test of Basic Skills (CTBS) as a standardized, norm-referenced achievement test for Grades 1-11. Test results for elementary, middle, and high school students, as reported by FDOE, are summarized in the tables below.

Overall, the District's test scores are below the state medians at every level for every subject except writing. Most scores are also below the national norming mark of the 50th percentile. Critically low performance was noted on the state report for elementary school writing in both years.

Indicators of Elementary School Student Academic Performance

Indicator	FY96		FY97	
	Glades	State	Glades	State
Writing (% Grade 4 @ + FL Writes)	28c	39	25c	44
Reading (% Grade 4 students higher than Median score on CTBS in Reading)	40	52	42	51
Mathematics (% Grade 4 students higher than Median score on CTBS in Reading)	61	65	54	62

School Accountability Report (November, 1997): C = critically low; October membership = 503 in FY96 and 540 in FY97

At the middle school level in Writing, 95% of the students scored 3 or higher in FY96, but this level dropped in FY97 to 55%. This was higher than the state median percent. Critically low performance was noted for middle school mathematics in FY96.

Indicators of Middle School Student Academic Performance

Indicator	FY96		FY97	
	Glades	State	Glades	State
Writing (% Grade 8 @ + FL Writes)	95	89	55	82
Reading (% Grade 8 students higher than Median score on CTBS in Reading)	40	62	40	58
Mathematics (% Grade 8 students higher than Median score on CTBS in Reading)	35c	55	41	55

School Accountability Report (November, 1997): C = critically low; October membership = 242 in FY96 and 246 in FY97

Writing scores at the high school level, however, increased from 83% scoring 3 or above in FY96 to 88% in FY97 (higher than the state median percent). At the high school level, critically low performances were noted for mathematics in FY96 and FY97 and communications in FY97.

Indicators of High School Student Academic Performance

Indicator	FY96		FY97	
	Glades	State	Glades	State
Writing (% Grade 10 @ + FL Writes)	83	75	88	87
Percent Passing HSCT Communications	89	92	72c	80
Percent Passing HSCT Math	69c	78	57c	76
12th Grade Graduation Rate	87.2	96.2	84.8	96.4
Dropout Rate	10.8	3.5	6.2	3.9

School Accountability Report (November, 1997): C = critically low; October membership = 250 in FY96 and 276 in FY97

The dropout rate at the high school level is almost twice as high as the statewide average, and the 12th grade graduation rate of 84% is 12 percentage points lower than the statewide average of 96%. The dropout rate at the high school level for Glades County was 10.8% in FY96 and 6.2% in FY97, compared to the statewide rates of 3.5% and 3.9%, respectively. Graduation rates were lower than statewide levels. The 12th grade graduation rate was 87.2% in FY96 and 84.8% in FY97, compared to statewide rates of 96.2% and 96.4%, respectively.

The District is making progress on a District-wide basis, but opportunities for improvement remain. According to District Performance Trends (Appendix B), the District's current dropout and graduation rates remain similar to those experienced four years ago (Glades' dropout rate jumped to 11.2% in FY96, but this may have been an aberration). The nonpromotion rate, however, rose steadily from 2.8% in FY93 to 12.3% in FY97. According to our Peer Survey (Appendix C), Glades' dropout rate of 6.2% remains higher than that of its peers (5.0%) and the state (5.4%). Its nonpromotion rate at 12.3% is much higher (compared to 5.3% for its peers and 5.0% statewide).

Summary of Key Findings

Academic performance levels of students in Glades County Schools are below statewide and national medians for student achievement

The high school dropout rate is too high and the graduation rate is too low Greater efforts are needed to keep students in school and help them graduate

Teachers and administrators are aware of and use the information from student assessments in planning curriculum and instruction. At the elementary school level, the school has recently adopted the Metra reading program, a phonics-based approach, to increase the reading scores before the fourth grade. The middle/high school has implemented the Renaissance Program to encourage and reward academic performance. Teachers and administrators believe that their students need more practice in taking similar tests.

Standardized achievement testing at the elementary and middle schools provides valuable information to teachers and administrators about individual student performance as well as curriculum and instructional effectiveness. At the high school level, however, this information is of less utility for student placement decisions or as measures of instructional effectiveness (the District believes that it is useful for JTPA and Title II).

The high school had an in-school suspension program but dropped the program two years ago. These programs have proven to be effective in keeping students in high school by allowing them to complete

required assignments while serving their suspensions. Another effective strategy is implementing Saturday make-up days for students who are absent during the week.

Finding No. 2.3 - Guidance counseling services could be improved through a more efficient use of current counseling resources.

This District offers certified guidance counselors at each school, one school nurse (shared by the two schools) and contract psychological services. Excessive guidance staff time at the middle/high school is dedicated to student scheduling, primarily because of the manual system. Scheduling students by hand instead of using a computer system is extremely time-consuming and keeps the guidance staff from providing other needed services such as career counseling for all students and individual counseling for those in need of help. This is especially true in the spring when students are graduating and looking for scholarships for higher education.

Our interviews indicated some concerns among parents and teachers about the quantity and quality of guidance counseling provided by the District. According to our peer survey (Appendix C), Glades County School District has 574 students per guidance counselor compared to 502 for peer districts and 462 statewide. This is an indication that the District may need additional guidance counseling resources. At the present time, the number of students being served by one guidance counselor at the Middle/High school exceeds the SACS recommendations.

Finding No. 2.4 - The District has had difficulty recruiting and retaining teachers, due in part to a relatively low compensation package.

Effective schools research has documented that schools with high instructional staff turnover have less curricular and instructional consistency, lower staff morale and lower academic performance levels for students. The District clearly has some challenges to address.

According to our community survey (Appendix D), teacher retention is an important issue to parents and teachers alike in Glades County. In response to our open-ended question about opportunities for improving the District, a significant number of responses (19%) called for better teacher recruitment and retention, as well as increasing training and incentives for qualified teachers. In responding to the question about the District's greatest strengths, 22% of the respondents cited dedicated, helpful and accessible teachers (our second most common response). According to our peer survey (Appendix C), Glades has an appropriate number of teachers.

As displayed in the table below, Glades County Schools have had a relatively high staff turnover rate compared to the state, especially at the middle/high school, where the rate of 22% in FY97 is almost 50% higher than the statewide average of 16%.

Instructional Staff Turnover Rate

Indicator	FY96		FY97	
	Glades	State	Glades	State
Elementary School	23%	13%	11%	13%
Middle/High School	24%	14%	22%	16%

Teachers and staff identified several factors that may contribute to the District's high turnover rate, including low teacher salaries, the county's rural isolation and conflict between the administration and school board. Average teacher salaries in Glades County are lower than surrounding districts by $2,000 or more at the Bachelor's Degree level (see table below).

Annual Teacher Salary Levels (FY97)

District	Education Level			
	Bachelors	Masters	Specialist	Doctorate
Glades	$26,230	$32,918	$37,147	
Hardee	$29,799	$34,903	$34,701	$36,809
Hendry	$30,661	$38,745		$40,062
Highlands	$30,289	$37,164	$43,190	$34,423
Okeechobee	$30,123	$37,340	$38,764	
State Average	$31,057	$37,693	$44,797	$43,231

According to FY98 data obtained from the Florida DOE, Glades County School District has the lowest minimum and maximum teacher salaries of the school district in its region. It also has the lowest minimum salary for Masters level teachers, and the next to the lowest maximum for Masters level teachers.

Minimum and Maximum Teacher Salary Levels (FY98)

	Bachelors Degree		Masters Degree	
District	Minimum	Maximum	Minimum	Maximum
Glades	$23,000	$37,010	$24,500	$39,400
Hendry	$23,760	$38,633	$25,470	$39,923
Hardee	$23,025	$36,303	$24,775	$38,053
Lee	$25,769	$43,659	$28,069	$45,959
Highlands	$23,300	$39,600	$25,150	$41,450
Okeechobee	$24,000	$49,937	$25,600	$42,537
Charlotte	$23,500	$37,750	$27,050	$41,300
Palm Beach	$28,922	$48,418	$31,422	$50,918
Collier	$27,750	$46,000	$29,550	$50,550

In addition, the District is located in a very rural area with limited access to shopping and cultural opportunities. Recognizing these problems, the District has implemented Quality Teachers Insure Production (QTIP) – a peer mentoring program to retain new teachers. Additional efforts are needed, especially in attracting African-American and Hispanic teachers.

2. Community Involvement

Finding No. 2.5 - While Moore Haven appears to be a relatively close-knit community, the District needs a comprehensive and well-organized community involvement program.

In a community where everyone knows everyone else, communicating with parents and students is a relatively easy process, and educating children becomes a very personal mission. Nevertheless, every school district must continually strive to maintain a comprehensive community involvement program, including business partnerships, community/school interactions, school-based volunteer programs, school advisory councils and organized publications.

A critical component in school improvement and accountability systems is the strong involvement of the community. Communities provide valuable resources that can enrich and enhance the educational system. They also contribute the bottom-line reason for the education system: to supply an educated citizenry that will guide future work force, community and political decisions.

District administrators indicate that their efforts to increase community involvement have met with limited success. This may be due in part to the isolated, rural nature of the county. The District is only served by one local weekly newspaper and the local cable company does not offer a public access channel. It may be attributable to the great distances residents must travel merely to attend meetings at the school facilities.

During our site visits to the District, we found little evidence of a planned, structured community involvement program. There is no systematic effort to identify and inform key stakeholders about school needs, activities, achievements and performance. The District issues few, if any, formal publications to the general public. The District does not have any PTA organizations and spends only 0.1% of its operating budget on community involvement.

Open communications are vital to the effective operation of a public school district. In a small community such as Glades County, communications tend to be very informal. School board members and the Superintendent are accessible to all residents and frequently see parents and community members at church, the grocery store and social events in Moore Haven.

Our interviews and site visits indicated a strong community identification with the schools in Moore Haven, but limited community participation in school activities. Board meetings, regardless of when they are scheduled (they were scheduled at night, but are now scheduled monthly at 9:00 AM on a weekday), are not well attended by the public. The District does not issue many formal publications to the public (e.g., board agendae, newsletters or school activity calendars).

Finding No. 2.6 - The District's parental involvement program, while involving the use of open houses and school advisory committees, could be strengthened.

For decades, educational research has documented the strong relationship between active parental involvement in school activities and student success. The literature has also documented that children from low income and minority families benefit the most from increased parental involvement. Recent state legislation has strongly promoted parental involvement.

State law (Florida Statutes, §229.58) requires districts to establish a school advisory council (SAC) for each school. SAC's must comprise teachers, other employees, students, parents and community members, but a majority of SAC members must be nonemployees. The procedures for selecting business and community members must include broad notification of vacancies and active solicitation of civic input. Each SAC shall help prepare and evaluate the School Improvement Plan (SIP), assist the principal as requested in preparing the annual budget, and designate programs or projects to be funded by a portion of state lottery funds. Other findings are listed below:

- There are several opportunities for parents to become involved in school activities, but the greatest participation appears to be in school athletics
- The District's open houses, which are scheduled from 4 PM to 8 PM, are attended by an estimated 10 percent of the parents
- The Board has established a SAC for each school, but it has not yet formed a district advisory council
- The SACs have been involved in preparing the SIPs, have had limited involvement with the preparation of school-based budgets
- The SAC appointment processes are neither documented nor consistent
- SAC attendance, deliberations and decisions are not documented
- Parents of under-achieving students are the most difficult to contact
- Teachers and administrators want greater parental involvement

Based on our community survey (Appendix D) and limited interviews, most parents and staff believe that, while ample opportunities for parental involvement exist, most parents fail to become effectively involved. Of our survey respondents, 81% agreed that parents have good access to school administrators and teachers, but only 39% agreed that parents are actively involved in the schools. District administrators would like to increase the level of parental involvement.

Glades County parents may become involved in the schools on a SAC, on the Title I Advisory Council, in school open houses, in athletic clubs or in the classroom. However, administrators and teachers acknowledge that, except for athletics, it is difficult to get parents involved in school programs. Open houses frequently attract less than 10 percent of the parents. The parents of under-achieving students tend to be the most difficult to contact. Staff indicate that these parents often work two jobs, or do not regard education as a priority.

Finding No. 2.7 - The District makes a diligent effort to recruit, train and use volunteers, but teachers and students could benefit from more volunteer resources.

The effective use of volunteers can provide schools with expertise otherwise unavailable within the system as well as expand the amount of quality time that students have with informed adults. Volunteers can be used to supplement classroom activities, provide insights from their business and community lives, and demonstrate the opportunities that children can have in a business or community. In short, a good volunteer program can help a district supplement scarce resources.

Interviews with teachers documented the use of volunteers in each of the schools. The schools also maintain logs of the volunteers and have a volunteer training program. Glades Elementary School was identified as a Red Carpet School for its use of volunteers and open-door policy towards parents. Examples of volunteer activities cited by teachers and staff included:

- Students toured a US Sugar facility in preparation for a new refinery
- Had a person from China tell students about origami.
- "Snowbirds," former teachers and executives from the North, volunteer in the classroom
- A member of the American Breeders Association discussed artificial insemination
- The high school is setting up a resale shop for the Renaissance program
- US Sugar supported the “Kiss the Pig” contest for the Future Farmers of America

The Florida DOE’s Office of Business and Education Alliances collects information on the use of volunteers in Florida's public schools. The table below compares the number of volunteers and volunteer hours for Glades County and surrounding school districts.

Volunteerism in Glades and Surrounding School Districts

District	Number of Volunteers	Volunteer Hours	Volunteer Hours per FTE
Glades	84	1,074	1.0
Hendry	528	11,756	1.6
Hardee	774	10,004	1.9
Highlands	844	128,285	11.7
Okeechobee	619	19,769	3.1

Florida DOE, Office of Business and Education Alliances

From the table above, it would seem that Glades does not use volunteers to the extent that some of its peer school districts do. Some of the teachers we interviewed stated that they find it difficult to attract volunteers into the classrooms. At the high school level, teachers indicated they would like to use more volunteers, but time and contact constraints have limited involvement of community members in the classrooms or visits to resources in the community. The new School To Work initiative that Glades County participates in with Lee and Hendry Counties has potential for increasing teacher awareness of and interest in bringing community resources into the classroom.

C. Pupil Support

1. Transportation

Finding No. 3.1 - The District's transportation program is praised by parents and staff for its quality and is relatively cost-effective, especially given the age of its bus fleet.

Our interviews and community survey (Appendix D) indicated very high satisfaction rates among parents and teachers about the quality, safety and timeliness of the District's transportation program. In fact, 83% of the respondents believe that transportation service is safe and timely.

Summary of Key Findings

The District's transportation program is praised by parents and staff for its quality, safety and timeliness

Despite several cost-effective strategies (e.g., paired routes and route-based driver compensation), the transportation program could be more efficient

The District's bus occupancy rate and courtesy ridership policy may contribute to its relatively high cost structure

The District employs several transportation strategies that have proven cost-effective, including combination runs to transport students of all grade levels and multi-trip (paired) routes. Paying drivers a fixed amount for their routes and pairing driving activities with other jobs (e.g., cafeteria workers) also have reduced operating costs. As a result, some of the District's operating ratios are favorable for a district of its size, type and density.

- Average ride times are 67 minutes for longer dedicated routes (7 routes over one hour) and 14 minutes for shorter trips (4 routes under one hour)
- The District's transportation costs per active bus are $34,600 (this estimate assumes an average of $4,600 in annual depreciation costs per bus)
- The District's transportation costs as a portion of total costs, at 4% of total operating costs, are well within industry benchmarks of 4 to 4.5% (e.g., *School Bus Fleet*, *Student Transportation News*)

Moreover, according to our Peer Survey (Appendix C), at $9,700, the District's average salary and benefit costs per employee are significantly lower than those of its peers ($13,800) and the state average ($16,800). Glades also runs fewer field trip miles (6% of total miles) than its peers (16%) and districts statewide (10%).

Commendation

The District is commended for operating a responsive, safe and relatively cost-effective student transportation program.

Despite the District's efforts to maximize transportation operating efficiency, its overall operating costs remain slightly higher on a per student and per bus basis than the costs of its peer school districts. According to our Peer Survey (Appendix C), the District's transportation operating costs of $511 per student transported, while slightly lower than the statewide average ($513) is about 9 percent higher than the peer average ($469).

One explanation for the District's slightly high operating costs lies in bus occupancy. According to our Peer Survey (Appendix C), the District's average bus occupancy of 59% does not compare favorably to the peer average (60%) and statewide average (71%). The District does not have an automated routing system to facilitate route analysis and refinement.

Another possible explanation for this variation is the District's policy on courtesy riders. Per our Peer Survey (Appendix C), the District's share of courtesy riders is 62% compared to 30% for its peers and 7% statewide. Transportation is partially funded by the State for students who reside two or miles from school. The District transports 290 students who reside within the two-mile distance from school (and are therefore ineligible for State transportation funding). Many of these students would be required to cross a major thoroughfare (Route 27) in order to walk to school, which is considered by the Board to be unsafe. Efforts to obtain an exception from the State to fund these students in consideration of the hazardous walking conditions have been unsuccessful. As a result, the full cost of transporting these students is absorbed locally.

The District has not calculated the incremental cost of courtesy rider services on a per student basis, but its policy has an adverse impact on program efficiency. The actual amount of this cost is subject to several variables, including excess capacity and established routes. While transportation services have to be provided to some pre-kindergarten students living in the designated courtesy rider area, there is still a marginal cost associated with providing transportation for a large number of mainstream students. The District should periodically estimate this cost. In any event, it probably contributes to the District's relatively high program costs.

Finding No. 3.2 - The District needs an effective bus replacement program, a better maintenance facility and a different fleet maintenance staffing approach.

Spare buses comprise 31 percent of the total school bus fleet. This is well above the 10 to 15% spare ratio typical in student transportation operations, and the 12 to 25% ratio found in peer districts. However, given the current demand for extra-curricular and sports activity transportation (particularly in the late Spring), 2 to 3 additional spare buses could be justified.

The fleet replacement program has not provided for the timely replacement of school buses. Per our peer survey (Appendix C), Glades' median bus fleet year is 1986 compared to 1988 for the peer districts and statewide average. Based on DMG experience with school bus fleets of this type, the median age is about 6 years and the median odometer mileage about 70,000 miles (typically, Type C and D buses are replaced between 120,000 and 140,000 miles). In contrast, Glades' school bus fleet, as illustrated below, is older and more worn.

Glades County School District Bus Fleet Statistics

Indicator	Daily Service	Spare
Median Accumulated Mileage	125,400	147,900
Average Accumulated Mileage	122,800	155,700
Median Age (years)	8.0	15.0
Average Age (years)	9.4	14.6
Percent Fleet over 120,000 Miles	50%	100%
Percent Fleet over 12 Years	38%	100%

While complete maintenance data were not available, the higher than average annual cost per bus suggests that the District spends more than it should to maintain buses that are past their economic replacement point.

According to our interviews with the bus drivers, the District's fleet maintenance staff does an excellent job of maintaining the fleet. However, the maintenance unit may be overstaffed. Based on industry benchmarks, the bus fleet should require 1,400 mechanic hours to maintain (assuming a requirement of 21 vehicles and 90.5 vehicle equivalents). The maintenance unit, with a capacity of 3,000 hours (2 positions at 1,500 hours of available hours per mechanic), has 1,600 more hours of capacity, or one more mechanic position, than it needs. Moreover, since FY 1993, fleet maintenance staffing has remained unchanged while the bus fleet has been reduced by 36 percent.

The current bus facility is considered inadequate for the space, maintenance and administrative needs of the District's transportation operation. There are numerous factors that impact the decision to replace a facility, including the facility's structural integrity, bay size and ceiling height, parts storage space, staging areas, vehicle circulation design, in-ground lifts and hydraulics, HVAC condition and shop exhaust scavenging and CO detection systems. In addition, facility compliance with a wide variety of standards must be addressed, including federal regulations, fire code ingress/egress and firewall standards, electrical codes, underground storage tank upgrading and compliance standards and Worker Right-to-Know Act safety standards. Usually, a complete facility programming analysis is required to address these factors.

At the time of this report, the District has begun construction of a new, 3-bay bus maintenance facility and transportation office. The District purchased the land for the bus facility three years ago for about $30,000. The property is located next to the central office and other land owned by the District. When completed, the facility will cost about $250,000 and provide a three-bay, 4,080-square foot bus maintenance garage. The facility is expected to be completed in August, 1998 with the exception of the sewage system. According to our interviews, the District did not consider other alternatives, such as a joint maintenance facility with the town and county or a contract relationship with an adjoining school district.

The fleet maintenance staff maintains manual records of bus maintenance and repair activities. However, some information, such as mechanic labor time, parts used and public service complaints are not logged in a systematic fashion. A fully manual system limits management's ability to track operating costs on a detailed, unit basis, and makes it difficult to extract important trend data and performance indicators. It should be noted that the Department has purchased, but not yet installed, a fleet maintenance information software package.

Finding No. 3.3 - A transportation foreman would enable the Administrative Services Director to focus on critical administrative priorities and other non-transportation matters.

The Administrative Services Director spends substantial time planning, directing and monitoring the daily supervisory requirements of the transportation program. We believe that there are many other administrative priorities that merit greater attention from the Administrative Services Director, including personnel management, technology management and facilities. So long as the Director of Administrative Services functions as the transportation foreman, other important functions and programs assigned to him (e.g., facilities and vocational education), or not assigned at all (e.g., technology and personnel), will receive less attention than they require.

2. Food Services

Finding No. 3.4 - Current menus and limited menu planning capabilities could hamper the District's efforts to increase student participation in its meal programs.

According to the peer survey results (Appendix C), Glades' food program participation rates are lower than its peers, but higher than the state average. The District's average lunch participation was 59% compared to 63% for its peers and 44% statewide. Its average breakfast participation was 14% compared to 19% for its peers and 13% for the statewide average. Current participation approximates the national average but, given the District's closed campus and relatively high free/reduced meal program eligibility rate, should be 65 to 70%.

Our interviews of staff and parents indicated significant dissatisfaction with the overall quality of food offerings and specific concerns about the level of starch and fat content. Our community survey (Appendix D) indicates that 27% of the respondents believe that food service is not high-quality or timely, a relatively high negative rating compared to the responses to other issues. Some employees we interviewed believe that the program's focus on profit has hurt food service quality and thereby reduced participation rates.

Participation levels may be adversely affected by limited menu offerings. Students are accustomed to choices outside of school and will demand no less from the school cafeteria. Nevertheless, due in large part to the District's size, its food offerings are limited. It appears that there is only one main entree offered each day. Side dishes also are limited. Vended items (usually snack foods) may help the program's bottom line, but they also can reduce participation rates. The District began serving school-made pizza every Friday to improve participation.

USDA Guidelines require menus, averaged over a 5- to 7-day period, to contain no more than 30% of calories from fat and no more than 10% of those calories from saturated fat. Based on our review of Glades' January, 1998 menu (represented as a typical menu), Glades' menus appear slightly high in fat content (33% compared to 30%) and high in saturated fat (14% compared to 10%). Minor menu adjustments would likely be required to bring the District into USDA compliance for the FY99 school year. The District's January, 1998 menu, which is similar to its menus for other months, is very "traditional" in its carbohydrate (starch) content.

Perhaps a more significant issue is the shortage of fresh fruits and vegetables on the menu; this is particularly surprising for Florida. Considering the number of USDA food items represented on the menu we analyzed, the District uses a lot of USDA commodities. This helps reduce costs but, USDA does not consistently provide foods with low-fat content or the kinds of foods that many students prefer (e.g., lima beans, vegetarian beans and sliced apples).

Summary of Key Findings

Current participation is about 59%, less than the 65% to 70% participation rate expected for a district with high free/reduced eligibility

Participation levels may be adversely affected by limited menu offerings

The District uses a traditional menu with many USDA commodities

The District's menu planning and analysis capabilities should be fully utilized to improve participation rates

The District uses a computerized point-of-sale system. This system includes such features as free and reduced meal application eligibility and student participation analysis, but these features are not yet fully used by staff. The food service manager has begun collecting food and nutritional data, but does not yet use automated software to support data analysis.

Commendation

The District is commended for acquiring an automated menu analysis software package approved by the USDA.

The District has acquired Lunch Bytes System's "Nutrikids" menu analysis software (one of the USDA's approved software programs), but it has not yet implemented it. Food service staff training is limited to orientations and intermittent ad hoc reviews of nutrition guidelines and food preparation practices.

Finding No. 3.5 - The current cafeteria facility lacks sufficient capacity to accommodate current and projected student needs, and may be impairing participation rates.

The current food service facilities, while they remain functional, are too small to accommodate current student demands. As a result, serving times for lunch have been moved up to as early as 10:30 AM. According to interviews, the accelerated serving times have enabled students to have between 15 and 30 minutes to eat lunch, depending on their placement in the serving line.

The District's concerns about the serving capacity of its cafeteria are well-placed. Most food service professionals believe that the longer students have to wait in line the more apt they are to walk away. Moreover, that inclination to walk away begins after about three minutes. The average student should have 14 minutes to eat after waiting no more than five minutes to be served. If less time is available, the student may skip the standard meal offering in favor of snack vending or visiting with friends. Thus, current serving capacity constraints may contribute to the District's relatively low participation rates.

To address this issue, the District plans to commence an expansion and remodeling program for the central cafeteria during the summer. The District plans to expand its cafeteria by about 40 percent. This will enable the District to commence service one hour later. As far as we know, facility expansion is the only option for improving serving capacity being considered by the District at this time. The project will cost about $900,000, of which $347,000 will be funded by an energy grant. Energy conservation measures include solar lighting, energy-efficient windows and a more efficient air conditioning system

Finding No. 3.6 - The food service program suffered an operating deficit in FY97 and, if participation rates do not outpace cost increases, such deficits could continue.

The District does not subsidize its food service program with general fund dollars and, according to the District, does not require the Food Service Special Revenue Fund to transfer a portion of its fund balance to the General Fund. Given the District's high free/reduced student enrollment, general fund subsidies should not be necessary. Not surprisingly, until FY97, the food service program experienced fund balances of up to $60,000.

School food service programs should not have an undesignated, unreserved fund balance in excess of three months of operating expenditures. In the case of Glades, this reserve should not exceed about $90,000, unless the excess is earmarked for facility improvements. The District does not use indirect cost allocations

to ensure that the food service revenue fund is charged for its fair share of overhead costs currently incurred by the General Fund.

In FY97, the Food Service Special Revenue Fund experienced a deficit of $14,415 (revenue of $285,059 less expenditures of $299,474). The FY97 food service deficit was caused by increases in personnel costs and a decrease in participation. Increases in salary (8%) and benefits (12%) during FY97, coupled with the 3% decrease in lunch participation for that year, contributed to the budget shortfall. While one year's deficit is not necessarily a significant issue, it may indicate the need for adjustments to maintain a balanced budget.

There are some other trends worth noting. Per our District Performance Trend Analysis (Appendix B), the District's total lunch costs per meal rose 18% from $1.77 in FY94 to $2.10 in FY97 and its breakfast costs rose 41% from $1.12 in FY94 to $1.58 in FY97. During the same period, annual nonprogram revenues (e.g., a la carte and other food sales) dropped from $29,500 to $19,900.

In FY97, salaries and benefits accounted for 36.6% of the food service budget which is below the national average. Food costs represented another 35.3% of the FY97 budget (below the national average of 40-42%), probably due to the use of USDA commodities and competitive purchasing practices (e.g., four-county purchasing consortium). All other expenditures represented 21.2% in FY97; of this amount, energy costs ($23,833) may offer the best opportunity for reduction.

Summary of Key Findings

The Food Service Special Revenue Fund suffered a deficit in FY97
Unit lunch and breakfast costs are relatively high
The food service program may be overstaffed by one position
If participation rates are not improved, prices may have to be adjusted

The District's food service costs are somewhat high. Per our Peer Survey (Appendix C), the District's total lunch costs per meal were $1.96 for FY96, compared to $1.91 for the peer districts and $1.73 for the state average. Similarly, the District's average breakfast costs were $1.48 compared to $1.44 for the peer districts and $1.30 for the statewide average. Comparative data for peer districts was not readily available for FY97.

In all likelihood, excessive labor costs represent a significant causal factor for the District's relatively high food service costs. A full preparation kitchen should average at least 25 meals per hour (the industry "rule of thumb" is 33 meals per labor hour). Interviews with food service staff indicated that the operation could be run with one fewer position and that portion control is not tightly managed for upper grades. These issues represent cost reduction opportunities.

If recent lunch participation trends continue, the program could have fiscal problems, especially if it does not adjust operating costs accordingly. Lunch participation experienced a negligible drop in FY95, rebounded in FY96, but then dropped by 3.1% in FY97. While the decision to reduce the price of lunches was made to bring the District's prices in line with the prices of other school districts, that decision may have been premature. Reducing prices often makes it more difficult to raise prices at a future date. If participation is not increased, the District may be faced with the prospect of raising prices to earlier levels just to avoid future operating deficits.

3. Facilities Management

Finding No. 3.7 - The District's facilities planning process needs community input, a process for prioritizing needs, funding requirements and automated support.

Effective facilities planning helps ensure that school facilities meet the needs of students and the community. Good planning incorporates an assessment of all facilities as well as student enrollment projections and an analysis of relevant state mandates. In our view, while the board has demonstrated a strong commitment to improving facilities, the District lacks an effective facilities planning process. Fortunately, some of the elements of such a process are in place.

Every five years, the District completes an Educational Plant Survey required by Florida's DOE. The most recent plant survey, which was completed in October, 1996, provides much of the necessary documentation to begin the facilities planning process (e.g., historical enrollment trends, enrollment projections, room inventories, available space, physical condition analysis, campus utilization rates, financial trends and anticipated state funds for capital projects).

The District established a facilities planning committee that meets periodically to identify and discuss facilities needs. This committee comprises board members, the Superintendent, the Director of Administrative Services, the Finance Director, the Curriculum Director and principals, but no community representatives. Through a series of planning sessions, the facilities planning committee developed a list of proposed projects that includes a combination of new construction, renovation, and deferred maintenance projects. The proposed facilities projects are listed below.

Listing of Proposed Facilities Projects

Capital Project
Evaluate alternatives for Booker T. Washington complex
Construct drainage ditch - High school parking lot/bus loop
Upgrade K-5 area
Upgrade high school science lab
Expand administrative complex
Upgrade and air condition gym
Upgrade vocational area
Renovate cafeteria
Identify site for potential satellite school
Construct tennis/handball court

Source: District Administrative Services Office

Although the committee has identified a listing of specific facilities needs, the planning process lacks a defensible mechanism for prioritizing needs. Additionally, funding requirements, another critical component of the facilities planning process, have not been documented. Not surprisingly, the Director of Administrative Services and maintenance staff lack the administrative support and automation resources necessary to facilitate facilities management planning and cost analysis.

Finding No. 3.8 - Inadequate data and standards are maintained for construction projects.

Effective construction and design practices help ensure that school facilities are constructed and renovated in accordance with applicable standards at the lowest possible costs. Although exact project cost records

have not been maintained for projects completed up to 1992, the Director of Administrative Services estimates total project costs to be over $6 million. A chronology of the District's construction and renovation projects since 1988 is presented below.

Glades Construction and Renovation Projects Since 1988

Project Name	Project Description	Year
Elementary School	Constructed Richie Music multi-purpose building	1988
Strope Building	Constructed business wing at the high School	1991
Robert Gamble Building	Renovated middle school classrooms	1991
Margaret Wells North Wing & Mildred Shivers Building	Renovated admin. offices & high school classroom & added lounge, clinic & office	1991
John Holbrook Building	Renovated middle school classrooms	1991
Music Building	Installed new roof	1991
Media Center	Installed new lighting and updated ceiling	1991
Physical Education Bldg.	Upgraded flooring, air handlers & lighting	1991
Electric Equipment Bldg.	New Construction	1991
Wade B. Shivers Building	Renovated industrial wing (labs & classrooms)	1992
Auditorium	Gutted and renovated auditorium	1992
Gymnasium	Upgraded roof, lighting, PA system & rest rooms	1992
Track & Field Imprvm'ts	Moved football field and built 6-lane track	1993
ESE/Computer Lab	Constructed 3 ESE classrooms and computer lab	1994
Middle school science lab	New construction	1995
Elementary classroom	New construction	1996

Source: District Administrative Services Office

School districts should maintain detailed construction project data so project cost-effectiveness can be accurately evaluated on a project-by-project basis. Such data includes construction type, architectural design firm, contractor, year completed, building square footage, construction cost, architectural and engineering cost, furniture and equipment cost, technology cost and construction cost per square foot. This data allows facilities management staff to make more informed management decisions on future construction and renovation projects.

The District has no formal tools in place to ensure standardization of design, equipment and materials for school facilities. Standardization reduces replacement costs and excess maintenance material storage needs. With standardization, all new and renovated facilities use common materials and building systems. Thus, fewer lines of inventory items can be stocked, and higher volumes can be ordered, reducing overall procurement and inventory costs. In addition, standardization creates a uniform, cohesive appearance in the school's facilities.

Finding No. 3.9 - Facilities maintenance services are appropriately staffed and effective, but the District's facility operating and maintenance costs are high compared to its peer districts.

An effective facilities maintenance program ensures that school facilities are safe, in good working order and producing an effective learning environment for students. We found that there exists a high level of satisfaction with the quality of facility maintenance.

Our interviews with teachers and other district staff addressed their perceptions of the facility maintenance function. While there were some concerns expressed about some issues (e.g., bathroom grouting and the air conditioning system), the staff we interviewed indicated that the quality of work performed by the

maintenance staff and associated response time for completing most projects was very good. It should be noted, however, that the concerns expressed about the air conditioning system could help explain the District's relatively high facility operating costs.

The District's current facility maintenance staffing levels are appropriate for the maintenance functions performed. As the table below illustrates, Glades' staffing levels are in line with the peer districts we surveyed.

Peer District Maintenance Staffing (FY98)

District	Glades	Franklin	Liberty	Lafayette	Average
Total Maintenance Staff	4	5	3	6	4.7
Total Schools	2	4	2	3	3
Staff /School	2	1.25	1.5	2	1.6

Management regularly evaluates maintenance and operations activities to determine the most cost-effective means of providing needed services. Through an informal evaluation process, the District has limited the number of maintenance projects contracted out because maintenance staff is capable of completing most jobs at a lower cost. This process is appropriate for a district of this size.

While the District's facility management services are highly regarded, its cost structure is relatively high, depending on which cost basis is employed. As the table below indicates, the District's facility maintenance and operations costs per student are relatively high compared with those of selected peer districts (i.e., Franklin, Lafayette and Liberty). On a per student basis, its facility operating costs are more out of line than its facility maintenance costs.

Facility Maintenance and Operations Costs Per Student FTE

	Maintenance Cost		Operations Cost	
District	FY96	FY97	FY96	FY97
Glades	$412	$403	$211	$281
Franklin	$410	$413	$137	$161
Lafayette	$344	$324	$247	$220
Liberty	$400	$408	$152	$165
Average w/o Glades	$385	$382	$179	$182

Source: Florida Department of Education FY97 School District Financial Report

According to our Peer Survey (Appendix C), the District's total facility maintenance and operating costs per Capital Outlay FTE (COFTE), at $685, are much higher than the costs of its peer districts ($563) and the statewide average ($590). However, the District's total facility maintenance and operating costs per Gross Square Foot (GSF), at $3.32, are in line with the peer district average of $3.29 and much lower than the statewide average of $4.32. Ironically, on a COFTE and GSF basis, its facility maintenance costs are more out of line than its facility operating costs.

District personnel were unable to explain the reasons for their relatively high facility maintenance and operating costs. We believe that there are probably several causal factors. One factor is the District's small enrollment. If their facilities are under-utilized, then we would expect per student facility costs to be relatively high. Inefficient heating and air conditioning systems, coupled with inefficient and obsolete

windows, could contribute significantly to facility costs. Finally, the District funds most maintenance projects from operating funds rather than debt financing.

Large maintenance jobs that the District's maintenance staff does not have the expertise, time or capacity to complete are contracted to commercial vendors normally located in the Ft. Myers, Florida area. Types of maintenance projects contracted by the District include roofing repairs, asbestos inspections, large plumbing repair jobs, large painting jobs and large carpentry jobs.

Finding No. 3.10 - The District needs a structured preventive maintenance program as well as an automated work order system.

The District lacks a formal preventive maintenance program. The Maintenance Supervisor developed a maintenance planning calendar, but this calendar excludes the types of equipment and systems that are prone to high repair costs. It also lacks sufficient detail to support a comprehensive preventive maintenance program (e.g., estimated budgets and detailed maintenance procedures). A sample of the District's maintenance planning calendar is shown below.

Sample District Maintenance Planning Calendar

Month	Maintenance Task(s)
July	• Inspect and clean HVAC • Fertilize and spray ball fields • Conduct quarterly sprinkler inspection
August	• Inspect buildings and grounds for school opening • Inspect and adjust cabinet hinges • Conduct fire extinguisher inspection
September	• Inspect and clean HVAC • Collect and fax waste water monthly operating report • Spray buildings for pests

Source: District Administrative Services Office

According to professional contract maintenance firms, it is good practice for all maintenance operations (no matter how small) to implement preventive maintenance programs and automate maintenance record keeping and monitoring systems. If performed on a regular basis, preventive maintenance keeps the level of maintenance service high, reduces equipment breakdowns and service interruptions and prolongs the lives of facilities and equipment.

The District tracks all maintenance work orders manually, even though up to 400 work order requests are received annually (it is estimated that another 100 to 150 unlogged emergency work order requests are completed each year). Automating work order requests would enable facilities management to better plan and track labor and material/supply costs and schedule general maintenance and construction renovation projects. The type of information contained on a manual work order log used by maintenance staff is illustrated below.

Sample Manual Work Order Log

Order No.	Site	Approved By	Completion Date	Labor Costs	Other Costs	Total Costs

Source: District's Administrative Services Office

The problem with the manual log is that once the information is written down, maintenance staff must still calculate the number of work orders completed and other pertinent data. Work order logs were reviewed for July, 1997, and no data was recorded in the columns designated for labor and parts costs. The manual system and the inconsistent or incomplete recording of key data make it very difficult for District personnel to analyze project costs.

Finding No. 3.11 - The District's custodial resources are insufficient and misallocated among the two schools and custodial training is inadequate.

The District does not assign custodians to facilities based on a standard custodial staffing formula. For example, Moore Haven Elementary and Moore Haven Junior and Senior High School are both assigned 3.5 FTE custodians even though the high/middle school is nearly 40 percent larger than the elementary school.

The District receives an annual report from Florida's DOE that provides indicators for custodial personnel needs based on a five-part formula developed by the state. The state formula takes into account five factors, including number of teachers, number of students, number of rooms, gross square footage (GSF) of facility space and acres of unkept grounds (site factor). Using the state's formula, Glades' custodial function would require nearly 12 custodians. The table below shows that the District's custodial function is understaffed based on suggested industry guidelines.

Custodial Staffing Allocations Compared to Industry Guidelines

Facility	GSF	Custodial FTEs	GSF Per Custodian	Best Practice (19,000 GSF)	Over/ (Under)
M.H. Jr./Sr. High	93,365	3.5	26,675	5.0	(1.5)
M.H. Elementary	67,969	3.5	19,419	3.5	0
Superintendents Office	6,424	.3	21,413	.3	0
Total Facilities	*167,758	7.3	21,507	8.8	(1.5)

Source: Florida DOE - Florida Inventory of School Houses (FISH) 1996-97 and District Administrative Services Office
*Note: * Gross square footage total excludes the Booker T. Washington facility*

During stakeholder input sessions at both the junior/senior high school and the elementary school, faculty and teachers indicated that the custodial function appears to be under-staffed and cleaning standards need to be improved. Custodians at both schools also told the review team that there are insufficient staff to adequately clean the schools.

The District underwent a formal process to assess the feasibility of privatizing its custodial services in 1997. Formal bid packages were prepared and two bids were received, but neither bid was found to be more cost-effective than existing internal operations.

According to staff, custodial training is limited to a videotape of cleaning techniques for newly hired custodians. Staff indicate that, in some instances, new custodians work for several weeks before viewing the training tape. Inadequate custodial training could result in substandard service and improper use of cleaning equipment and supplies, causing injury to custodians.

Finding No. 3.12 - The District's current energy costs are similar to national norms, but well above the costs of its peer districts in Florida.

An effective energy management program ensures the efficient use of utilities by developing energy conservation practices and monitoring energy usage. A key performance indicator for measuring efficient energy use is the annual cost of energy per GSF of facility space. According to industry guidelines for school districts, on average, energy costs per GSF should range from $0.70 to $0.85 per GSF in an energy-efficient facility. Other factors such as climate, local utility costs and the specific use of school facilities may impact these costs.

The data presented below shows that the District has utility costs per gross square foot of $0.80, which are in line with industry standards for energy consumption. However, the District has significantly higher energy costs than those of its peer districts.

Peer District Energy Costs (1996-97)

Peer District	Number of Schools	Avg. School Age (Years)	Square Footage	Costs per Square Foot
Glades	2	30	209,552	$0.80
Franklin	4	29	340,867	$0.64
Lafayette	3	21	167,974	$0.69
Liberty	3	29	213,948	$0.55
Average including Glades	3	27	233,085	$0.67

Source: Florida Department of Education Facilities Information, 1996-97

The high energy cost variance between Glades and its peer districts may be attributable to less efficient HVAC systems or facility deficiencies. Effectively-managed districts perform energy audits to determine the factors that contribute to higher energy costs. School energy audits should be performed every five to seven years. Energy consultants also suggest that school districts perform energy audits whenever energy rates change, a major equipment failure occurs and existing facilities are expanded.

In 1994, the District contracted with a firm to establish an energy management and accountability program. The program consisted of four components: (1) retrofitting the HVAC system; (2) providing technical support to maintain and operate the system; (3) providing an ongoing energy audit service; and (4) providing consultation on controlling future energy and operating costs. The energy management contract was in effect for two years and saved the District an estimated $80,000. Additionally, the District recently received a $300,000 energy management grant from the State to develop an energy reduction master plan.

4. Safety and Security

Finding No. 3.13 - Despite its commendable efforts to use cooperative risk management programs, the District's safety program still has many opportunities for improvement.

School districts must provide a safe and secure learning environment for students and an accident-free environment for its employees and visitors. To provide such an environment, safety programs must be interactive and include elements of prevention, intervention and enforcement. Prevention measures should minimize on-the-job incidents and worker compensation claims, and intervention programs should emphasize alternative learning away from the regular classroom.

South Central Educational Risk Management Program (SCERMP) provides much of the District's safety-related training, including employee safety handbooks for District employees. The handbooks contain safety rules, policies and procedures. The maintenance supervisor, lunchroom supervisor and principals are responsible for distributing and discussing training pamphlets with employees. Members of SCERMP share the cost of providing safety-related training to each district's employees.

Commendation

The District is commended for participating in a cooperative risk management program to share the cost of providing safety-related training to District employees.

In 1993, the District established an emergency management team with specific duties to provide immediate assistance throughout the District in times of emergency. This team consists of five groups with specific duties for coordinating assistance in the event of an emergency (see below).

Emergency Management Team Groups and Duties

Group	Duties or Functions
Communications Group	• Receives initial notification of an incident and alerts all other groups • Notifies parents and maintains communications with hospitals
Logistics Support Group	• Coordinates transportation, supplies and equipment
Media Liaison Group	• Keeps the public informed of the emergency • Designates a spokesperson for the district and cooperates with media
Victims Assistance Group	• Assists victims and parents at the emergency scene and hospital • Notifies clergy and psychologists to provide counseling
Investigation Group	• Interviews individuals and initiates an in-house investigation • Assists federal, state, and local authorities as necessary

Source: August 26, 1996 memorandum from Director of Administrative Services

Each component group develops a crisis management plan in the event of a catastrophic event. These plans are updated annually. An emergency call list for members of each group, including Glades County authorities, is also updated and disseminated to members of the team annually.

Commendation

The District is commended for enhancing student and employee safety with its comprehensive emergency preparedness plan.

The District lacks sufficient resources to develop a comprehensive safety program to address district-wide safety issues. While the District has obtained a sample *"Safety and Health Loss Control Program"* from SCERMP and a copy of Lee County School District's *Safety Manual* , and both documents address the major elements of a comprehensive safety program, they have not been tailored to meet the unique safety requirements of Glades County.

Each year, the Florida State Board of Education (FSBOE) conducts a safety inspection of school districts throughout the state. Glades County's results from FSBOE were poor, as safety deficiencies were noted in the maintenance, operational, capital outlay, fire safety, and sanitation categories. The safety deficiencies cited by FSBOE are summarized below by category.

District Safety Deficiencies by Category (1996-97)

Category	Number of Deficiencies	No. Of Prior Deficiencies	% of Prior Deficiencies	Estimated Cost to Correct
Maintenance	147	117	79.5%	$16,440
Operational	89	72	80.9%	0
Capital Outlay	18	14	77.8%	48,750
Fire Safety/Sanitation	254	203	79.9%	65,165
Totals	508	406	79.9%	$130,355

Source: Comprehensive Safety Inspection, State Board of Education, 1996-97

About 80 percent of the safety deficiencies cited in the 1996-97 safety inspection were included in prior safety inspection reports. The total estimated cost to correct safety deficiencies cited totaled $130,355. The Director of Administrative Services indicates that the District lacks sufficient funds to correct all safety deficiencies in a timely manner. Nevertheless, uncorrected serious safety deficiencies could result in accidents that will increase the District's risk of financial losses resulting from potential lawsuits.

Finding No. 3.14 - The District is relatively free of serious security problems and has taken steps to ensure that it is positioned to address such issues should they arise.

The predominant mission of a security program is to provide a deterrent to crime and violence and react quickly to prevent unnecessary harm (prevention and enforcement). Ultimately, however, the security of a school district is frequently based on the perceptions of parents and the community. Our community survey (Appendix D) indicates that 84% of the respondents believe that school facilities provide a safe and secure learning environment.

The District's schools are generally free of major student discipline problems. The violence that is prevalent on many other Florida school campuses is not an issue in this district. Incidents of student discipline are not a major issue on these campuses and are among the lowest in the state. The major student discipline actions are for gum chewing on campus and tardiness.

Student discipline appears to have improved in the District over the past three years, with the number of disciplinary actions per 100 full-time equivalent students (FTE) decreasing approximately 89 percent between FY95 and FY97 (see table below).

Disciplinary Actions Per 100 FTE (FY95-FY97)

School Year	Disciplinary Actions per 100 FTE
FY95	37.8
FY96	26.8
FY97	4.3

Source: Glades County Schools Performance Trends, Florida DOE

Moreover, the District's student disciplinary actions in FY97 were approximately 84 percent below the peer district average. The disciplinary action per 100 FTEs in FY97 was 4.3 for Glades County, compared to the statewide average of 24.3 and rates in other small, rural counties of 16.0 (Liberty County) and 18.0 (Okeechobee County).

Peer District Disciplinary Actions Per 100 FTE (FY97)

Peer District	Disciplinary Actions per 100 FTE
Franklin County	25.9
Lafayette County	37.3
Liberty County	16.0
Peer District Average	26.4
Glades County	4.3
Percent Below Peer Average	83.7%

Source: Glades County School District Peer Data, Florida DOE

The precipitous drop in disciplinary actions in FY97 is difficult to explain. The Superintendent speculated that the reduction in disciplinary actions may be because of reduced corporal punishment. Without more careful analysis, this data should be viewed with some skepticism.

Moore Haven Junior-Senior High School's SRO is a sworn law enforcement officer. The SRO teaches a criminal justice class, conducts safety workshops, and assists with monitoring at lunch time. Based on interviews with District staff and the deputy sheriff of Moore Haven County, the SRO program has fostered a better relationship between students and law enforcement.

The salary of the SRO provided by Glades County Sheriff's Department is funded through a four-year block grant through the Florida Department of Juvenile Justice. Only four counties in the state of Florida received this block grant. Glades County also matches block grant funds by covering the officer's training, uniform, vehicle, gasoline, and maintenance. As a result, the District is not required to pay any costs associated with the SRO. Typically, school districts share the cost of an SRO's salary and benefits with the county.

Commendation

The District is commended for establishing an excellent cooperative relationship with the Glades County Sheriff's Office to provide community-based and efficient initiatives to enhance safety and security at the middle-senior high school.

D. Financial Services

1. Financial Management

Finding No. 4.1 - The District's limited financial management staff resources make it difficult to document procedures and maintain effective internal control systems.

A school district's fiscal operations control the collection, disbursement and accounting of federal, state and local funds. An effective fiscal operation has sound policies, procedures and internal controls to efficiently process and control daily business transactions and provide accurate, complete and timely information to the board and administration for decision-making.

Based on our interviews, site visits and document review, we have the following findings:

- The District's finance staff is very lean, with employees assigned multiple responsibilities for different functions
- There is limited cross-training (only the Payroll & Insurance and Purchasing & Property Records clerks have been cross-trained)
- Many key procedures are not documented (e.g., payroll, property record and federal program accounting)
- There are limited staff to segregate duties within the department
- Internal controls for cash receipts are weak (i.e., the secretary performs multiple cash receipt duties)
- While the Payroll & Insurance Clerk spends 70 percent of her time processing payroll checks, there is no direct payroll deposit plan

Without well-documented procedures for each component of the District's fiscal operations, employee turnover, prolonged absences because of illness, and orientation of new employees will result in inefficiencies that diminish the Finance Department's productivity. In the absence of effective internal controls, the District has greater exposure to loss or misappropriation.

Finding No. 4.2 - The District makes appropriate use of lottery funds.

The District receives Educational Enhancement Funds from the State in the form of discretionary lottery funds. State law requires that districts use the funds to enhance educational programs, and, prior to expending the funds, demonstrate that "enhancement" has been defined. Current board policy (§6.20) stipulates that lottery funds shall be used to maintain, expand or add programs that meet student needs or improve schools.

The Director of Finance is responsible for preparing both quarterly and annual reports detailing how lottery funds are spent. Information provided in the FY97 annual report filed with the Florida DOE is summarized below.

Discretionary Lottery Fund Expenditures (FY97)

Type of Expenditure	Amount
Hire an additional 7th grade teacher to lower class size	$43,224
Continue the health program at the middle school	42,549
Continue the reading program at the middle school	33,268
Continue the ESOL program at the elementary program	37,525
Hire an additional technology teacher at the middle school	32,054
Continue prep program	11,376
School Improvement Funds	438
Total	$200,434

Source: FDOE 1996-97 Discretionary Lottery Funds Annual Report

The District makes both the quarterly and annual reports of expenditures of lottery revenue available to the public at their request. The use of lottery funds has been a topic of extensive public discussion because school districts throughout Florida do not consistently inform the public of how discretionary lottery funds are spent.

2. Asset and Risk Management

Finding No. 4.3 - The District has adopted a cost-effective strategy for managing its cash, but its property inventory records are not current.

Effective cash management involves establishing sound banking relationships, managing cash receipts, controlling cash disbursements and investing funds in safe investment vehicles. The accounts payable/general disbursement and special account are interest bearing. The payroll activity account is a non-interest bearing imprest account (i.e., funds are deposited to cover only the amount of the payroll).

Additionally, the District uses the State Board Account (SBA) Local Government Surplus Fund to invest all idle funds not needed for business operations on a given day. Although the District has the flexibility to invest excess funds in a variety of safe vehicles approved by the Florida Legislature, the district has opted to invest all funds in the SBA, because of the limited number of staff to perform financial functions in the Finance Department.

Commendation

The District is commended for maintaining a manageable number of accounts and a single investment account through the SBA's Local Government Surplus Fund.

Effective asset management involves good records. The District's property inventory records are not current. The Purchasing and Property Records Clerk has not yet entered 1997-98 property acquisitions into the property records system--seven months into its fiscal year. Without updated property records, the District is exposed to the potential loss of fixed assets. Moreover, the accurate reconciliation of year end physical inventory to property records will require all property acquisitions to be entered into the property records system.

Finding No. 4.4 - The District employs a cost-effective cooperative agreement for obtaining worker compensation, property and casualty insurance.

The primary objective of risk management is to establish cost-effective insurance and loss-control programs that minimize financial liability for the district and its employees. The District uses SCERMP to obtain workers' compensation coverage. SCERMP uses a third party administrator for processing worker compensation claims. The use of a third party administrator gives consortium members better ability to monitor claims, which normally result in cost savings.

The District's claims filed and payments for worker compensation claims is relatively low (see table below for worker compensation claims for 1995 through 1997). Unlike many other school districts, Glades' worker compensation claims are highest among professional employees rather than food service and maintenance workers where employee injuries are more likely. The District may be able to lower worker compensation claims even further if it increases targeted safety training to employees in the professional worker category.

Worker Compensation Claims History (1995-97)

Worker Category	FY95 No. of Claims	FY95 Claim Amount	FY96 No. of Claims	FY96 Claim Amount	FY97 No. of Claims	FY97 Claim Amount
Professional	3	$1,306	8	$2,683	3	$341
Food Service	3	$3,228	4	$1,977	0	0
Transportation	0	0	2	$611	1	0
Operations	0	0	0	0	0	0
Maintenance	2	$137	2	$1,523	1	$282
Others	1	0	0	0	0	0
Total	9	$4,671	16	$6,794	5	$623

Source: McCreary Corporation, Third Party Administrator for District's Workers' Compensation Program
Note: In instances where the claim amount is $0, a claim was filed, but no payment had to be made for the claim

Commendation

This District is commended for entering into a cooperative cost savings agreement for obtaining worker compensation, property and casualty insurance.

District personnel could not quantify the benefits of their cooperative insurance program, but, at a minimum, its participation provides the District access to risk management guidelines and techniques which it otherwise would not have.

3. Purchasing

Finding No. 4.5 - The District's manual purchasing process is inefficient, but staff process orders in a timely basis and have begun to use cooperative purchasing techniques.

An efficient purchasing department should have management processes and technology in place to ensure that supplies, equipment and services are purchased from the right source, in the right quantity, at the lowest price, and in accordance with state purchasing guidelines. The District has taken steps to meet these objectives in spite of its limited staff.

The District is a member of the Heartland Consortium to leverage the buying power of ten districts. As a member of the consortium, Glades purchases office and instructional supplies at a lower unit price than it would otherwise be able to obtain if it purchased directly from supply vendors. While the District does not

track these savings, it is our experience that such arrangements usually result in cost savings for most bulk purchases.

Commendation

The District is commended for entering into cooperative purchasing agreements to reduce the cost of bulk purchases.

Purchase orders are processed within one to two days of receiving approved purchase requisitions. Our review of a small sample of purchase orders indicated that all had been processed within two days of receiving the original requisition. Our interviews with principals, teachers, and counselors revealed high satisfaction with the purchasing process. Most said that materials, supplies and services were of good quality and delivered by vendors in a timely manner.

Commendation

The District is commended for processing purchase orders in a timely manner.

There are some opportunities for improving the purchasing process. First, the process is totally manual. The District processes up to 1,000 purchase orders per year and significant clerical time is spent filing forms. Second, there is no file indexing system to easily locate purchase orders. Third, since dated purchase orders from prior school years are filed in a storage room on the ground floor of the administration building, retrieving purchase orders to research vendor-related questions is time consuming. Finally, purchasing data is extremely limited.

The absence of an automated purchasing system has impaired the efficiency of the purchasing process. The Purchasing and Property Control Clerk spends too much time manually preparing purchase orders, filing copies of purchase orders, and retrieving purchase orders from storage. Additionally, the District cannot track its purchases by category or commodity, which impairs its ability to control expenditures.

The Auditor General's preliminary audit findings for FY97 noted certain deficiencies in purchasing practices and competitive bidding procedures (e.g., some transactions lacked appropriate bid controls, purchase orders and documentation of receipt). The Auditor General recommended that appropriate actions be taken to ensure that all purchase orders and receiving documents are properly prepared prior to the purchase and/or payment for goods and services. Moreover, the report recommended that the District improve its controls over the bid process to ensure that sealed bids are properly controlled upon receipt and the appropriateness of decisions is documented.

IV. Recommendations

A. District Management

1. Management and Organization

Recommendation No. 1.1 - Establish an integrated board-level planning, school improvement and performance monitoring system, including a formal strategy to anticipate potential population growth and calibrate resources to projected student needs (Findings No. 1.1-1.5).

The Glades County School District faces many uncertainties in the future. Will student enrollment grow, stabilize or decline? If it grows, in what parts of the County will it occur? Will new school facilities be required in the western or northern parts of the County? If not, will it be more cost-effective to serve students in those areas through service arrangements with adjoining school districts? Will consortia give the District access to the resources it will require to succeed?

Regardless of the answers to these questions, they are questions that must be asked. No school district has failed because it did too much planning. Glades County School District, because of its limited size and resources, is particularly vulnerable to the future's uncertainties. In the coming year, the school board's most critical task should be to establish a clear district-wide vision, a coherent community-based strategic plan, and a practical, board-level performance monitoring system. In turn, these plans and monitoring tools must be linked to the annual budget process.

Implementation Strategies and Timelines

Implementation Strategies	Responsible Entity	Completion Date
Obtain population projections from regional planning entity	Superintendent	July, 1998
Update enrollment projections for each area of the County	Superintendent	August, 1998
Develop unit cost estimates for serving students in remote areas	Superintendent	September, 1998
Develop cost estimates for building satellite school (K-3) in western part of county and adding grades and classrooms over 5 years	Director of Adm. Services	September, 1998
Project funding needs for technical resources and assistance (e.g., technology, personnel management and curriculum development)	Finance Director	September, 1998
Prepare inventory of potential consortia and other resources	Superintendent	October, 1998
Develop strategy for accelerating use of consortia to obtain needed resources and assistance, including lobbying for incentive funding	Superintendent	October, 1998
Engage consultant to provide planning and other technical assistance	Board	October, 1998
Establish committee of community and parent representatives to assess service needs and alternative strategies	Superintendent	November, 1998
Develop short-term service delivery strategy to ensure cost-effective service to students in remote areas (near other schools)	Superintendent	January, 1999
Develop and adopt district-wide strategic plan and performance targets	Board	February, 1999
Update annual operating budget linkages to reflect strategic plan	Superintendent	March, 1999
Conduct workshops to train board members, staff and SACs on the new planning, budgeting and monitoring process	Superintendent	April, 1999

Arguably, given Florida's financing system, the Glades County School District could improve its prospects through growth. The issue is where that growth will occur. If population growth occurs in the Moore Haven, Washington Park and Palmdale areas, where about 80% of the District's students live, the District could probably accomodate and benefit from this growth. Current facilities in Moore Haven could be expanded at a reasonable cost and additional state revenues would enable the District to expand its administrative and instructional support resources.

However, if future population growth occurs in the North LaBelle/Muse or Buckhead Ridge areas, the District may be forced to build new facilities in areas of the county that are relatively close to schools in adjoining school districts. The District estimates that at least 330 students that live in the North LaBelle/Muse and Buckhead Ridge areas attend schools in the adjoining Hendry and Okeechobee school districts pursuant to cooperative agreements with those districts. This is because these areas are closer to schools in those districts than the schools in Moore Haven.

If population stablizes in the North LaBelle/Muse and Buckhead Ridge areas, the Glades County School District may find it increasingly inefficient to serve a limited number of students in those areas, as it does now. If it cannot afford to build new schools in those areas to better the students there (and the current number of students there would probably not merit such an investment), it may be forced to encourage more of the students in those areas to attend other school districts. By reducing the District's enrollment, this would further reduce the District's federal and state funding.

The District will require training and other technical assistance to help update its projections, prepare the plan and implement the new planning and monitoring process. Training sessions will have to be conducted with parents, teachers and other stakeholders once the plan and process are ready for implementation. Involving all participants in the process will greatly further the District's site-based management philosophy. The school board should continue to monitor the District's performance and its capabilities for achieving the objectives it sets for itself.

These initiatives will strain administrative resources. One compensating strategy should be to expand the superintendent's use of regional cooperatives for technical assistance, personnel recruitment, staff development and purchasing. For example, the superintendent should aggressively promote the Heartland Consortium's plans to expand services of benefit to consortium members. The Consortium assists member districts at the direction of those districts, or under contract to any given district. The superintendent should seek greater assistance in the areas of curriculum development, personnel management, and technology management. Another strategy should be to operate and finance joint educational programs with adjoining districts.

However, if such strategies fail to address the District's long-term needs, and student performance levels do not rise appreciably, the board should consider the feasibility of a merger with an adjoining school district. We understand that this idea would probably encounter substantial community resistance, but poor student performance and high unit operating costs would be a high price to pay for local control.

Estimated Fiscal Impact By Year

Recommendation	FY99	FY00	FY01	FY02	FY03
Update enrollment projections	- 0 -	($1,500)	- 0 -	- 0 -	- 0 -
Develop strategic plan	- 0 -	($7,500)	- 0 -	- 0 -	- 0 -
Conduct training sessions	- 0 -	($2,000)	- 0 -	- 0 -	- 0 -
Net (costs)/benefits	- 0 -	($11,000)	- 0 -	- 0 -	- 0 -

The other recommended strategies can be implemented with existing resources. Nevertheless, we urge the District to lobby state officials for greater incentive funding for participation in regional collaboratives. Together, the recommended strategies will address Findings No. 1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 1.4 and 1.5 and ultimately improve the District's capacity address the future needs of its students.

Recommendation No. 1.2 - Refine school board and superintendent roles and establish effective mechanisms for resolving future disputes (Findings No. 1.3-1.5).

The school board's primary emphasis should be on planning, policy formulation, setting goals, targets and measurable outcomes for student achievement, and performance monitoring. This will require the board to reinforce its commitment to school-based management policies and support the superintendent's day-to-day operational decisions. To accomplish this objective, the board should consider the following strategies:

- Engage the Florida Association of School Boards (FASB) or another association to assist the board in strengthening its planning and policy-making role
- Assign individual school board members leadership roles for key policy areas (e.g., technology, human resources or curriculum)
- Expand its consent agenda to include such decisions as personnel actions and minor fiscal commitments (e.g., under $10,000)
- Develop specific criteria for revisiting the Superintendent's administrative decisions (e.g., personnel actions)

The District should develop a structured community input process that regularly obtains feedback from residents, parents and students and ensures that their ideas for improving schools are documented and incorporated in the district-wide planning process. It should revise SAC procedures to ensure that all interested community members and parents can become members. Finally, it should establish a district advisory council to serve as an informal quality assurance committee (with one board member) and provide a more discrete mechanism for resolving personnel disputes, classroom complaints and other issues.

Implementation Strategies and Timelines

Implementation Strategies	Responsible Entity	Completion Date
Engage facilitator from FASB	Board	June, 1998
Assign individual school board members leadership roles	Board	July, 1998
Expand board consent agenda	Board	July, 1998
Develop criteria for reviewing administrative decisions	Board	July, 1998
Establish structured community input process	Superintendent	August, 1998
Revise SAC procedures	Board & Superintendent	August, 1998
Establish a district advisory council	Board & Superintendent	September, 1998

The board should focus on planning and policy more than day-to-day operations. Instead of intervening in administrative decisions, it should solicit community input, set broad strategies and measurable performance targets, monitor district and administrative performance and serve as a court of appeals for personnel matters and other disputes. While it should monitor the chief executive officer's performance against established targets, it should support and reinforce his authority where possible.

By establishing a mechanism to deal effectively with complaints about teachers or other delicate matters and a more effective tool for monitoring the superintendent's performance, the board should be able to focus more on policy formulation and planning (and avoid excessive entanglement in day-to-day administrative details). The board also should explore the merits of making the superintendent position an appointed position under Florida Constitution, Article 9, Section 5. This would accord the school board direct control over the superintendent.

Estimated Fiscal Impact By Year

Recommendation	FY99	FY00	FY01	FY02	FY03
Engage board facilitator	($2,400)	- 0 -	- 0 -	- 0 -	- 0 -
Develop community input process	($1,500)	- 0 -	- 0 -	- 0 -	- 0 -
Net (costs)/benefits	($3,900)	- 0 -	- 0 -	- 0 -	- 0 -

We have assumed an average hourly rate of $75 for a board facilitator and consultant to help develop the structured community input process. The other recommended strategies can be implemented with existing resources. Together, the recommended strategies will address Findings No. 1.3, 1.4 and 1.5.

2. Personnel Management

Recommendation No. 1.3 - Strengthen central coordination of the District's human resource management function and upgrade the human resource management program (Finding No. 1.6).

The School District should assign district-wide responsibility for its human resource functions to the Superintendent or Director of Administrative Services, designating one individual as the District's Human Resources (HR) Coordinator or team leader. The HR team leader should have district-wide responsibility for such areas as recruitment, training, classification, compensation, employee relations, grievances, personnel records, health and safety, work force diversity and policy documentation. A responsibility matrix delineating HR duties among the HR Coordinator, principals and other department heads will facilitate site-based management.

Updating the District's human resource program will require the involvement of many individuals. Where possible, the District should continue to use specialized HR resources from its consortia. As indicated below, the Human Resource Leader also should use employee teams to assist with the implementation of several recommended HR strategies.

Implementation Strategies and Timelines

Implementation Strategies	Responsible Entity	Completion Date
Create mission statement for human resource management program	Superintendent	May, 1998
Assign HR coordination duties to single individual	Superintendent	June, 1998
Prepare a responsibility distribution matrix for HR duties	HR Leader	July, 1998
Revise and implement compensation study and job descriptions	HR Leader	July, 1998
Reduce the education requirement for new custodians	HR Leader	July, 1998
Conduct an employee attitude survey	HR Leader	October, 1998
Institute new performance appraisal process and forms	HR Leader & Staff Team	January, 1999
Develop training plan for instructional staff	HR Leader & Staff Team	February, 1999
Develop training plan for non-instructional staff	HR Leader & Staff Team	February, 1999
Update HR policies and procedures	HR Leader & Staff Team	March, 1999
Adopt revisions to HR policies and procedures	Board	April, 1999

The District should intensify its efforts to recruit and retain the best possible employees, develop their potential, monitor their performance and maximize their productivity. It should implement the new classification system, revise the performance appraisal process and develop new training plans. An employee attitude survey also would help ensure that employee input is reflected in the development of new personnel management policies and procedures.

The new personnel policies and procedures should provide guidelines and procedures for numerous issues, such as applicant pre-screening, open position advertisement and recruitment, employee orientation, reclassification, job definition and file maintenance. Well-documented procedures help ensure that the District's human resource goals are met. A well-designed and effectively-coordinated HR program will help the District ensure adequate and competent staff for the provision of educational services, now and into the future.

Estimated Fiscal Impact By Year

Recommendation	FY99	FY00	FY01	FY02	FY03
Develop new training plans	($3,000)	- 0 -	- 0 -	- 0 -	- 0 -
Conduct employee survey	($2,000)	- 0 -	- 0 -	- 0 -	- 0 -
Net (costs)/benefits	($5,000)	- 0 -	- 0 -	- 0 -	- 0 -

The District should engage a consultant through the FASB or a consortium to tailor proven training plans to its needs. We have assumed an average hourly consultant rate of $75. The employee survey is based on a lump sum amount. The other recommended strategies can be implemented with existing resources. Together, the recommended strategies will address Finding No. 1.6.

The District may need a full-time HR professional some day. Many public agencies establish a professional human resource position when their employment level exceeds 100. A Human Resources Director often requires a college degree (preferably a Master's Degree in Human Resources Management) and five years of experience in human resource management and specialized human resources training.

Candidates also should understand the principles of human resources administration, relevant federal, state and local laws and proven labor relations skills.

Since the District probably cannot afford this position at this time, it should rely on one of the current administrators to coordinate its HR program. As an alternative, the District should consider contracting with another public entity for certain HR services (e.g., training).

3. Technology Management

Recommendation No. 1.4 - Upgrade the District's technology plan and improve the management of its technology resources and initiatives (Findings No. 1.7, 1.8, 4.3 and 4.5).

The District's technology needs are sufficient to warrant at least one position (and possibly two) devoted exclusively to technology. One position (or a contract resource) is needed to provide planning and coordination assistance. Another position (or contract resource) could be merited at a later date to complete the installation of and provide ongoing support for the district-wide network. To ensure that instructional staff are fully involved with technology issues, the District's technology committee should be reconvened and expanded.

The District's technology committee should revisit the 1997-98 Technology Plan and the District's technology needs. The District's current technology plan needs to provide a longer planning period (e.g., five years) and more specific guidance as to implementation steps, timelines, responsibility assignments and financial resource needs. The technology plan also should address such concerns as flexibility, longevity, upgradability and scalability and fully address support requirements and distance learning capabilities.

Implementation Strategies and Timelines

Implementation Strategies	Responsible Entity	Completion Date
Create and fund a Technology Coordinator position	Board & Superintendent	July, 1998
Reconvene the technology committee and expand membership	Superintendent	July, 1998
Negotiate a contract for computer network implementation assistance	Technology Coordinator	August, 1998
Establish a district-wide technology purchasing plan and repair-maintenance service arrangement	Technology Coordinator	August, 1998
Issue RFP to acquire and install compatible software for AS400	Technology Coordinator	August, 1998
Evaluate vendor proposals for installation services and software and conduct vendor demonstrations as needed	Technology Coordinator	September, 1998
Conduct additional teacher training as needed to ensure that current technology (e.g., video production laboratory) is fully used	Technology Coordinator	September, 1998
Select a vendor to install the system and related software	Superintendent	October, 1998
Approve the selection and execute the contract(s)	Board	November, 1998
Review and revise the District's Technology Plan	Technology Coordinator	December, 1998
Test the AS400 and software, accept installation and conduct software training sessions for District staff	Technology Coordinator	March, 1999

The District should install the IBM AS400 and fully-integrated administrative and financial management software. This investment will enable the District to operate and control its own automated administrative and financial management system and improve the efficiency and effectiveness of operations. The applications should include budgeting, general ledger, payroll, personnel, accounts receivable/payable, purchasing, fixed assets, grants accounting, and student records and attendance reporting.

Estimated Fiscal Impact By Year

Recommendation	FY99	FY00	FY01	FY02	FY03
Hire a technology coordinator	($50,000)	($50,000)	($50,000)	($50,000)	($50,000)
Update technology plan	($7,500)	- 0 -	- 0 -	- 0 -	- 0 -
Net (costs)/benefits	($57,500)	($50,000)	($50,000)	($50,000)	($50,000)

Acquisition costs for the AS400 have been incurred, but one-time installation, cabling, software and training costs will be about $36,000 and annual maintenance costs will be about $10,000. The District has already factored these cost estimates into its annual budget and future spending plans. The other recommended strategies can be implemented with existing resources. Together, the recommended strategies will address Findings No. 1.7, 1.8, 4.3 and 4.5.

Public school districts organize their technology resources in different ways. Some assign a instructional technology unit to the Curriculum and Instruction Department and the administrative and business computing unit to the Director of Finance or Administration. Other districts combine instructional and business computing functions under one manager. Regardless of the organizational approach, effective leadership of district technology issues is critical.

B. Instructional Support

1. Educational Services Delivery

Recommendation No. 2.1 - Increase curriculum development resources and continue efforts to upgrade the District's curriculum and instructional programs and materials (Findings No. 2.1-2.3).

In order for the District to increase student performance and keep abreast of ever-changing federal and state mandates for public education, it will require greater instructional support resources. This may be achieved by adding a new position, using educational consultants or leveraging the resources available through consortia. In any event, the District needs help to coordinate the development and implementation of standard curricula within and across grade levels.

Implementation Strategies and Timelines

Implementation Strategies	Responsible Entity	Completion Date
Create a position of Curriculum Coordinator, engage contractor or expand collaborative efforts to improve curriculum	Superintendent	August, 1998
Review test results from School Accountability Report to identify instructional improvements that will increase test scores	Curriculum Coordinator	September, 1998
Review "Vital Signs for School Improvement - A Training Guide" published by Florida DOE	Curriculum Coordinator	September, 1998
Determine appropriate measures that will lead to academic improvements and develop plans for achieving these improvements	Curriculum Coordinator	September, 1998
Hire a consultant to work with the District in troubleshooting the academic deficits and seeking successful strategies for increasing student academic performance	Curriculum Coordinator	September, 1998
Establish collaborative staff development plan with other school districts with measurable performance objectives and timelines	Curriculum Coordinator	September, 1998
Implement Saturday make-up days for absentee students	Curriculum Coordinator	September, 1998
Reinstitute the in-school suspension program at high school	Superintendent	September, 1998
Implement program at grades 4, 8 and 10 to improve student test-taking skills for standardized tests	Curriculum Coordinator	October, 1998
Modify high school prerequisite policy to afford easy access to courses while maintaining the curricular rigor of course sequences	Superintendent & Board	November, 1998
Install computerized scheduling system for the middle/high school	Curriculum Coordinator	December, 1998
Develop plan to use distance learning opportunities to expand high school course offerings	Curriculum Coordinator	March, 1999

Although the District has demonstrated some improvement in student performance levels, the FY97 School Accountability Report documented critically low scores in writing at the elementary level and in mathematics at the senior high school level. Achievement levels have been consistently below state medians, perhaps due in part to the District's relatively high mobility rates.

Student Achievement levels are impacted by many factors. Research has documented that to demonstrate high achievement, schools must have a close alignment of the curriculum being taught and the achievement

test being used to measure academic progress. Other critical factors identified in the research on higher performing high poverty schools are:

- Clear school mission
- Strong leadership using shared decision-making
- Instructional programs that support and implement the curriculum
- Safe school environment
- Effective monitoring of student progress
- Targeted staff development
- Active involvement of parents and the community
- High expectations for students

The additional factors listed above should also be examined to determine areas in which improvements can be made that will maximize student learning in Glades schools. Specific areas noted in our review are allowing and supporting principals to implement shared decision-making in schools, providing more targeted staff development, and assisting teachers in implementing instructional programs that support a planned, integrated curriculum.

Florida DOE is changing the state curriculum guides and achievement testing program (FCAT) to reflect more integrated instruction and higher order thinking skills. School districts must restructure their curricula to meet these new requirements and prepare their students for the new achievement testing program. Even though small districts find it difficult to marshal the resources to restructure their curricula, textbooks alone do not adequately prepare students for FCAT.

The Florida State Sunshine Standards reflect national policies that our education system refocus on skills for our technologically-advanced society. Students should be taught how to find, use and present information, not to memorize knowledge that will quickly be outdated or forgotten. For example, instead of memorizing the state capitals, students should learn how to locate the names of capitals, preferably through a real-world experience such as planning a trip. Such problem-oriented instruction helps students locate, integrate, and apply information.

Glades should review and revise its curricula to reflect the Florida State Sunshine Standards and Curriculum Frameworks. The District must generate benchmarks and correlate instructional materials from the textbook series and other resources to address the benchmarks. Examples of specific needs include social studies and science at the elementary level. The District has three options for achieving this objective: 1) participate in joint development efforts with the Heartland Consortium, 2) hire or contract with a curriculum coordinator to lead these efforts or 3) acquire curricula from another district and modify it accordingly.

Other improvement strategies recommended herein include implementing Saturday make-up days for absentee students and reinstituting the in-school suspension program at the high school. These measures could help reduce the high school dropout rate and increase the 12th grade graduation rate. Conducting joint staff development programs with other districts will improve curricula and instructional programs through the sharing of ideas and successful strategies, and reduce the perceived isolation of this small, rural district. Automating the scheduling system will reduce the time needed to manually schedule students and increase the time available for counselors to provide academic counseling.

Instituting new academic prerequisite procedures will ensure that students taking advanced courses understand certain required skills. In turn, this could reduce the dropout rate, increase graduation rates and improve the future post-secondary performance of certain students. High school students need all of the courses required for graduation plus classes that prepare them for post-secondary education in vocations or colleges. Prerequisite courses should be viewed in this context.

Expanding high school course offerings through distance learning opportunities will increase the college-entrance opportunities for high school graduates. Increasing course offerings at the high school will require teachers with the expertise to teach the additional courses and sufficient numbers of students to take the courses. If additional courses are offered, class sizes will be reduced or the number of sections of other courses must be reduced. The best option for a small high school like Glades to increase its course offerings is to identify and offer classes through distance learning, a challenge best addressed at the faculty level.

Estimated Fiscal Impact By Year

Recommendation	FY99	FY00	FY01	FY02	FY03
Engage curriculum consultant	($25,000)	($25,000)	($25,000)	($25,000)	($25,000)
Implement Saturday make-up days	($2,000)	($2,000)	($2,000)	($2,000)	($2,000)
Computerize scheduling system	($5,000)	$10,000	$10,000	$10,000	$10,000
Net (costs)/benefits	($32,000)	($17,000)	($17,000)	($17,000)	($17,000)

The other recommended strategies can be implemented with existing resources. Together, the recommended strategies will address Findings No. 2.1, 2.2 and 2.3.

Recommendation No. 2.2 - Fund and implement a more aggressive teacher recruitment and retention program, perhaps jointly with an adjoining school district (Findings No. 1.6 and 2.4).

The School Board should evaluate its teacher compensation program to make it more competitive with other school districts. This will probably require the District to increase some salaries to recruit and retain quality teachers, especially for certain specialties. It should then implement a teacher recruitment program that includes brochures and promotional information on the advantages of Glades County as a place of employment and a place to live.

Implementation Strategies and Timelines

Implementation Strategies	Responsible Entity	Completion Date
Establish committee of teachers and parents to review base teacher salaries and other potential barriers to teacher recruitment	Board & Superintendent	August, 1998
Explore potential joint recruitment opportunities with adjacent school districts (e.g., Hendry County School District)	Board & Superintendent	September, 1998
Conduct telephone interviews with teachers that have decided to join other school districts in last two years	Committee	November, 1998
Adjust base teacher salary and develop other incentives as part of new teacher recruitment and retention strategy	Board & Superintendent	December, 1998
Develop recruitment brochures and promotional materials	Superintendent	January, 1999

To compete with surrounding districts, Glades School District must increase teacher salaries or convince new teachers of the other advantages of living and working in Glades County (or both). Such advantages include the small class sizes, low violence and discipline rates, close communications, and strong sense of community. For teachers coming from northern states, the low tax rates and favorable weather should also be stressed.

Florida studies of indicators of higher student achievement levels in high poverty schools document staff turnover rates as having a significant adverse relationship on student achievement. Schools with low turnover rates have higher student achievement levels. In Glades, the relatively high teacher turnover rate, coupled with lower average teacher salaries, could be having a negative impact on student performance.

Estimated Fiscal Impact By Year

Recommendation	FY99	FY00	FY01	FY02	FY03
Increase base teacher salaries	($39,000)	($39,000)	($39,000)	($39,000)	($39,000)
Implement retention program	-0-	$28,000	$28,000	$28,000	$28,000
Net (costs)/benefits	($39,000)	($11,000)	($11,000)	($11,000)	($11,000)

The fiscal impact of increasing base salaries was estimated assuming a $3,000 salary increase for 20 percent of the teachers. In subsequent years, reducing teacher turnover by 50 percent would save about $4,000 per year per teacher in recruitment costs. The other recommended strategies can be implemented with existing resources. Together, the recommended strategies will address Findings No. 1.6 and 2.4.

2. Community Involvement

Recommendation No. 2.3 - Create a district-wide community involvement program with an emphasis on increasing community participation in school decisions, maximizing parental participation in school activities and increasing the use of volunteers (Findings No. 2.5-2.7).

Glades County School District needs a structured community involvement strategy. According to the Washington State School Director's Association, a district's community involvement plan should address such elements as opinion leader lists, media relations, external communications, press release schedules, internal communications, responsibility assignments and funding. Districts also should considering using such tools as surveys, focus groups, brochures, newsletters, web pages, community organizations, and survey utilities for Internet users.

Achieving this objective will require the effective leadership of the Superintendent and the assignment of central coordination responsibilities to a single administrator. Since we do not believe that the District can afford an additional position for this function at this time, we recommend that the Superintendent assign this responsibility to the Instructional Services Coordinator. This will enable the Board to assign clear accountability for this program.

In a district as small as Glades, the community involvement program also should address parental involvement and volunteer programs. As such, the new community involvement program should include the following strategies:

- Establish a joint community newsletter with the county and town

- Establish a PTA for each campus and give each PTA a strong voice in determining community members for SAC's
- Commence a joint business/community fundraising effort for funding certain needs (e.g., strategic planning process, curriculum development or technology support)
- Establish business programs for students (e.g., apprenticeships, mentor programs and job shadowing) via the School To Work Consortium
- Develop a parental/family involvement plan for offering more activities parents can attend (e.g., weekend school barbecues and parent-child athletic contests)
- Establish formal contracts with parents (e.g., on disciplinary matters)
- Develop and implement a strategy for supporting parents of children in transition (e.g., 5th to 6th, 8th to 9th grade and graduating seniors), including amplified course description manuals (e.g., students entering middle school)
- Create a structured volunteer recruiting program, solicit volunteers to assist in schools and train teachers to increase volunteerism in school classrooms

Implementation timelines and responsibility assignments are presented below.

Implementation Strategies and Timelines

Implementation Strategies	Responsible Entity	Completion Date
Assign responsibility for coordinating community involvement, parental communications and volunteer programs	Superintendent	July, 1998
Establish formal contracts with parents	Community Coordinator	September, 1998
Establish joint community involvement program with county and town including joint newsletter	Community Coordinator	September, 1998
Establish PTA for each campus and give PTA strong voice in determining community members for SAC's	Community Coordinator	September, 1998
Commence joint business/community fundraising campaign	Community Coordinator	October, 1998
Establish and maintain business programs for students via School To Work Consortium	Community Coordinator	October, 1998
Develop parental/family involvement plan for offering more activities parents can attend	Community Coordinator	December, 1998
Develop strategy for supporting parents of children in transition (e.g., 5th to 6th, 8th to 9th grade and graduating seniors)	Community Coordinator	December, 1998
Create a structured volunteer recruiting program	Community Coordinator	December, 1998

In its report entitled, "Improving Student Performance in High Poverty Schools," OPPAGA found that less affluent schools like those in Glades face greater challenges (e.g., high student mobility and absenteeism) and that limited parental involvement posed a big obstacle to school improvement. However, the report cited several examples of proven strategies for facilitating parental involvement in such districts (see table below).

Recommended Parental Involvement Types and Strategies

Type	Home-Based Strategies	School-Based Strategies
Parenting, help teaching and at-home learning	• Information packets, videotapes & automated phone messages • Home visitations by staff • Referral data on health, nutrition & other services	• Family math, science & reading nights • Parent education courses (e.g., GED, family literacy) • Family resource rooms for parental use after hours
Communicating	• Student work folders • School/community calendars • School activity newsletters • Positive teacher call program	• Parent-teacher conferences as needed or on regularly scheduled basis • Open houses with food and treats • Language translators available
Volunteering	• Annual postcards to solicit volunteers and capabilities	• Classroom program (e.g., tutoring) • Parent patrols to aid safety
Decision making (advisory)	• Needs assessment surveys	• Parental involvement on SACs • Active PTO/PTA organizations

There also are several volunteer resources available to school districts in Florida and around the nation. Examples include NetDay (tools for wiring schools for Internet), TechCorps (a national directory of technology experts for advising schools), Volunteer Link (a volunteer database), Project Appleseed and the Florida Business and Education Coalition for Technology and Change.

Estimated Fiscal Impact By Year

Recommendation	1998-99	1999-2000	2000-01	2001-02	2002-03
Establish joint community relations venture with county and town	($2,500)	($2,500)	($2,500)	($2,500)	($2,500)
Commence joint business/community fundraising	$2,500	$5,000	$7,500	$10,000	$10,000
Net (costs)/benefits	-0-	$2,500	$5,000	$7,500	$7,500

The other recommended strategies can be implemented with existing resources. Together, the recommended strategies will address Findings No. 2.5, 2.6 and 2.7.

C. Pupil Support

1. Transportation

Recommendation No. 3.1 - Upgrade one mechanic position into a Transportation Supervisor position, automate the routing system and reassess courtesy ridership practices (Findings No. 3.1 and 3.3).

The District operates a relatively effective transportation service, but the program absorbs an excessive amount of the central administration's time and diverts attention from other issues. In addition, there are several opportunities for improving the efficiency of the operation. Our suggested strategies for improving program efficiency are outlined below.

Implementation Strategies and Timelines

Implementation Strategies	Responsible Entity	Completion Date
Convert one full-time mechanic position to a full-time Transportation Supervisor position	Superintendent & Board	July, 1998
Install inexpensive bus routing/scheduling package and evaluate alternative routing schemes	Transportation Supervisor	August, 1998
Discontinue service to students who can safely walk to school, particularly older, secondary school students	Board	August, 1998
Evaluate the feasibility of employing additional crossing guards at heavily-traveled or poorly controlled intersections	Transportation Supervisor	September, 1998
Aggressively petition the State to grant an exception to the funding exclusion for students transported within the walking distance	Transportation Supervisor	September, 1998

The full-time mechanic position could be incorporated into a new transportation coordinator position to provide better operational coverage of daily operations. This individual could also be used as a reserve driver and back-up mechanic to fill in during the full-time mechanic's absence. One of the transportation coordinator's first tasks should be to acquire an inexpensive bus routing and scheduling or GIS software package. This will support efficient route adjustments.

The District's current courtesy ridership policy cannot be disputed on safety considerations. While it results in significant unreimburseable costs for the District, the board believes that the policy is critical to student safety. Nevertheless, the District should consider discontinuing (or charging for) service to those students who can safely walk to school, particularly older, secondary school students. At a minimum, it should evaluate the viability of continuing to provide the current level of courtesy transportation for students that are within the two-mile walking limit defined by the State. Considering the very high cost of this service, every effort should be made to minimize the number of students so transported, *where this can be done without compromising safety*. Finally, the District also should evaluate the costs and benefits of employing additional crossing guards where students must traverse heavily-traveled or poorly controlled intersections.

The District should aggressively petition the State to grant an exception to the funding exclusion for students transported within the walking distance who cannot reasonably be expected to walk to and from school for reasons of safety. The State's current criteria for determining hazardous walking conditions are too narrow. They should include such factors as average vehicular running speeds, vehicle counts during hours that students would be walking to and from school, road berm width or sidewalks, pedestrian visibility and motorist sight-range measurements for each student age group, climatic factors (e.g., fog and heavy rain) and incidence of recent pedestrian-related accidents along approved walking routes.

Estimated Fiscal Impact By Year

Recommendation	1998-99	1999-2000	2000-01	2001-02	2002-03
Upgrade mechanic to supervisor	($10,000)	($10,000)	($10,000)	($10,000)	($10,000)
Automate routing system and revise courtesy ridership practices	($5,000)	$19,600	$19,600	$19,600	$19,600
Net (costs)/benefits	($15,000)	$9,600	$9,600	$9,600	$9,600

Bus routing information systems vary widely in cost. Top-end applications, such as *Ecotran* or *Edulog* cost as much as $25,000 for this size operation. Low-end GIS packages, such as *Atlas*, offer basic mapping that can be adapted to routing requirements and cost less than $5,000. We do not recommend the more expensive routing software packages.

Improved routing and reduced courtesy ridership should reduce overall operating costs. We have estimated that reducing the District's unit costs to a level comparable to that of its peer districts would save about $19,600 per year. The other recommended strategies can be implemented with existing resources. Together, the recommended strategies will address Findings No. 3.1 and 3.3.

Recommendation No. 3.2 - Upgrade the bus fleet, reduce the number of spare buses and either upgrade the maintenance facility or outsource fleet maintenance services (Finding No. 3.2).

To the extent that field trips and extra-curricular transportation can be scheduled such that they do not infringe on regular daily transportation schedules, the District should reduce the number of spare buses from five to two units. This will reduce the annual maintenance labor requirement by about 225 labor hours, and reduce overall maintenance and repair costs.

The current policy calls for one bus to be replaced every three years. With the present fleet size, this would result in a planned service life for each bus of 48 years! The District is planning to procure three new replacement buses during the current fiscal year, which we fully support. While the absence of reliable data makes it difficult to measure the cost of keeping 15 year-old buses operational, it is our experience that it tends to generate higher maintenance and repair costs.

Implementation Strategies and Timelines

Implementation Strategies	Responsible Entity	Completion Date
Reduce number of spare buses	Superintendent	August, 1998
Explore cooperative fleet maintenance service agreement with Hendry County School District	Superintendent	September, 1998
Analyze feasibility of outsourcing or sharing maintenance function in lieu of building new transportation maintenance facility	Director of Adm. Services	September, 1998
Approve maintenance/transportation facility subject to prior analysis	Board	October, 1998
Institute a realistic bus replacement program and select analytical method for updating replacement plan	Transportation Supervisor	October, 1998
Implement recently-purchased fleet maintenance software	Transportation Supervisor	October, 1998
Update fleet management records and information	Transportation Supervisor	December, 1998

With 13 active and spare buses, the District should plan to replace approximately one bus every year. We suggest the following replacement schedule as a point of departure for developing a complete ten-year replacement plan for the fleet:

Suggested Bus Replacement Schedule

Bus Type	Years	Miles
A-B (Conversion Van)	8	100,000
C (Conventional Chassis)	12	130,000
D (Large Transit Buses)	15	175,000

Using careful cost tracking methods and planning tools such as equivalent annual cost analysis, the new supervisor should monitor and refine the replacement plan on a yearly basis to ensure that the combination of maintenance and repair (M& and capital costs are minimized over the life of each asset. The new purchased fleet maintenance software will enable the District to capture and track M&R cost data, including parts, labor, and sublet repairs, on a per-unit basis.

There is no typical percentage increase in M&R costs as the fleet ages. This is because this number is elastic, depending on such factors as the aggressiveness of the preventive maintenance program, whether the bus is parked under a roof, local climatic and topographic factors, driver training, and the original vehicle specifications. As a result, the optimal replacement point can only be fine-tuned using careful M&R cost tracking evaluated on a net present value (NPV) basis. We use the *Equivalent Annual Cost Model* to determine the optimal replacement point in the life of the asset.

Reducing the number of spare buses to two or three will help the District meet industry standards (i.e., 10 to 15 percent of total active buses kept as spares). The size of the fleet requires at least two spare buses due to variations in active fleet capacity and to accomodate peak sports and extra-curricular activity trips in the spring. Based on the industry benchmark of $800 M&R cost per vehicle equivalent unit (VEU), this will reduce the annual maintenance and repair costs by an estimated $10,000 to $14,000 annually (2 -3 buses = 12 - 18 VEUís x $800 per VEU).

The most critical transportation issue facing the District is the condition of the current maintenance facility. There is no question that it is obsolete. Its estimated replacement cost is $145,000. We urge the District to at least consider the potential merits of outsourcing or sharing maintenance services with another district before it moves forward with this major investment.

The District could outsource most M&R work. Minor repairs and adjustments, as well as required 20-day inspections could be retained in-house to eliminate the need to continually transport vehicles to an from repair the facility. Other work could be contracted with Hendry County School District, or a commercial repair shop in Clewiston. Any one of these options could enable the District to avoid a significant share of its planned facility costs of $145,000. We have estimated savings of $48,000 (about one third), but this estimate assumes that an intergovernmental agreement can be executed on a timely basis.

Estimated Fiscal Impact By Year

Recommendation	**1998-99**	**1999-2000**	**2000-01**	**2001-02**	**2002-03**
Reduce spare buses	$12,000	$12,000	$12,000	$12,000	$12,000
Share costs of proposed bus maintenance facility	$48,000	-0-	-0-	-0-	-0-
Net (costs)/benefits	$60,000	$12,000	$12,000	$12,000	$12,000

The other recommended strategies can be implemented with existing resources. Together, the recommended strategies will address Finding No. 3.2.

2. Food Services

Recommendation No. 3.3 - Improve menu planning, diversify menus and pursue other strategies designed to maximize participation and satisfy new USDA requirements (Findings No. 3.4 and 3.6).

The most serious threat facing school food service programs is losing their customers, not running afoul of USDA regulations. Student likes and dislikes have changed dramatically in recent years. To keep student customers satisfied, food service managers must find ways to meet their needs. School food service managers no longer have a captive audience, even on a closed campus.

The District's food service program should develop a strategy for addressing such issues as participation, vending and nutritional needs. A Food Service Advisory Committee including students, teachers, administrators and parents will be helpful in developing and building support this strategy. The Food Service Manager also should continually monitor customer preferences by meeting with student councils once per month and school advisory committees at least twice per year. He also should meet with faculty representatives as needed.

The District must commit to one of the USDA-approved menu options since enforcement begins in September, 1998. The USDA's Food Based Menu Option, since it most closely parallels the traditional menu used by Glades, is the most appropriate option for Glades at this time. While the District must use computerized menu analysis for this option, it must do so at the time of audit, not before releasing menus. So long as the District shows a good faith effort to meet USDA Dietary Guidelines, auditors will likely help it achieve compliance. With its new nutrition software, the District should have little problem achieving full compliance.

The District should consider expanding its daily offerings. Expanded menu offerings could include additional daily entrees, rotating daily food bar, cold sandwich selections, nationally branded items, internally branded items, more fresh fruits and vegetables, and a premium lunch at a higher price. The number of side dishes could be expanded (e.g., offer a tossed salad as a choice every day in addition to other side dishes already listed on the menu).

Implementation Strategies and Timelines

Implementation Strategies	Responsible Entity	Completion Date
Implement the approved nutrition software package	Food Service Manager	May, 1998
Develop a food service advisory committee	Superintendent	June, 1998
Complete review of recent survey of student and faculty meal preferences	Food Service Manager	June, 1998
Adopt the Food Based Menu Option standard for meeting USDA requirements, analyze the menus and update menus accordingly	Food Service Manager	July, 1998
Develop a plan or schedule for testing new food items, including tasting panels for reviewing proposed menu items	Food Service Manager	September, 1998
Develop a promotions calendar for the FY99 school year	Food Service Manager	September, 1998
Develop an adult meal program to meet faculty needs	Food Service Manager	September, 1998
Develop a training plan for food service staff	Food Service Manager	December, 1998
Prepare and initiate food quality monitoring program, including daily temperature checks	Food Service Manager	December, 1998

"Nationally branded" food items (e.g., Burger King and Subway) are helping many school districts increase participation. Glades may want to consider using some of these as well as considering "internally branded" items (e.g., naming an offering after the District mascot). The District should negotiate with name brand restaurants in the area to serve their offerings once per month. Many districts have approached 100% participation on such days. Of course, the District's menu would have to be analyzed to determine the impact on content.

Menu analyses and new menus should be widely promoted for customers to see. The menu format should be updated to include color and appropriate graphics. Promotions should include at least one event per month (e.g., Mother's Day). The staff should decorate the cafeteria seasonally and promote school events (e.g., football games).

Employee training is a key element in ensuring ongoing program success. Limited initial orientation sessions and ad hoc reviews will not meet ongoing needs. While it is true that many tasks involved in school meal service can be accomplished without "significant" training, the sharpening of skills should be emphasized and encouraged. Training is key to quality food service program since employees have the greatest influence on customers; well-trained employees help foster good image and maximize participation.

The objectives of the training program should be to increase customer participation and sales, decrease customer complaints, build teamwork and customer loyalty and improve the program's image. Suggested topics include team building, productivity, OSHA regulations, workplace safety, lifting techniques, food protection, personal hygiene, food presentation, nutrition concepts, menu planning, quantity meal preparation, equipment sanitation, dish washing, cashiering, portion control, ordering and inventory control. Employee uniforms should be professional and appealing.

The recommended strategies can be implemented with existing resources. Any increases in food costs attributable to premium lunch offerings should be offset by higher prices for those lunches. It also should

be noted that better menu planning can help the District reduce labor costs. Together, the recommended strategies will address Findings No. 3.4 and 3.6.

Recommendation No. 3.4 - Upgrade cafeteria facilities, explore other serving alternatives and continue the closed campus philosophy (Finding No. 3.5).

We support the District's planned food service facility improvements. It is more cost-effective to maintain school cafeterias than to ignore physical integrity issues until a facility requires major renovations. The facility plans should include plans for improving air conditioning and ventilation and installing additional features (e.g., more serving lines, a salad preparation area and a dryer).

At the same time, other alternatives for accommodating demands should be considered. For example, the District should consider decentralizing the serving area and creating food stations where space allows. Free standing booths and mobile or stationary carts may provide cost-effective alternatives to expanding the central cafeteria. Facility "dress up" strategies (e.g., murals, banners, posters, signage, awnings and valances) also should be employed to the extent practical. Purveyors often provide some of these as marketing materials. Wall treatments and decor also should be updated.

Implementation Strategies and Timelines

Implementation Strategies	Responsible Entity	Completion Date
Continue closed campus policy	Superintendent	Ongoing
Identify inexpensive "dress up" facility strategies	Food Service Manager	September, 1998
Develop plan for decentralizing serving area, creating food stations where space allows; modify facility plans accordingly	Food Service Manager	October, 1998
Complete facility renovation, including additional serving lines, HVAC improvements, salad preparation area and dryer	Superintendent	December, 1998
Use retained earnings to update facility regularly	Superintendent	Ongoing

We believe that decentralization is a strategy with potential merit for Glades. This trend is exemplified by food courts in retail environments and scatter systems in large institutional settings (e.g., hospitals and colleges). The goal is to maximize traffic flow and improve service efficiency. As a possible alternative to facility expansion, the District should consider decentralizing serving areas by creating free-standing food stations, e.g.,:

- Main Event - daily entree plus appropriate accompaniments
- Daily Deli - a mini deli bar with a choice of meats, cheeses, breads and rolls
- Blue Plate Specials - one or more student favorites (e.g., chicken nuggets, tacos and wings) served separately from the Main Event
- Food Bar - a special daily offering (e.g., taco, pasta or potato)
- Garden Spot - a salad bar
- Bagelicious - bagels with toppings
- Snack Shack - assorted snacks
- Fast Takes - pre-packaged meals (e.g., sandwich, fruit, vegetables, cookie and milk)
- Piece of Pizza - nationally branded or school-made pizza with appropriate accompaniments
- Burgers and Dogs - hamburgers, cheeseburgers, and hot dogs with accompaniments

- Sweet Tooth - fruits, cookies, puddings, gelatins, school-baked items, ice cream or yogurt
- Filling Station - beverages

Computer-based point-of-sale (POS) systems help eliminate service bottlenecks. Some schools have adopted cashless operations, requiring students to pre-pay for meals at a time and place separate from the service area. Cashier stations become check-out stations no longer involved in cash collections. Benefits include faster delivery, shorter lines, less paper and less confusion.

The District should continue its closed campus policy for lunch for the elementary school. High school students should be encouraged to have lunch at the school. Their interest in breakfast programs also should be explored.

Estimated Fiscal Impact By Year

Recommendation	FY99	FY00	FY01	FY02	FY03
Decentralize serving areas	($11,700)	-0-	-0-	-0-	-0-
Implement dress up strategies	($2,000)	($2,000)	($2,000)	($2,000)	($2,000)
Net (costs)/benefits	($13,700)	($2,000)	($2,000)	($2,000)	($2,000)

Stand-alone food serving facilities vary widely in functionality and cost. An electric hot food cart costs about $7,500 and an electric hot food and beverage cart costs about $11,700. Custom serving modules, food service modules and kiosks offer other alternatives that might appeal to middle school and high school students. These costs should be weighed against the costs of expanding the central cafeteria. The other recommended strategies can be implemented with existing resources. Together, the recommended strategies will address Finding No. 3.5.

Recommendation No. 3.5 - Continue efforts to strengthen the financial structure of the food service program, by reducing costs and adjusting meal prices (Finding No. 3.6).

Despite the District's high free and reduced meal eligibility rates, its financial prospects for the food service program are uncertain. It must implement a program of cost reduction and price adjustments to minimize the need for future general fund subsidies.

Reducing food service costs without reducing food quality usually requires efforts to reduce waste. Since food and labor costs comprise the largest objects of food service expenditures, cost reduction strategies must begin there. We believe that the District should consider eliminating one food service position through attrition. Other possible cost reduction strategies include the following:

- Improve menu planning (e.g., pre-cost and post-cost menus, eliminate low participation items, use USDA commodities when it does not reduce participation, use fresh fruits and vegetables in season and use ground turkey instead of ground beef where possible)
- Replace portion-packed items (e.g., catsup) with bulk items, but use convenience foods when costs compare favorably to on-site preparation costs
- Improve portion controls (e.g., pre-portion food when possible, encourage students to take only what they eat, vary portion sizes by grade level as appropriate, use correct measuring utensils and tightly control condiments)

- Improve procurement (e.g., improve planning, increase use of bulk buys, state and national commodity processing contracts state bids and local cooperative purchases, minimize delivery demands, rigorously verify prices and shipments, use automated production records to support orders and apply for rebates as offered)
- Store food properly, rotate stock regularly and strengthen inventory controls
- Serve desserts on the menu only when they further the meal pattern and shift more treats from the regular menu to the a la carte menu

Implementation Strategies and Timelines

Implementation Strategies	Responsible Entity	Completion Date
Eliminate one Food Services Worker position via attrition	Superintendent	August, 1998
Improve menu planning techniques	Food Service Manager	September, 1998
Improve portion controls	Food Service Manager	September, 1998
Improve procurement practices	Food Service Manager	September, 1998
Improve inventory controls	Food Service Manager	September, 1998
Shift more desserts and other food items to the a la carte menu	Food Service Manager	December, 1998
Modify pricing structure	Superintendent	January, 1999

The District also should pursue strategies to increase food service revenue. Those strategies could include the following:

- Offer breakfast and consider an a la carte program for high school students
- Develop and test a K-12 breakfast program
- Develop and test a premium lunch program
- Develop and test catering and vending programs
- Explore ways to increase free and reduced participation perhaps by offering more choices for the ethnic populations or groups
- Discontinue free meals to custodians, teachers and other staff

The District also should revisit its pricing structure. Perceptions of quality and pricing often go hand in hand. Unfortunately, school meals are not always perceived as high-quality since they are offered at such low cost. While a lunch price of $1.50 is about average nationally, it is difficult to provide an appealing lunch at that price. Glades should offer a "premium lunch" at $2.00 on an a la carte basis if their customer base allows.

Estimated Fiscal Impact By Year

Recommendation	FY99	FY00	FY01	FY02	FY03
Implement cost reduction strategies	$15,000	$15,000	$15,000	$15,000	$15,000
Implement revenue enhancement strategies	$19,000	$19,000	$19,000	$19,000	$19,000
Net (costs)/benefits	$34,000	$34,000	$34,000	$34,000	$34,000

The recommended strategies, which can be implemented with existing resources, should generate cost savings of $15,000 per year (this assumes 5% operational savings which would bring the District into line with its peers). In addition, if the District increased its average daily participation rates to 19% for breakfast and 63% for lunch (the peer rates), this would increase revenues by about $19,000 per year. Together, the recommended strategies will address Finding No. 3.6.

3. Facilities Management

Recommendation No. 3.6 - Implement a formal community-based facilities planning process and increase the use of project design standards and costing data (Findings No. 3.7-3.9).

The District needs a structured facilities planning process to ensure that future acquisition and construction costs are reasonable and consistent with the community's spending priorities. This new facility planning process will require several implementation steps, including the following:

- Identify interested community members and taxpayers to participate in facilities planning process and recommend facilities improvements
- Design a process to evaluate district facilities based on defined evaluation criteria (e.g., physical condition, space needs, educational suitability analysis and enrollment projections)
- Conduct a formal needs assessment based on facility evaluation criteria
- Develop a long-range capital budget aligned with facility needs and capital improvement project priorities

The District also should develop an automated historical project data base for each facility and a construction handbook. These duties should be assigned to a clerk in the Finance Office.

Implementation Strategies and Timelines

Implementation Strategies	Responsible Entity	Completion Date
Identify interested community members and taxpayers to participate in facilities planning process	Superintendent	June, 1998
Design a needs assessment process to evaluate district facilities based on well-defined criteria	Director of Adm. Services	September, 1998
Conduct a formal needs assessment based on facility evaluation criteria	Director of Adm. Services	December, 1998
Develop a long-range capital budget aligned with CIP priorities	Director of Adm. Services	March, 1999
Purchase and install PC and appropriate data base software and provide appropriate software training to administrative support staff	Director of Adm. Services	July, 1998
Prepare automated historical facilities database	Director of Adm. Services	August, 1998
Select model design and construction standards handbook for new construction standards handbook (DOE Facilities section)	Director of Adm. Services	August, 1998
Contract with outside consultant to assist with development of handbook as deemed necessary	Director of Adm. Services	March, 1999
Review, modify and approve construction design handbook	Superintendent	April, 1999

All future facilities improvements should be based on priorities reflected in long-range capital plans. Involving community members in the planning process promotes a better understanding of facility and

funding needs. Good planning will be particularly important if the District's enrollment grows and additional facilities are needed in outlying parts of the county.

The historical data base for facilities projects can be developed using a spread sheet software package to allow instant access to and sharing of construction related data. Microsoft Access 1997 is a popular data base development and management software that is easy to use. Microsoft Excel or Lotus 1-2-3 may also be used with the data base software to analyze project cost-effectiveness.

The District should contract with an outside consultant (perhaps through the Heartland Consortium) to assist with the development of the Facilities Design and Construction Standards Handbook. A construction and design handbook is a critical tool. This handbook should contain guidelines for standardizing new construction plans, renovation projects, equipment and materials.

Estimated Fiscal Impact By Year

Recommendation	FY99	FY00	FY01	FY02	FY03
Purchase personal computer	($2,500)	- 0 -	- 0 -	- 0 -	- 0 -
Purchase data base software	($500)	- 0 -	- 0 -	- 0 -	- 0 -
Provide software training	($500)	- 0 -	- 0 -	- 0 -	- 0 -
Hire consultant to develop construction handbook	($3,000)	- 0 -	- 0 -	- 0 -	- 0 -
Implement automated work order system	($1,000)	- 0 -	- 0 -	- 0 -	- 0 -
Implement construction standards	- 0 -	$25,900	$25,900	$25,900	$25,900
Net (costs)/benefits	($7,500)	$25,900	$25,900	$25,900	$25,900

A conservative cost estimate for contracting with an outside consultant is $3,000. We believe that in addition to increased savings in architectural and engineering fees, savings ranging from 5 to 10 percent of material and supply costs can be achieved through better design standards. We have estimated $25,900 in annual cost savings assuming a 5% reduction of annual construction and material costs. The other recommended strategies can be implemented with existing resources. Together, the recommended strategies will address Findings No. 3.7, 3.8 and 3.9.

Recommendation No. 3.7 - Automate the work order system, develop a detailed preventive maintenance schedule for all maintenance projects and prioritize maintenance projects by campus (Findings No. 3.9 and 3.10).

The District should automate its facility maintenance work order system. It may use a specialized PC-based software package or a simple spreadsheet package (e.g., Microsoft Excel or Lotus 1-2-3). An automated work order system will facilitate the prioritizing, tracking and costing of maintenance requests. It also will better enable staff to establish performance standards and assess thresholds for outsourcing certain projects (e.g., large paint, carpentry and plumbing projects).

The Maintenance Supervisor should develop a comprehensive preventive maintenance schedule of projects by campus and prioritize preventive maintenance projects for facilities and equipment. The Maintenance Supervisor should develop equipment inspection and maintenance procedures, estimated labor hours to complete activities and a budget for preventive maintenance activities.

Implementation Strategies and Timelines

Implementation Strategies	Responsible Entity	Completion Date
Acquire and implement automate work order system	Director of Adm. Services	July, 1998
Develop management reports from automated work order logs to track key data (e.g., labor and material costs and work backlog)	Director of Adm. Services	August, 1998
Begin submitting completed maintenance work orders to administrative clerk for entry	Maintenance Supervisor	September, 1998
Develop prioritized list of maintenance projects by campus with timelines and resource requirements	Maintenance Supervisor	September, 1998
Develop preventive maintenance procedures, distribute preventive maintenance schedule to staff & assign tasks	Maintenance Supervisor	September, 1998
Develop labor hour estimates to complete maintenance tasks and notify maintenance staff of scheduled completion times	Maintenance Supervisor	November, 1998

The sample work order logs provided below illustrates the type of information that can be maintained, including work order request, approval, project start and end dates, estimated and actual elapsed times, and labor, part and total costs.

Sample Automated Work Order Log

Work Order #	*Work Order Request & Site*	*Approval*	*Start Date*	*End Date*	*Est. Time*	*Real Time*	*Labor Costs*	*Part Costs*	*Total Costs*

Source: Management Review Team

The sample work order management report provided below illustrates the kind of information that can be tracked on work orders. For example, at a glance, the District could determine the percent of work orders completed within established deadlines (i.e., % on target). The reports could be generated monthly, quarterly or annually.

Sample Summary Work Order Management Report

Work Order Type	*No. Rec'd*	*No. Complete*	*% Complete*	*No. Open*	*% Open*	*% On Target*
Routine Special Urgent Project Deferred						
Total						

Source: Management Review Team

The sample preventive maintenance schedule below illustrates the type of information to be included in the schedule.

Sample Preventive Maintenance Schedule

Equipment/Component	*Location*	*Work Performed*	*Frequency*
Air Handling Units	District-wide	Change Filters	Quarterly
Circulator Pump(s)	District-wide	Inspect and oil motor	Quarterly
Condensing Units	District-wide	Clean unit	Quarterly
Coolers and Freezers	District-wide	Clean condenser and visually inspect	Quarterly
Cooling Tower	District-wide	Clean tower and oil motor	Quarterly
Building Interior Inspection	District-wide	Visually inspect	Quarterly
General HVAC Inspection	District-wide	Visually inspect	Quarterly
Kitchen Appliances	Cafeteria	Clean and visually inspect	Quarterly
Painting Inspection	District-wide	Visually inspect	Semi Annually
Plumbing Inspection	District-wide	Visually inspect	Quarterly
Roofs	District-wide	Visually inspect	Semi-Annually

Source: Management Review Team

If performed on a regular basis, preventive maintenance keeps the level of maintenance service high, reduces facility and equipment breakdowns and service interruptions and prolongs the lives of facilities and equipment. The automation of maintenance systems enable staff to improve planning, track costs and efficiently schedule maintenance work. Automation also frees staff from paper work to focus more time on maintenance work.

Automating the work order system will cost about $1,000 in the first year; this estimate has been factored into the fiscal impact estimates for Recommendation No. 3.6. The other recommended strategies can be implemented with existing resources. Together, the recommended strategies will address Findings No. 3.9 and 3.10.

Recommendation No. 3.8 - Increase the number of custodians at the high school and establish a standardized, performance-based training program for all custodial staff (Finding No. 3.11).

Custodial resources should be reallocated from the elementary school to the high school in accordance with industry guidelines. Custodial training should be improved to maximize productivity. If the reallocation of resources and improved training do not significantly improve custodial services, the District should consider adding one custodial FTE at the end of FY99 in accordance with applicable industry standards. While industry standards would appear to justify the additional custodial employee immediately, the District's cost structure does not.

Implementation Strategies and Timelines

Implementation Strategies	Responsible Entity	Completion Date
Realign custodial positions for FY99	Maintenance Supervisor	June, 1998
Obtain appropriate custodial training tapes and develop formal custodial performance standards	Maintenance Supervisor	July, 1998
Train head custodians so that they can reinforce the training tape and formal performance standards during daily cleaning work activities	Maintenance Supervisor	August, 1998
Provide training to all custodian new hires on their first day of work and regular follow-up training to veteran custodians	Maintenance Supervisor	Ongoing

Part of the Maintenance Supervisor's custodian managerial responsibilities include demonstrating expected cleaning standards to new custodians. Demonstrated cleaning standards should be documented and developed into formal performance standards. Head custodians should be trained to present video tapes of desired custodial practices and the formal performance standards to newly hired custodial staff on the employees first day of work. Regular follow-up custodial training should also be provided to the remainder of the custodians.

The recommended strategies can be implemented with existing resources. Together, the recommended strategies will address Finding No. 3.11.

Recommendation No. 3.9 - Develop specific strategies to reduce energy costs through energy audits and low-cost energy management techniques (Findings No. 3.9 and 3.12).

The District should explore energy management techniques that have proven effective in other districts and seek to replicate these practices where applicable.

Implementation Strategies and Timelines

Implementation Strategies	Responsible Entity	Completion Date
Begin tracking energy costs against peer school districts	Maintenance Supervisor	May, 1998
Review and select effective energy management techniques and strategies used by other school districts of similar size and resources	Maintenance Supervisor	May, 1998
Develop and implement an action plan accordingly	Maintenance Supervisor	June, 1998
Work with schools to explain elements of the energy management plan as necessary, and monitor energy costs on an ongoing basis	Maintenance Supervisor	Ongoing

Energy consultants suggest that school districts perform energy audits (1) whenever energy rates change; (2) after a major equipment failure; and, (3) when the district makes additions to existing facilities. These audits should keep school district management aware of new energy technology that promises improvements in energy efficiency.

Other energy saving programs that have been successfully used by smaller school districts (and which the District should consider) include those in the table below.

- Develop long-range plans to replace equipment with more energy-efficient models
- Develop energy conservation educational programs for students and staff
- Perform monthly energy audits of each facility
- Initiate a campaign to turn off lights when rooms in district facilities are not in use
- Monitor utility bills for incorrect billing rates
- Report energy use and cost statistics to principals and board

Estimated Fiscal Impact By Year

Recommendation	FY99	FY00	FY01	FY02	FY03
Develop specific strategies to reduce energy costs	$27,200	$27,200	$27,200	$27,200	$27,200

The fiscal impact of this recommendation is estimated by assuming an energy management cost per square foot of $0.67, which is the average cost per square foot of the peer districts. Assuming a square footage of 209,552, and FY97 costs of $.80 per GSF, annual savings would be $27,200. The other recommended strategies can be implemented with existing resources. Together, the recommended strategies will address Findings No. 3.9 and 3.12.

4. Safety and Security

Recommendation No. 3.10 - Prioritize safety deficiencies identified in state safety inspection reports, allocate available budget resources to correct critical safety-related items and refine sample safety manual and loss control programs (Finding No. 3.13).

The District should review the state 1996-97 safety inspection report, determine the most critical safety-related deficiencies, set priorities based on available resources and establish a schedule for correcting them. The schedule should be modified as available resources change.

Implementation Strategies and Timelines

Implementation Strategies	Responsible Entity	Completion Date
Contact SCERMP to obtain additional training for professional staff	Director of Adm. Services	June, 1998
Review sample manuals from Lee County and SCERMP and incorporate safety guidelines, policies, and practices unique to District	Director of Adm. Services	June, 1998
Review FY97 safety inspection report and prioritize deficiencies	Director of Adm. Services	September, 1998
Develop a schedule based on the established priorities	Director of Adm. Services	November, 1998
Present new safety program to District Safety Committee for review	Director of Adm. Services	October, 1998
Review and approve final safety program and related manuals	Director of Adm. Services	January, 1999
Begin correcting safety-related deficiencies	Director of Adm. Services	February, 1999
Monitor worker compensation claims reports on quarterly basis	Director of Adm. Services	Ongoing

The District should customize the sample safety manual and loss control program obtained from Lee County and SCERMP to address the safety requirements unique to the district. While the manuals should contain safety issues required to be addressed by Florida statutes, specific issues unique to the District should be documented in the safety manual as well. For example, safety requirements included in the Lee County manual are general safety guidelines for Lee County rather than Glades County School District.

According to the state, correcting the safety deficiencies will cost the District about $130,400 over four years. The District has already incorporated these estimates in its budget discussions. The other recommended strategies can be implemented with existing resources. Together, the recommended strategies will address Finding No. 3.13.

D. Financial Services

1. Financial Management

Recommendation No. 4.1 - Develop formal desk procedures for each position within the Finance Department and cross-train all Finance Department employees (Finding No. 4.1).

Each employee should develop formal desk procedures for their respective positions and the procedures should be available for reference in a binder maintained in the department. This will ensure that all tasks and activities related to specific fiscal operations are formally documented.

Implementation Strategies and Timelines

Implementation Strategies	Responsible Entity	Completion Date
Direct employees to document procedures associated with completing tasks and activities related to their positions	Finance Director	July, 1998
Direct employees to draft formal desk procedures for respective positions	Finance Director	August, 1998
Review and approve formal desk procedures	Superintendent	December, 1998
Develop schedule for cross-training all department employees	Finance Director	December, 1998
Codify procedures into single accounting procedures manual	Finance Director	January, 1999

Each employee within the Finance Department should be cross-trained to ensure that the responsibilities for each position are covered in the absence of employees. Cross-training will also allow the Director of Finance the flexibility to use employees for special projects and activities that may occur form time-to-time without materially affecting department operations.

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources. Together, the recommended strategies will address Finding No. 4.1.

Recommendation No. 4.2 - Improve internal controls, especially surrounding cash receipts and purchasing transactions (Finding No. 4.1).

The responsibility for accepting cash receipts and making bank deposits should be separated from recording cash receipts and reconciling the district's bank accounts. In a small district, it is not cost-effective to hire additional staff to achieve separation of duties. Therefore, the Superintendent's secretary is the logical position for accepting cash receipts and making bank deposits. The deposits will be logged with the date received and deposit slips will be forwarded to the Director of Finance's secretary for recording and subsequent reconciliation of bank accounts.

Implementation Strategies and Timelines

Implementation Strategies	Responsible Entity	Completion Date
Assign responsibility for accepting cash receipts and making bank deposits to the Superintendent's secretary	Superintendent	July, 1998
Revise job descriptions of both secretaries to reflect reassigned duties	Finance Director	August, 1998
Review Auditor General's report to identify required procedural changes	Finance Director	August, 1998
Implement new controls for purchasing and competitive bidding processes	Finance Director	September, 1998

The Director of Finance should immediately implement the recommendations included in the Auditor General's preliminary report to ensure that the purchasing and bidding processes are appropriately controlled and not compromised. A significant degree of exposure to theft, loss, or impropriety exists for the district if these processes are not controlled and appropriately monitored.

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources. Together, the recommended strategies will address Finding No. 4.1.

Recommendation No. 4.3 - Implement a direct deposit option for district employees to reduce payroll processing time (Finding No. 4.1).

The District should provide a direct deposit option for district employees. Moore Haven has two local banks at which most of the district's employees maintain checking accounts.

Implementation Strategies and Timelines

Implementation Strategies	Responsible Entity	Completion Date
Contact local banks to determine procedures and costs for direct deposit plan	Finance Director	July, 1998
Survey employees to determine the level of interest in a direct deposit option	Finance Director	August, 1998
Determine feasibility of implementing a direct deposit plan	Finance Director	September, 1998
Execute agreements with banks, obtain board approval and implement the direct deposit option	Superintendent	October, 1998

All employees have salaried positions and direct deposit will allow payroll to be electronically submitted to the local banks and, thereby, reduce processing time. Additionally, electronically transferring payroll data to banks for direct deposit is secure and improves internal controls over distributing "paper" payroll checks.

Estimated Fiscal Impact By Year

Recommendation	FY99	FY00	FY01	FY02	FY03
Implement direct payroll deposit	($2,400)	($3,600)	($3,600)	($3,600)	($3,600)

If properly negotiated, the direct deposit option could be added to the District's existing depository agreement or re-bid to the two local banks. The cost to the District for implementing the direct deposit option will be about $300 per month. Efficiencies will be realized from redirecting the 20 percent time savings realized by the Payroll & Insurance Clerk to other duties within the department. This recommended strategy will address Finding No. 4.1.

2. Asset and Risk Management

Recommendation No. 4.4 - Update the District's property records for 1997-98 property additions and deletions (Finding No. 4.3).

The District should immediately update its property records to ensure that all FY98 property additions and deletions are accurately reflected in its records prior to conducting the annual fixed assets inventory. Updated property records will decrease the District's risk of losing school property to pilferage or theft. The updating process will force the District to conduct periodic physical inventories and reconcile fixed assets recorded on its books to those identified during the physical inspection. Moreover, the updated listing will enable the District to determine if school property recorded in its records actually exists, and hold principals and department managers accountable for property within their custody.

Implementation Strategies and Timelines

Implementation Strategies	Responsible Entity	Completion Date
Review outstanding commitments and develop a schedule for updating the District's property records	Finance Director	June, 1998
Determine external resource requirements for updating the District's property records	Finance Director	June, 1998
Secure outside assistance (e.g., temporary personnel) as needed	Finance Director	July, 1998
Update the District's property records	Finance Director	October, 1998

This recommendation can be implemented with existing resources and will address Finding No. 4.3. External assistance, if required, should not cost in excess of $1,800 (assuming the use of a part-time clerk working ten hours per week for 12 weeks at $15 per hour).

3. Purchasing

Recommendation No. 4.5 - Automate the District's purchasing system and improve purchasing-related controls (Finding No. 4.5).

The District should implement an automated purchasing module that allows principals and department heads to electronically process purchase requisitions at their school or department location. The automated purchasing system would check funds availability, account coding, and allow for on-line approvals of purchase requisitions. It also would make it easier for staff to track the status of requisitions and purchase

orders by category or commodity and provide more purchasing data for staff to use to plan and schedule bulk purchases.

An automated purchasing system would significantly reduce the amount of paper and related filing time currently required. Clerical time used to file paper purchase orders would be reduced. For example, the Purchasing and Property Control Clerk could spend less time preparing purchase orders, filing copies of purchase orders, and retrieving purchase orders from storage. This would allow such staff resources to be reallocated to other purchasing activities, such as responding to inquiries from school personnel and vendors.

Reallocating staff time also would make it easier for the District to meet the State Auditor's requirements. The Auditor General recommended that the District properly prepare all purchase orders and receiving documents prior to the purchase and/or payment for goods and services and improve its controls over sealed bids. Administrative staff also would be available to help with other administrative activities, such as facilities maintenance processes.

Resource requirements and for this recommendation are addressed in Recommendations No. 1.4, 4.1 and 4.2. This recommendation will address Finding No. 4.5.

APPENDIX A

District Staff Inventory

Explanatory Notes: The District staff inventory depicts the number of full-time equivalent (FTE) employees working for the District at the time our field work was conducted. The staff inventory is based on data provided to DMG by the District. We have summarized the employee data by program or organizational unit and by position class or type.

Glades County School District Staffing by Position and Program - FY97

Position	Program	FTEs		Position	Program	FTEs
Administration:				Elementary School:		
Superintendent	Admin	1.0		Principal	HS	1.0
Curriculum director	Admin	1.0		Assistant Principal	HS	1.0
Trans. & Maint. Dir.	Admin	1.0		ESE Director	ESE	0.5
Secretary	Admin	2.0		Secretary	HS	3.0
Subtotal		5.0		Teacher	HS	21.0
				Teacher	HS-ESE	4.0
Finance:				Teacher	HS-VocEd	5.0
Finance Director	Finance	1.0		Teacher Aide	HS-ESE	3.0
Data Specialist	Finance	1.0		Guidance counselor	HS	1.0
Purchasing Clerk	Finance	1.0		Nurse	HS	1.0
Payroll Clerk	Finance	1.0		Librarian	HS	1.0
Secretary	Finance	1.0		Subtotal		41.5
Subtotal		5.0				
				High/Middle School:		
Transportation:				Principal	Elem	1.0
Transportation Foreman	Transp	1.0		Secretary	Elem	2.0
Bus Driver	Transp	4.0		ESE Director	ESE	0.5
Mechanic	Transp	2.0		Teacher	Elem	31.0
Subtotal		7.0		Teacher	Elem-ESE	2.0
				Teacher	Chpt 1	2.0
Food Service:				Teacher Aide	Elem	5.0
Food Service Director	Food	1.0		Teacher Aide	Elem-ESE	3.0
Food Service Worker	Food	5.8		Teacher Aide	Chpt 1	3.2
Subtotal		6.8		Instructional specialist	Chpt 1	1.0
				Instructional specialist	Elem/ESE	1.0
Facilities:				Guidance counselor	Elem	1.0
Maintenance Foreman	Maint	1.0		Nurse	Elem	0.5
Maintenance Worker	Maint	3.0		Librarian	Elem	1.5
Custodian	HS	5.0		Subtotal		54.7
Custodian	Elem	3.5				
Subtotal		12.5				
				Instructional staff		91.2
				Pupil support staff		26.3
				Administrative staff		15.0
				Total Staff		132.5

APPENDIX B

District Performance Trends Data

Explanatory Notes: The performance data we compiled for the Glades County School District included financial and nonfinancial performance indicators for the years FY93 through FY97 (where data was available). For the financial indicators, we relied primarily on audited financial reports issued by the Florida State Auditor. For the nonfinancial indicators, we relied primarily on Florida Department of Education (DOE) data presented in such reports as: *Profiles of Florida School Districts*, *Food Service Special Revenue Financial Reports*, and *The Quality Link, Florida School District Transportation Profiles.*

GLADES COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT PERFORMANCE TRENDS - FY93 TO FY97						
Indicator	**FY93**	**FY94**	**FY95**	**FY96**	**FY97**
Student Characteristics1					
Student Membership	1,009	1,091	1,102	1,149	1,148
Students w/ Limited English Prof.	25	23	49	50	34
Percent Limited English Prof.	2.5%	2.1%	4.4%	4.4%	3.0%
Students in Title I Program	254	312	262	255	226
Percent Title I Program	25.2%	28.6%	23.8%	22.2%	19.7%
Students w/ Free/Reduced Lunch	536	592	630	572	662
Percent Free/Reduced Lunch (DMG)	53.1%	54.3%	57.2%	49.8%	57.7%
Percent Free/Reduced Lunch (District)	63.0%	65.0%	60.0%	65.0%	75.0%
Students in ESE Programs	98	96	116	132	129
Percent ESE Programs	9.7%	8.8%	10.5%	11.5%	11.2%
Students in ESE 25 hours or more	21	17	73	37	30
Percent ESE Programs > 25 hrs.	2.1%	1.6%	6.6%	3.2%	2.6%
Student Performance1					
Student Dropouts	15	24	16	31	18
Dropouts:100 FTEs	1.49	2.20	1.45	2.70	1.57
Dropout Rate	6.3%	9.7%	5.8%	11.2%	6.2%
Students Reported Truant	2	6	6	9	12
Students Disciplined	199	469	417	308	49
Disciplinary Actions:100 FTEs	19.7	43.0	37.8	26.8	4.3
Students Not Promoted	28	50	82	125	141
Nonpromotions:FTE	2.8%	4.6%	7.4%	10.9%	12.3%
Graduation Rate	107.8%	56.4%	58.1%	48.6%	58.8%
Graduates (std. diploma)	40	36	38	33	40
Graduates Entering College	25	29	24	22	0
Percent Graduates Entering College	62.5%	80.6%	63.2%	66.7%	0.0%
Graduates Entering Tech. School	14	2	9	4	0
Percent Grads Entering Tech. School	35.0%	5.6%	23.7%	12.1%	0.0%
Governmental Funds2					
Revenues					
Intergovernmental					
Federal Direct	113	106	90	115	59
Federal Through State	513	517	568	553	573
Federal Through Local	8	23	0	0	0
State	1,939	2,581	3,652	3,028	3,366
Local	3,048	2,945	2,889	3,019	2,892
	5,621	6,172	7,199	6,715	6,890
Expenditures					
Current Education					
Instruction	2,685	2,724	3,203	3,362	3,360
Pupil Personnel Services	187	208	251	308	261
Instructional Support	225	240	264	287	369
Board & General Admin.	332	330	333	353	334
School Administration	199	201	248	262	262
Fiscal & Central Services	191	189	195	197	198
Food Services	259	276	291	316	321
Pupil Transportation	210	220	226	235	250
Plant Operation & Maint.	586	633	831	631	739
Other	6	5	3	1	3
Fixed Capital Outlay					
Facilities Acq. & Const.	576	675	1,224	303	1,107
Other Capital Outlay	99	47	201	173	80
Debt Service					
Interest & Fiscal Charges	29	0	0	0	0
	5,584	5,748	7,270	6,428	7,284
Excess (Deficiency)	37	424	(71)	287	(394)

GLADES COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT PERFORMANCE TRENDS - FY93 TO FY97						
Indicator	**FY93**	**FY94**	**FY95**	**FY96**	**FY97**
Financial Indicators					
Percent Revenues Federal	11%	10%	9%	10%	9%
Percent Revenues State	34%	42%	51%	45%	49%
Percent Revenues Local	54%	48%	40%	45%	42%
Total Revenues	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Revenues Per Student-Federal	$628	$592	$597	$581	$551
Revenues Per Student-State	1,922	2,366	3,314	2,635	2,932
Revenues Per Student-Local	3,021	2,699	2,622	2,628	2,519
Revenues Per Student-Total	$5,571	$5,657	$6,533	$5,844	$6,002
General Fund					
Revenues					
Intergovernmental					
Federal Direct	113	106	90	115	59
Federal Through State	0	0	2	0	0
Federal Through Local	8	23	0	0	0
State	1,580	1,904	2,777	2,631	2,847
Local	2,482	2,399	2,275	2,421	2,306
	4,183	4,432	5,144	5,167	5,212
Expenditures					
Current Education					
Instruction	2,460	2,528	2,974	3,113	3,090
Pupil Personnel Services	165	173	223	276	242
Instructional Media Services	83	96	113	116	119
Instruction & Curr. Dev.	126	132	139	144	212
Instructional Staff Training	10	9	9	9	5
Board of Education	192	197	189	194	175
General Administration	121	125	135	148	149
School Administration	198	200	247	260	261
Facilities Acq. & Const.	0	0	0	0	9
Fiscal Services	189	186	190	195	198
Central Services	2	3	5	2	0
Pupil Transportation	210	220	226	234	250
Plant Operation	377	397	416	417	435
Plant Maintenance	209	236	415	214	295
Community Services	0	0	0	0	0
Other	0	0	0	0	0
Fixed Capital Outlay					
Facilities Acq. & Const.	0	0	54	0	34
Other Capital Outlay	15	16	146	141	60
Debt Service					
Principal	0	0	0	0	0
Interest & Fiscal Charges	1	0	0	0	0
	4,358	4,518	5,481	5,463	5,534
Excess (Deficiency)	(175)	(86)	(337)	(296)	(322)
Other Financing Sources (Uses)					
Operating Transfers In	243	277	353	345	160
Operating Transfers Out	27	6	0	0	0
	216	271	353	345	160
Excess (Deficiency)	41	185	16	49	(162)
Fund Balance Year Beginning	496	537	722	737	786
Fund Balance Year End	537	722	738	786	624

GLADES COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT PERFORMANCE TRENDS - FY93 TO FY97							
Fund			**FY93**	**FY94**	**FY95**	**FY96**	**FY97**
Special Revenue Fund							
	Revenues						
		Intergovernmental					
			Federal Through State	513	517	566	553	573
			State	6	11	12	11	10
		Local		82	94	97	112	80
				601	622	675	676	663
	Expenditures							
		Current Education						
			Instruction	225	196	229	249	270
			Pupil Personnel Services	22	35	28	32	19
			Instructional Media Services	2	2	1	0	0
			Instruction & Curr. Dev.	4	1	2	18	33
			Instructional Staff Training	0	0	0	0	0
			General Administration	19	8	9	11	10
			School Administration	1	1	1	2	1
			Food Services	259	276	291	316	321
			Pupil Transportation	0	0	0	1	0
			Community Services	6	5	3	1	3
		Fixed Capital Outlay						
			Facilities Acq. & Const.	0	0	39	0	0
			Other Capital Outlay	84	31	55	32	20
		Debt Service						
			Principal	34	32	0	0	0
			Interest & Fiscal Charges	7	9	0	0	0
				663	596	658	662	677
	Excess (Deficiency)			(62)	26	17	14	(14)
	Other Financing Sources (Uses)							
		Operating Transfers In		105	0	0	0	0
		Operating Transfers Out		5	0	0	0	0
				100	0	0	0	0
	Excess (Deficiency)			38	26	17	14	(14)
	Fund Balance Year Beginning			20	58	84	101	115
	Fund Balance Year End			58	84	101	115	101
Debt Service								
	Revenues							
		Intergovernmental						
			State	223	223	223	223	223
		Local		8	6	12	11	11
				231	229	235	234	234
	Expenditures							
			Principal	65	67	60	65	70
			Interest & Fiscal Charges	21	16	12	9	5
				86	83	72	74	75
	Excess (Deficiency)			145	146	163	160	159
	Other Financing Sources (Uses)							
		Operating Transfers In		12	6	0	0	0
		Operating Transfers Out		158	158	158	158	158
				(146)	(152)	(158)	(158)	(158)
	Excess (Deficiency)			(1)	(6)	5	2	1
	Fund Balance Year Beginning			193	192	186	191	193
	Fund Balance Year End			192	186	191	193	194

GLADES COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT PERFORMANCE TRENDS - FY93 TO FY97						
Fund	**FY93**	**FY94**	**FY95**	**FY96**	**FY97**
Capital Projects Fund					
Revenues					
Intergovernmental					
State	130	443	640	163	286
Local	476	446	505	475	495
	606	889	1,145	638	781
Expenditures					
Current Education					
Facilities Acq. & Const.	40	23	91	58	24
Fixed Capital Outlay					
Facilities Acq. & Const.	536	652	1,040	245	1,049
Other Capital Outlay	0	0	0	0	0
	576	675	1,131	303	1,073
Excess (Deficiency)	30	214	14	335	(292)
Other Financing Sources (Uses)					
Operating Transfers In	0	0	0	0	0
Operating Transfers Out	85	117	194	187	0
	(85)	(117)	(194)	(187)	0
Excess (Deficiency)	(55)	97	(180)	148	(292)
Fund Balance Year Beginning	438	382	479	299	447
Fund Balance Year End	383	479	299	447	155
Expendable Trust Fund					
Revenues-Other	176	170	174	192	210
Expenditures-Other	175	160	170	197	209
Excess (Deficiency)	1	10	4	(5)	1
Other Financing Sources (Uses)	0	0	0	0	0
Excess (Deficiency)	1	10	4	(5)	1
Fund Balance Year Beginning	46	47	57	61	56
Fund Balance Year End	47	57	61	56	57
Food Service Indicators					
Meals Served					
Lunches		113,217	112,109	113,738	110,322
Breakfasts		25,505	27,804	26,651	29,896
Total Meals		138,722	139,913	140,389	140,218
Direct Cost Per Meal					
Lunches		$1.70	$1.95	$1.89	$2.03
Breakfasts		$1.08	$1.19	$1.42	$1.53
Total Cost Per Meal					
Lunches		$1.77	$2.04	$1.97	$2.10
Breakfasts		$1.12	$1.24	$1.48	$1.58
Expenditures by Object					
Salaries		$74,434	$75,616	$75,702	$82,338
Benefits		31,415	31,958	31,022	35,439
Purchased Services		8,601	10,420	10,155	11,282
Energy Services		21,841	21,340	24,606	23,833
Supplies		11,490	16,252	17,500	19,189
Purchased Food		105,723	110,498	123,197	113,567
Other Materials and Supplies		0	0	0	0
Other Expenses		2,440	3,012	7,799	4,793
Total Direct Costs		$255,944	$269,096	$289,981	$290,441
Indirect Costs		9,700	11,302	12,021	9,033
Total Costs		$265,644	$280,398	$302,002	$299,474
Nonprogram Revenues					
Adult/Student A la Carte Sales		$0	$6,180	$20,506	$19,927
Other Food Sales		29,524	2,456	20,524	15
Total		$29,524	$8,636	$41,030	$19,942

GLADES COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT PERFORMANCE TRENDS - FY93 TO FY97						
Fund	**FY93**	**FY94**	**FY95**	**FY96**	**FY97**
Transportation Indicators4					
Demographic Data					
Area (square miles)	763	763	763	763	763
Population per square mile	10	10	10	10	10
Roads-paved (miles)	154	154	154	285	285
Roads-unpaved (miles)	45	45	45	57	57
Student Data					
Enrollment PreK-12	925	1,009	1,091	1,102	
Eligible Students Transported	330	379	494	468	
% Eligible Students Transported	35.7%	37.6%	45.3%	42.5%	
Courtesy Students Transported	381	215	239	290	
Teen Parents Tranported	2	2	9	11	
Hazardous Walkers Tranported	0	0	0	0	
Personnel Data					
Supervisory Positions	1	1	1	1	1
Bus Drivers	8	8	8	8	8
Substitutes	8	6	8	7	7
Bus Attendants/Other	0	1	1	1	1
Mechanics	2	2	2	2	2
Total Positions	19	18	20	19	19
Bus and Facility Data					
Bus Maintenance Facilities	1	1	1	1	1
Fuel Sites	1	1	1	1	1
Daily Service Buses - Dist. Inv.	19	10	10	9	9
Spare Buses - District Inventory	6	5	5	7	7
Total Buses - Dist. Inventory	25	15	15	16	16
Buses in Daily Service - DOE	8	8	8	8	8
Buses By Bus Type					
Type A	2	0	0	0	0
Type B	2	0	0	0	0
Type C	17	12	12	12	12
Type D	4	3	3	4	4
Buses By Fuel Type					
Gas	1	1	1	1	1
Diesel	24	14	14	15	15
Buses By Lift Type					
With Lift	5	0	0	1	1
Without Life	20	15	15	15	15
State Funding Data					
District Entitlement	$215,124	$214,241	$328,538		
State Allocation	$122,302	$120,441	$176,268	$177,107	
Entitlement Per Student	$575.13	$550.61	$654.24		
Percent State Funding	58.1%	54.9%	58.0%	65.5%	
Percent Local Funding	41.9%	45.2%	42.0%	34.5%	
Vehicle Miles					
Total Annual Miles	148,158	140,178	138,862	134,303	
Regular Route Miles	131,724	129,600	134,858	142,246	
Expenditure Data					
Total 7800 Expenditures	$210,542	$219,591	$303,632	$239,763	
Bus Purchase Expenditure	$0	$0	$73,054	$0	
Gas/Fuel Expenditures	$20,822	$17,782	$18,502	$21,965	
Total Salaries	$119,709	$123,900	$131,474	$131,222	
Total Benefits	$46,784	$49,098	$51,167	$52,721	
Operating Expenditures/Student	$638.01	$579.40	$466.76	$512.31	
Operating Expenditures/Mile	$1.42	$1.57	$1.66	$1.79	

1 - "Profiles of Florida School Districts, 1996-97 Data", Statistical Report, FL DoE; "Percent Free/Reduced Lunch" is calculated using state data (DMG) and using local data (District)

2 - Audited Financial Reports, State Auditor

3 - FL DOE Food Service Special Revenue Financial Reports

4 - "The Quality Link, Florida School District Transportation Profiles," years 1991-97

APPENDIX C

Peer Survey Data

Explanatory Notes: The peer school districts used for the benchmarking survey were Dixie, Franklin, Hardee, Hendry, Highlands, Lafayette, Liberty, Okeechobee and Union. Several of these districts are located either adjacent to or within the same region as Glades County School District. All of the districts selected for the peer district analysis are similar to Glades in terms of size (e.g., student enrollment), demographic characteristics and other operating characteristics. In compiling peer school district data, we relied primarily on DOE data presented in such reports as: *Financial Profiles of Florida School Districts*, *Staff and Student Profiles of Florida School Districts*, *Cost Indicators*, *Vital Signs*, *The Annual Report of Child Nutrition Programs*, *The Quality Link*, *Florida School District Transportation Profiles.* and *School Public Accountability Report.* For each benchmark, we calculated a peer average including Glades County School District and presented the appropriate state indicator (usually a statewide average).

Glades County School District - Summary of Peer Data

Indicator	State	Peer Avg	Glades	Dixie	Franklin	Hardee	Hendry	Highlands	Lafayette	Liberty	Okeech.	Union
Student FTEs (FY96)1												
Basic K-12	1,692,581	3,012	834	1,783	1,327	3,751	5,587	8,568	793	939	4,748	1,786
At-Risk	197,211	296	71	43	108	710	518	587	92	63	677	90
Exceptional Education	177,039	317	80	239	123	324	545	1,083	56	90	461	172
Vocational - 6-12	102,255	235	68	143	81	289	417	676	77	70	372	161
Subtotal	2,169,086	3,860	1,053	2,208	1,639	5,074	7,067	10,914	1,018	1,162	6,258	2,209
Vocational - Adult/Supp.	144,046	59	14	6	27	205	131	0	30	101	28	50
Total	2,313,132	3,919	1,067	2,214	1,666	5,279	7,198	10,914	1,048	1,263	6,286	2,259
Revenues-Gov't (FY96)1												
Percent Federal Revenue	7%	10%	10%	11%	10%	13%	10%	9%	10%	7%	11%	8%
Percent State Revenue	50%	65%	45%	73%	53%	60%	66%	54%	71%	79%	67%	80%
Percent Local Revenue	43%	25%	45%	16%	37%	27%	24%	37%	19%	14%	22%	12%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Revenue per FTE-Federal	$421	$597	$625	$646	$603	$729	$698	$536	$634	$395	$638	$465
Revenue per FTE-State	2,888	$3,869	2,832	4,398	3,281	3,275	4,713	3,263	4,376	4,354	3,768	4,425
Revenue per FTE-Local	2,511	$1,524	2,825	990	2,247	1,496	1,705	2,203	1,168	738	1,224	641
Revenue per FTE-Total	$5,820	$5,989	$6,282	$6,034	$6,131	$5,500	$7,116	$6,002	$6,178	$5,487	$5,630	$5,531
Expenditures-Gov't (FY96)1												
Percent Current Expenditures	80%	88%	92%	91%	89%	93%	90%	76%	92%	91%	79%	90%
Percent Capital Outlay	14%	9%	7%	8%	8%	6%	5%	17%	7%	7%	20%	9%
Percent Debt Service	6%	2%	1%	1%	3%	1%	5%	7%	2%	2%	1%	1%
	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Current Expenditures Per FTE	$5,026	$5,284	$5,567	$5,681	$5,310	$5,066	$5,185	$5,341	$5,333	$4,961	$5,111	$5,063
FEFP Expenditures/FTE (FY96)1												
Basic (K-12), At-Risk	$3,887	$3,929	$4,592	$3,945	$3,950	$3,728	$3,841	$3,906	$3,919	$4,075	$3,569	$3,766
Exceptional	$9,244	$8,310	$7,722	$8,219	$10,278	$7,425	$7,664	$9,660	$8,377	$7,375	$8,573	$7,805
Vocational	$4,657	$4,912	$5,951	$4,881	$6,485	$4,627	$4,369	$4,292	$4,145	$4,674	$4,358	$5,334
Adult General Education	$2,510	$2,837	$2,435	$0	$2,285	$2,318	$3,622	$0	$2,838	$2,938	$10,497	$1,432
Student Data (FY97)2												
Percent Black Non-Hispanic	25%	16%	27%	10%	18%	9%	20%	22%	12%	13%	9%	18%
Percent Hispanic	16%	14%	21%	1%	1%	44%	35%	13%	4%	3%	19%	1%
Percent Exceptional (ESE)	17%	17%	11%	24%	15%	16%	14%	21%	13%	18%	19%	16%
Percent Gifted PT	3.8%	1.1%	0.0%	0.0%	0.5%	2.0%	0.9%	3.8%	1.4%	0.0%	1.3%	1.3%
Percent Profoundly Hand.	0.5%	0.2%	0.3%	0.1%	0.1%	0.1%	0.4%	0.4%	0.1%	0.0%	0.3%	0.4%

Glades County School District - Summary of Peer Data

Indicator	State	Peer Avg	Glades	Dixie	Franklin	Hardee	Hendry	Highlands	Lafayette	Liberty	Okeech.	Union
Percent Limited English Proficiency	6.4%	3.5%	3.0%	0.2%	0.1%	11.3%	9.1%	3.7%	2.4%	0.0%	5.4%	0.0%
Percent Free/Reduced Lunch	17%	53%	58%	60%	54%	57%	54%	52%	53%	44%	54%	42%
Student Performance (FY97)2												
Disciplinary Actions:100 FTEs	24.3	29.3	4.3	51.7	25.9	39.2	29.1	38.0	37.3	16.0	18.0	33.3
Dropout Rate - FY96	5.0%	6.4%	11.2%	8.5%	2.4%	7.2%	8.4%	4.6%	5.1%	3.5%	8.7%	4.2%
Dropout Rate - FY97	5.4%	5.0%	6.2%	3.9%	0.5%	5.0%	7.5%	5.7%	7.0%	4.5%	7.6%	2.8%
Dropouts:FTE	1.4%	1.3%	1.6%	1.0%	0.1%	1.2%	1.9%	1.5%	2.0%	1.2%	1.9%	0.8%
Nonpromotions:FTE	5.0%	5.3%	12.3%	3.6%	4.0%	7.3%	0.0%	5.7%	3.1%	6.7%	5.0%	5.4%
HSCT Passing % - Comm.	77%	75%	72%	70%	72%	65%	74%	77%	86%	81%	79%	75%
HSCT Passing % - Math	75%	67%	57%	67%	58%	71%	65%	73%	70%	77%	72%	63%
Graduation Rate - FY96	73%	68%	49%	50%	61%	56%	73%	72%	91%	86%	64%	81%
Graduation Rate - FY97	73%	69%	59%	43%	74%	74%	75%	65%	69%	86%	70%	74%
% HS Grads:Grade 12 FTEs	88%	92%	83%	88%	95%	112%	103%	89%	79%	92%	87%	93%
% Entering College	56%	57%	0%	71%	55%	48%	53%	74%	87%	47%	68%	64%
% Entering Technical School	4.1%	2.6%	0%	1.4%	5.1%	5.4%	1.8%	3.0%	0.0%	1.9%	3.7%	3.4%
Staffing Ratios (FY97)2												
Classroom Teachers : Admin. Staff	14.2	9.5	8.0	7.9	8.8	11.6	9.7	12.4	8.5	7.6	11.0	9.9
Instructional Staff : Admin. Staff	15.8	10.4	8.5	8.6	9.3	12.8	10.6	14.0	9.3	7.9	12.2	10.5
Total Staff : Admin. Staff	28.8	21.3	16.3	18.7	16.9	27.6	23.8	27.9	18.5	14.5	25.4	23.7
Students : Classroom Teachers	18.3	17.5	18.0	16.4	15.1	18.5	19.1	18.6	16.3	16.4	18.7	18.0
Classroom Teachers : Teacher Aides	4.4	3.8	4.6	3.2	5.5	2.4	2.6	3.7	4.0	6.3	2.3	3.9
Students : Guidance Counselors	462.5	502.2	574.5	774.3	529.7	537.7	518.4	459.6	554.5	247.0	439.7	386.2
Avg. Salary Data (FY97)2												
Teacher - BS	$31,057	$28,209	$26,230	$25,965	$27,621	$29,799	$30,661	$30,289	$25,778	$29,881	$30,123	$25,740
Teacher - Masters	$37,693	$34,092	$32,918	$32,426	$34,006	$34,903	$38,745	$37,164	$29,831	$33,538	$37,340	$30,046
Teacher - Specialist	$44,797	$34,511	$37,147	$30,251	$31,608	$34,701		$43,190	$25,914		$38,764	
Teacher - Doctorate	$43,231	$38,429		$40,748	$40,101	$36,809	$40,062	$34,423				
Teacher - All Degrees	$33,887	$29,816	$28,230	$28,225	$29,949	$31,020	$31,097	$32,333	$26,737	$31,228	$32,325	$27,016
Superintendent	$89,506	$76,165	$66,795	$108,233	$69,437	$70,168	$70,690	$86,424	$66,333	$64,417	$89,450	$69,707
School Board Member	$21,593	$17,529	$16,899	$16,438	$17,257	$18,046	$16,688	$21,050	$16,385	$16,473	$18,650	$17,406
FY95 WFTE Funding3												
BSA		$2,558	$2,558	$2,558	$2,558	$2,558	$2,558	$2,558	$2,558	$2,558	$2,558	$2,558
DCD		108	239	76	117	49	159	121	31	77	137	74
Declining Enrollment		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	0
Sparsity		133	205	136	219	34	81	75	220	201	17	140

Glades County School District - Summary of Peer Data

Indicator	State	Peer Avg	Glades	Dixie	Franklin	Hardee	Hendry	Highlands	Lafayette	Liberty	Okeech.	Union
Safe Schools		21	21	21	21	21	21	21	21	21	21	21
Discretionary Tax Equal.		12	0	24	0	14	12	0	0	28	15	30
Hold harmless		87	15	139	110	81	44	74	174	34	52	144
Descretionary Lottery		163	171	161	164	159	166	164	159	161	165	159
Major Categorical		242	300	269	210	254	203	210	270	264	226	215
Discretionary Local Effort		57	120	31	94	55	59	78	35	29	50	17
Supp. Discretionary Local Effort		24	41	15	39	27	29	38	0	14	24	9
Total		$3,404	$3,670	$3,430	$3,532	$3,252	$3,332	$3,339	$3,470	$3,387	$3,265	$3,367
Adjustments		(9)	(12)	(6)	8	(12)	(10)	(3)	(3)	4	(12)	(41)
Adjusted Total		$3,396	$3,658	$3,424	$3,540	$3,240	$3,322	$3,336	$3,467	$3,391	$3,253	$3,326
Funding Data4												
DCDs for FY985		0.9492	0.9826	0.9288	0.9646	0.9292	0.9605	0.9559	0.9273	0.9431	0.9565	0.9434
Food Services5												
Breakfast Programs - Approved		5	1	4	3	6	4	15	1	3	9	3
Full Price Breakfast - Elementary		$0.66	$0.50	$0.60	$0.60	$0.65	$0.80	$0.80	$0.65	$0.60	$0.75	$0.65
Lunch Programs - Approved		6	2	4	4	6	9	15	2	3	9	3
Full Price Lunch - Elementary		$1.18	$1.50	$1.00	$1.00	$1.00	$1.25	$1.25	$1.25	$1.00	$1.25	$1.25
Full Price Lunch - High School		$1.40	$1.50	$1.25	$1.25	$1.25	$1.50	$1.50	$1.50	$1.25	$1.50	$1.50
Average Cost Per Meal - Lunch:												
Salaries	$0.58	$0.67	$0.49	$0.85	$0.64	$0.64	$0.70	$0.66	$0.70	$0.83	$0.63	$0.58
Benefits	0.25	0.29	0.20	0.32	0.36	0.28	0.32	0.32	0.27	0.32	0.27	0.28
Purchased Services	0.04	0.03	0.07	0.04	0.01	0.03	0.01	0.03	0.05	0.02	0.03	0.01
Energy Services	0.02	0.03	0.16	0.08	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.02	0.00	0.00
Supplies	0.08	0.07	0.11	0.09	0.08	0.06	0.01	0.09	0.01	0.05	0.10	0.11
Purchased Food	0.66	0.68	0.80	0.67	0.62	0.63	0.70	0.59	0.76	0.63	0.76	0.61
Other Materials/Supplies	0.01	0.01	0.00	0.00	0.01	0.00	0.07	0.00	0.02	0.00	0.01	0.01
Other Expenses	0.05	0.05	0.05	0.07	0.08	0.03	0.05	0.08	0.03	0.03	0.01	0.06
Total Direct Costs	$1.71	$1.83	$1.88	$2.12	$1.81	$1.65	$1.86	$1.77	$1.84	$1.90	$1.81	$1.67
Indirect Costs	0.02	0.08	0.08	0.11	0.12	0.05	0.08	0.03	0.07	0.11	0.04	0.10
Total Costs	$1.73	$1.91	$1.96	$2.23	$1.93	$1.70	$1.95	$1.80	$1.91	$2.02	$1.85	$1.78
USDA		$0.17	$0.19	$0.19	$0.15	$0.18	$0.17	$0.14	$0.19	$0.18	$0.17	$0.17
Average Cost Per Meal - Breakfast:												
Salaries	$0.44	$0.51	$0.37	$0.64	$0.48	$0.48	$0.53	$0.49	$0.53	$0.63	$0.47	$0.44
Benefits	0.19	0.22	0.15	0.24	0.27	0.21	0.24	0.24	0.21	0.24	0.20	0.21
Purchased Services	0.03	0.02	0.05	0.03	0.01	0.02	0.01	0.02	0.04	0.01	0.02	0.01
Energy Services	0.02	0.02	0.12	0.06	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.01	0.00	0.00

Glades County School District - Summary of Peer Data

Indicator	State	Peer Avg	Glades	Dixie	Franklin	Hardee	Hendry	Highlands	Lafayette	Liberty	Okeech.	Union
Supplies	0.06	0.05	0.09	0.07	0.06	0.04	0.01	0.07	0.01	0.04	0.08	0.08
Purchased Food	0.50	0.51	0.60	0.51	0.47	0.47	0.52	0.44	0.57	0.47	0.57	0.46
Other Materials/Supplies	0.01	0.01	0.00	0.00	0.01	0.00	0.05	0.00	0.01	0.00	0.01	0.01
Other Expenses	0.04	0.04	0.04	0.06	0.06	0.02	0.04	0.06	0.02	0.02	0.01	0.05
Total Direct Costs	$1.28	$1.38	$1.42	$1.60	$1.36	$1.24	$1.40	$1.33	$1.38	$1.43	$1.36	$1.26
Indirect Costs	0.02	0.06	0.06	0.08	0.09	0.03	0.06	0.02	0.05	0.08	0.03	0.08
Total Costs	$1.30	$1.44	$1.48	$1.68	$1.45	$1.28	$1.46	$1.35	$1.43	$1.51	$1.39	$1.34
Revenues By Source:												
Meal Sales	35.3%	28.3%	32.4%	19.8%	24.6%	21.5%	28.3%	27.5%	31.5%	26.2%	30.2%	41.1%
Federal Reimbursement	54.6%	57.4%	57.5%	57.3%	64.6%	62.9%	61.5%	56.5%	53.9%	50.4%	58.4%	50.6%
State Reimbursement	3.1%	3.5%	3.4%	4.1%	4.2%	3.7%	3.5%	2.9%	3.1%	3.4%	4.0%	2.5%
Misc. Local	1.4%	1.8%	1.4%	0.2%	0.4%	4.7%	0.2%	7.8%	0.5%	0.1%	1.3%	1.4%
Donated Foods	5.3%	5.7%	5.2%	5.4%	6.1%	7.2%	6.5%	5.3%	6.4%	4.2%	6.0%	4.4%
Transfers	0.2%	3.4%	0.0%	13.2%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	4.6%	15.8%	0.0%	0.0%
Totals	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
Average Daily Participation6:												
Avg. Daily Participation-Breakfast	294,522	754	147	624	340	1,167	1,340	1,789	150	329	1,382	267
B'fast Participants/Student FTE's	13%	19%	14%	28%	20%	22%	19%	16%	14%	26%	22%	12%
Avg. Daily Participation-Lunch	1,018,335	2,540	628	1,584	1,149	3,874	4,849	6,992	673	612	3,872	1,165
Lunch Participants/Student FTE's	44%	63%	59%	72%	69%	73%	67%	64%	64%	48%	62%	52%
Percent Paid Lunch ADP	33%	30%	23%	28%	29%	30%	24%	32%	36%	34%	26%	35%
Percent Free Lunch ADP	59%	62%	69%	63%	61%	65%	70%	59%	55%	57%	65%	56%
Percent Reduced Lunch ADP	8%	9%	8%	9%	11%	6%	6%	9%	10%	9%	9%	9%
Totals	100%	100%	100%	100%	101%	101%	100%	100%	101%	100%	100%	100%
Earnings Per Participant6:												
Earnings Per Participant-Breakfast	$221	$194	$202	$194	$186	$200	$198	$211	$195	$171	$192	$196
Earnings Per Participant-Lunch	$256	$234	$255	$239	$230	$236	$250	$234	$216	$221	$245	$215
Transportation Indicators7												
Population Per Square Mile	236	26	10	15	16	31	22	67	10	7	38	42
District Road Miles Paved	89,916	382	285	265	280	396	423	1,235	209	183	353	186
District Road Miles Unpaved	22,583	224	57	208	227	278	29	285	365	309	366	115
Total District Road Miles	112,499	605	342	473	507	674	452	1,520	574	492	719	301
Percent Road Miles Paved	80%	63%	83%	56%	55%	59%	94%	81%	36%	37%	49%	62%
Student Membership FY96	2,175,233	3,914	1,102	2,274	1,706	5,298	7,064	10,758	1,052	1,242	6,456	2,189
Avg. Students Transported FY96	936,950	2,197	468	1,378	490	2,958	3,622	6,379	815	641	3,944	1,271
Percent Students Transported FY96	43.1%	54.6%	42.5%	60.6%	28.7%	55.8%	51.3%	59.3%	77.5%	51.6%	61.1%	58.1%

Glades County School District - Summary of Peer Data

Indicator	State	Peer Avg	Glades	Dixie	Franklin	Hardee	Hendry	Highlands	Lafayette	Liberty	Okeech.	Union
Percent Courtesy Ridership	7.0%	30.0%	62.0%	21.0%	52.5%	25.9%	39.6%	7.4%	23.2%	40.6%	22.3%	5.3%
Percent Teen Parent Ridership	0.53%	0.53%	2.24%	0.22%	0.00%	0.73%	0.43%	0.45%	0.74%	0.00%	0.53%	0.00%
Percent Disabilities Ridership	4.83%	3.36%	0.21%	8.28%	0.00%	6.63%	1.52%	3.52%	5.52%	0.62%	7.20%	0.08%
Percent Hazardous Walking Ridership	3.60%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%
% Field Trip Miles to Annual Miles	10.5%	15.6%	5.9%	8.1%	12.4%	6.5%	12.5%	4.5%	18.0%	24.0%	43.9%	20.0%
Buses Reported in Daily Service	13,166	37	9	26	10	42	61	109	13	15	65	23
Buses Reported in Inventory	13,967	48	16	32	14	72	86	121	16	17	79	28
Median Bus Year (DOE Inventory)	1988	1988	1986	1988	1985	1991	1986	1990	1987	1986	1988	1989
Students Transported/Active Bus	71.2	56.4	52.0	53.0	49.0	70.4	59.4	58.5	62.7	42.7	60.7	55.3
Students Transported/Bus in Inv.	67.1	42.7	29.3	43.1	35.0	41.1	42.1	52.7	50.9	37.7	49.9	45.4
Avg. Bus Occupancy	71.2%	60.1%	58.5%	55.1%	57.6%	70.4%	59.9%	65.4%	62.3%	49.3%	60.6%	62.0%
Full Costs Per Student Transported	$550	$493	$511	$453	$674	$502	$543	$480	$431	$509	$387	$440
Adj. Costs Per Student Transported	$562	$533	$576	$522	$689	$553	$561	$515	$458	$547	$450	$463
Oper. Costs Per Student Transported	$513	$469	$511	$453	$619	$499	$497	$459	$397	$470	$387	$401
Oper. Costs per Annual Mile	$1.95	$1.73	$1.79	$1.91	$1.19	$1.63	$2.38	$1.83	$1.89	$2.00	$1.26	$1.40
Benefits as % of Salaries & Benefits	29.4%	30.5%	28.7%	27.4%	35.7%	32.3%	31.1%	34.1%	26.6%	26.4%	30.4%	32.1%
Salaries & Benefits as % of Op. Exp.	77.6%	76.3%	76.7%	78.2%	65.6%	73.9%	78.2%	84.0%	79.8%	80.1%	77.5%	69.1%
Avg. Salary & Ben. (All Trans. Staff)	$16,597	$13,798	$9,681	$12,849	$15,989	$16,559	$16,036	$17,521	$13,601	$9,981	$14,406	$11,352
Facilities Management8												
Operating Cost Per GSF	$2.99	$2.46	$1.96	$3.09	$1.75	$2.29	$2.15	$3.02	$1.96	$2.10	$2.80	$3.43
Maintenance Cost Per GSF	1.33	$0.83	1.36	0.02	0.68	1.44	0.20	0.82	1.34	0.85	0.72	0.90
Total Cost Per GSF	$4.32	$3.29	$3.32	$3.11	$2.43	$3.73	$2.35	$3.84	$3.30	$2.95	$3.52	$4.33
Operating Cost Per COFTE	$407.66	$418.13	$403.96	$522.27	$413.52	$318.52	$334.18	$474.03	$324.79	$408.14	$445.34	$536.57
Maintenance Cost Per COFTE	181.88	$144.85	281.29	3.88	161.86	200.99	30.60	128.92	220.97	165.09	114.52	140.38
Total Cost Per COFTE	$589.54	$562.98	$685.25	$526.15	$575.38	$519.51	$364.78	$602.95	$545.76	$573.23	$559.86	$676.95

Footnotes:

1 - "Profiles of Florida School Districts, 1995-96 Financial Data", Statistical Report, August 1997, FL DOE

2 - "Profiles of Florida School Districts, 1996-97 Data", Statistical Report, FL DOE

3 - "Florida's Education Funding System," OPPAGA, April 8, 1998

4 - 1997-98 Florida Education Finance Program, Statistical Report, August, 1997

5 - "The Annual Report of Child Nutrition Programs, National School Lunch & Breakfast Programs, Cost Report 1995-96," DOE, 1997

6 - "The Annual Report of Child Nutrition Programs, National School Lunch & Breakfast Programs, Participation and Earnings, 1995-96," DOE, 1997

7 - "The Quality Link," Florida School District Transportation Profiles", Volume 6, June 1997; note adj. costs = plus bus replacement factor

8 - "1996-97 School district Financial Report," FL DOE; COFTE = Capital Outlay FTE

APPENDIX D

Community Survey Results

Explanatory Notes: The opinion survey of parents and teachers, which is presented herein, was a one-page survey instrument with 20 questions. The first 18 questions were affirmative statements to which respondents were asked to signify the extent of their agreement with those statements (i.e., strongly agree, agree, neutral, disagree and strongly disagree). The last two questions requested open-ended responses as to the strengths of the District and the best opportunities for improving the District. With the District's assistance, we distributed 300 survey forms to 240 children in Grades 5, 8 and 11 and 60 teachers. For each survey form, we provided an addressed and stamped envelope to be returned to the North Carolina DMG office. DMG received 69 responses (a 23 percent response rate).

Glades County School District - Summary of Survey Results

		Survey Question	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Total	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Total
Affirmative Statement														
1	The instructional curriculum is appropriate for children in Glades County.		32%	43%	10%	14%	0%	100%	22	30	7	10	0	69
2	There are sufficient materials and resources in the classrooms and libraries.		14%	39%	9%	28%	10%	100%	10	27	6	19	7	69
3	There are sufficient computers and technology to meet the needs of students.		17%	29%	14%	28%	12%	100%	12	20	10	19	8	69
4	The schools provide good quality programs for students with special needs.		12%	29%	30%	16%	13%	100%	8	20	21	11	9	69
5	Students are learning what they need to at school to succeed later in life.		14%	46%	22%	16%	1%	100%	10	32	15	11	1	69
6	The school district has excellent teachers and instructional staff.		36%	41%	12%	9%	3%	100%	25	28	8	6	2	69
7	Current disciplinary practices are appropriate and effective.		19%	39%	12%	16%	14%	100%	13	27	8	11	10	69
8	School facilities provide a positive, safe and secure learning environment.		35%	49%	10%	3%	3%	100%	24	34	7	2	2	69
9	School facilities are clean and well-maintained.		20%	45%	14%	14%	6%	100%	14	31	10	10	4	69
10	The children receive safe and timely transportation (bus) service.		38%	45%	14%	1%	1%	100%	26	31	10	1	1	69
11	The children receive good quality food and timely food service.		19%	35%	19%	14%	13%	100%	13	24	13	10	9	69
12	The Superintendent manages school resources prudently and efficiently.		28%	33%	20%	12%	7%	100%	19	23	14	8	5	69
13	The School Board provides appropriate plans and policies for children.		17%	30%	25%	17%	10%	100%	12	21	17	12	7	69
14	Parents are actively involved in the schools and education of their children.		9%	30%	25%	25%	12%	100%	6	21	17	17	8	69
15	Parents have ready access to school administrators, teachers and other staff.		36%	45%	10%	7%	1%	100%	25	31	7	5	1	69
16	The District makes it easy to get involved with school improvement efforts.		23%	33%	26%	12%	6%	100%	16	23	18	8	4	69
17	I would send my children to an adjoining school district if I could.		7%	6%	16%	20%	51%	100%	5	4	11	14	35	69
18	Overall, the District does a good job in educating the children of our county.		19%	61%	16%	4%	0%	100%	13	42	11	3	0	69
						No. of	**Percent**							
19 - Current Strengths of Glades County School District						**Responses**	**of Total**							
	Small classes, family atmosphere and strong teacher/pupil interaction					41	59%							
	Safe and secure learning environment in school facilities					8	12%							
	Dedicated, caring, helpful and accessible teachers					15	22%							
	Good principals who support teachers and foster collegiality among teachers					7	10%							
						No. of	**Percent**							
20 - Opportunities for Improving the Glades County School District						**Responses**	**of Total**							
	Improve school board; increase its focus on planning and policy making					15	22%							
	Improve administration; increase site-based management & reduce influence of cliques					9	13%							

Glades County School District - Summary of Survey Results

	Survey Question	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Total	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Total
	Improve community and parental involvement and increase flow of information				4	6%							
	Improve access to and coordination of technology resources				7	10%							
	Reduce student:teacher ratios and classroom sizes				4	6%							
	Improve retention of good teachers; increase teacher training & incentives				13	19%							
	Upgrade textbooks, library materials and other instructional materials				5	7%							
	Strengthen student expectations & improve standardized test preparation				4	6%							
	Improve curriculum & expand course offerings (e.g., art, foreign language and driver education.)				12	17%							
	Improve special education classes				4	6%							
	Refine disciplinary rules, upgrade dress code and strengthen enforcement				5	7%							
	Increase extracurricular activities				2	3%							
	Improve facility cleanliness and custodial services				6	9%							
	Expand or improve facilities (e.g., classrooms, gymnasium and teacher rest rooms)				4	6%							
	Improve food quality, increase menu variety and expand cafeteria				11	16%							
	Notes:												
	1. For each affirmative statement listed above (No. 1 - 18), respondents were asked to indicate the degree to which they agreed or disagreed.												
	2. For the "Current Strengths" question (No. 19), the respondents were asked an open-ended question to identify what they regarded as the greatest strengths of the District												
	3. For the "Opportunities" question (No. 20), the respondents were asked an open-ended question to identify what they regarded as the best opportunities for improving the District.												
Parents Only													
1	The instructional curriculum is appropriate for children in Glades County.	28%	44%	13%	15%	0%	100%	15	24	7	8	0	54
2	There are sufficient materials and resources in the classrooms and libraries.	11%	41%	11%	26%	11%	100%	6	22	6	14	6	54
3	There are sufficient computers and technology to meet the needs of students.	19%	31%	15%	28%	7%	100%	10	17	8	15	4	54
4	The schools provide good quality programs for students with special needs.	15%	31%	26%	17%	11%	100%	8	17	14	9	6	54
5	Students are learning what they need to at school to succeed later in life.	15%	43%	24%	17%	2%	100%	8	23	13	9	1	54
6	The school district has excellent teachers and instructional staff.	35%	37%	13%	11%	4%	100%	19	20	7	6	2	54
7	Current disciplinary practices are appropriate and effective.	20%	31%	13%	17%	19%	100%	11	17	7	9	10	54
8	School facilities provide a positive, safe and secure learning environment.	30%	54%	9%	4%	4%	100%	16	29	5	2	2	54
9	School facilities are clean and well-maintained.	24%	44%	15%	9%	7%	100%	13	24	8	5	4	54

Glades County School District - Summary of Survey Results

	Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Total	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Total
10	The children receive safe and timely transportation (bus) service.	41%	41%	15%	2%	2%	100%	22	22	8	1	1	54
11	The children receive good quality food and timely food service.	22%	35%	13%	15%	15%	100%	12	19	7	8	8	54
12	The Superintendent manages school resources prudently and efficiently.	31%	31%	17%	13%	7%	100%	17	17	9	7	4	54
13	The School Board provides appropriate plans and policies for children.	20%	33%	26%	11%	9%	100%	11	18	14	6	5	54
14	Parents are actively involved in the schools and education of their children.	11%	28%	28%	22%	11%	100%	6	15	15	12	6	54
15	Parents have ready access to school administrators, teachers and other staff.	33%	46%	9%	9%	2%	100%	18	25	5	5	1	54
16	The District makes it easy to get involved with school improvement efforts.	22%	35%	26%	11%	6%	100%	12	19	14	6	3	54
17	I would send my children to an adjoining school district if I could.	6%	7%	15%	24%	48%	100%	3	4	8	13	26	54
18	Overall, the District does a good job in educating the children of our county.	20%	54%	20%	6%	0%	100%	11	29	11	3	0	54
Teachers Only													
1	The instructional curriculum is appropriate for children in Glades County.	47%	40%	0%	13%	0%	100%	7	6	0	2	0	15
2	There are sufficient materials and resources in the classrooms and libraries.	27%	33%	0%	33%	7%	100%	4	5	0	5	1	15
3	There are sufficient computers and technology to meet the needs of students.	13%	20%	13%	27%	27%	100%	2	3	2	4	4	15
4	The schools provide good quality programs for students with special needs.	0%	20%	47%	13%	20%	100%	0	3	7	2	3	15
5	Students are learning what they need to at school to succeed later in life.	13%	60%	13%	13%	0%	100%	2	9	2	2	0	15
6	The school district has excellent teachers and instructional staff.	40%	53%	7%	0%	0%	100%	6	8	1	0	0	15
7	Current disciplinary practices are appropriate and effective.	13%	67%	7%	13%	0%	100%	2	10	1	2	0	15
8	School facilities provide a positive, safe and secure learning environment.	53%	33%	13%	0%	0%	100%	8	5	2	0	0	15
9	School facilities are clean and well-maintained.	7%	47%	13%	33%	0%	100%	1	7	2	5	0	15
10	The children receive safe and timely transportation (bus) service.	27%	60%	13%	0%	0%	100%	4	9	2	0	0	15
11	The children receive good quality food and timely food service.	7%	33%	40%	13%	7%	100%	1	5	6	2	1	15
12	The Superintendent manages school resources prudently and efficiently.	13%	40%	33%	7%	7%	100%	2	6	5	1	1	15
13	The School Board provides appropriate plans and policies for children.	7%	20%	20%	40%	13%	100%	1	3	3	6	2	15
14	Parents are actively involved in the schools and education of their children.	0%	40%	13%	33%	13%	100%	0	6	2	5	2	15
15	Parents have ready access to school administrators, teachers and other staff.	47%	40%	13%	0%	0%	100%	7	6	2	0	0	15
16	The District makes it easy to get involved with school improvement efforts.	27%	27%	27%	13%	7%	100%	4	4	4	2	1	15
17	I would send my children to an adjoining school district if I could.	13%	0%	20%	7%	60%	100%	2	0	3	1	9	15
18	Overall, the District does a good job in educating the children of our county.	13%	87%	0%	0%	0%	100%	2	13	0	0	0	15