FCMAT
FISCAL CRISIS & MANAGEMENT ASSISTANCE TEAM

Albany Unified School District

Technology Review

March 18, 2009

Joel D. Montero
Chief Executive Officer

FCMAT

FISCAL CRISIS & MANAGEMENT ASSISTANCE TEAM

CSIS California School Information Services
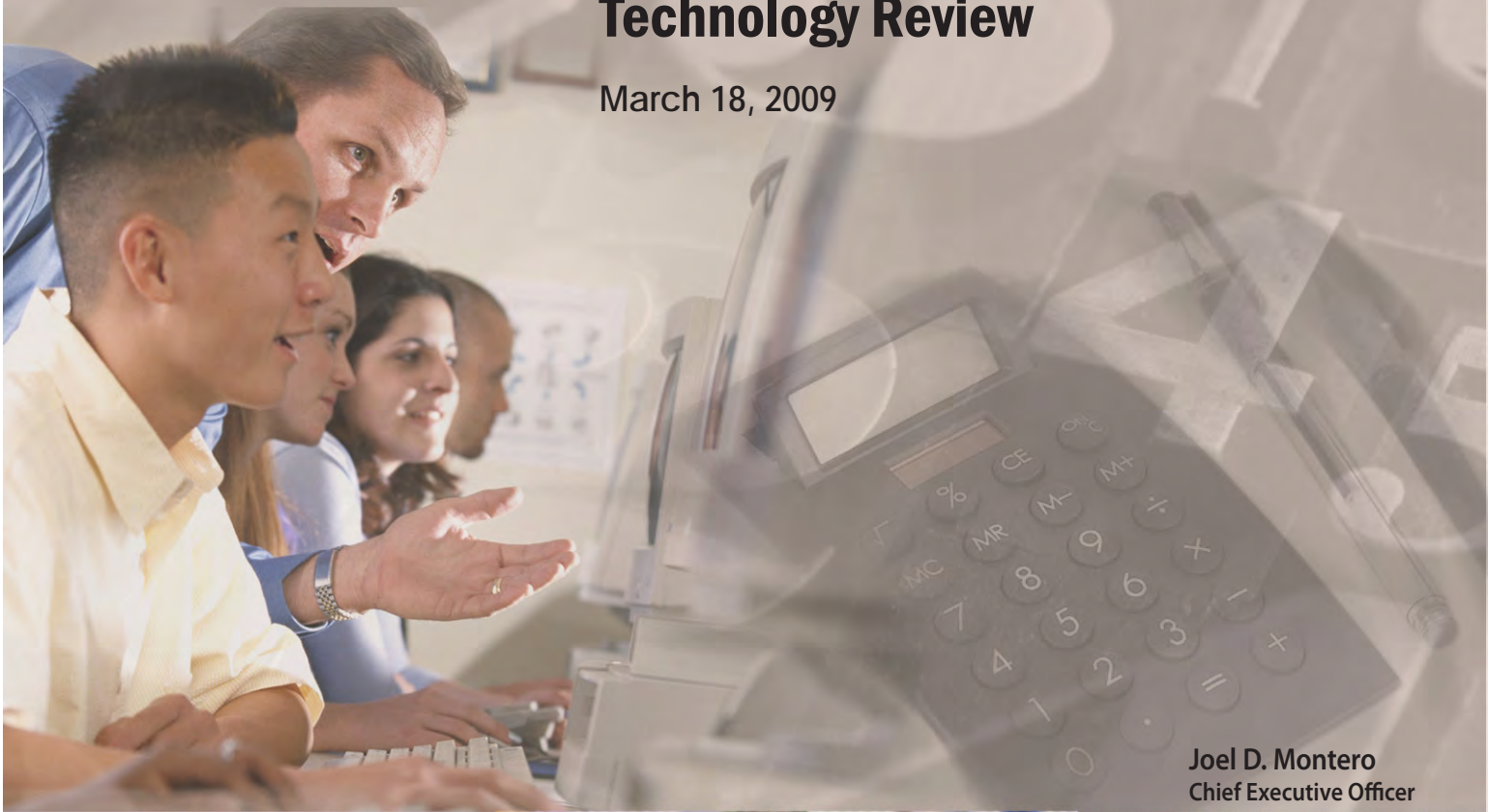
March 18, 2009

Marla Stephenson, Superintendent
Albany Unified School District
904 Talbot Avenue
Albany, California 94706
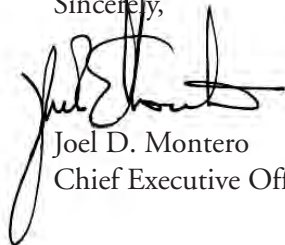
Dear Superintendent Stephenson:

In August 2008, the Albany Unified School District and the Fiscal Crisis and Management Assistance Team (FCMAT) entered into an agreement for FCMAT to conduct a review of the district's technology services. Specifically, the agreement states that FCMAT will perform the following:

1. Review the district's administrative technology implementation and make recommendations for improvement.

2. Review the district's instructional technology implementation and make recommendations for improvement

3. Review the district's network infrastructure and make recommendations for improvement.

4. Review the district's staffing and organizational structure for technology services delivery and make recommendations for improvement.

The attached final report contains the study team's findings and recommendations.

We appreciate the opportunity to serve you and we extend our thanks to all the staff of the Albany Unified School District.

Sincerely,

Joel D. Montero
Chief Executive Officer

FCMAT
Joel D. Montero, Chief Executive Officer
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Foreword

FCMAT Background

The Fiscal Crisis and Management Assistance Team (FCMAT) was created by legislation in accordance with Assembly Bill 1200 in 1992 as a service to assist local educational agencies in complying with fiscal accountability standards.

AB 1200 was established from a need to ensure that local educational agencies throughout California were adequately prepared to meet and sustain their financial obligations. AB 1200 is also a statewide plan for county offices of education and school districts to work together on a local level to improve fiscal procedures and accountability standards. The legislation expanded the role of the county office in monitoring school districts under certain fiscal constraints to ensure these districts could meet their financial commitments on a multiyear basis. AB 2756 provides specific responsibilities to FCMAT with regard to districts that have received emergency state loans. These include comprehensive assessments in five major operational areas and periodic reports that identify the district's progress on the improvement plans.

Since 1992, FCMAT has been engaged to perform nearly 700 reviews for local educational agencies, including school districts, county offices of education, charter schools and community colleges. Services range from fiscal crisis intervention to management review and assistance. FCMAT also provides professional development training. The Kern County Superintendent of Schools is the administrative agent for FCMAT. The agency is guided under the leadership of Joel D. Montero, Chief Executive Officer, with funding derived through appropriations in the state budget and a modest fee schedule for charges to requesting agencies.

Total Number of Studies.................... 711
Total Number of Districts in CA 982

- ● Management Assistance............................ 675   (94.9%)
- ○ Fiscal Crisis/Emergency 36   (5.1%)

Note: Some districts had multiple studies.
● Districts (7) that have received emergency loans from the state.
(Rev. 7/30/08)

Study Agreements by Fiscal Year
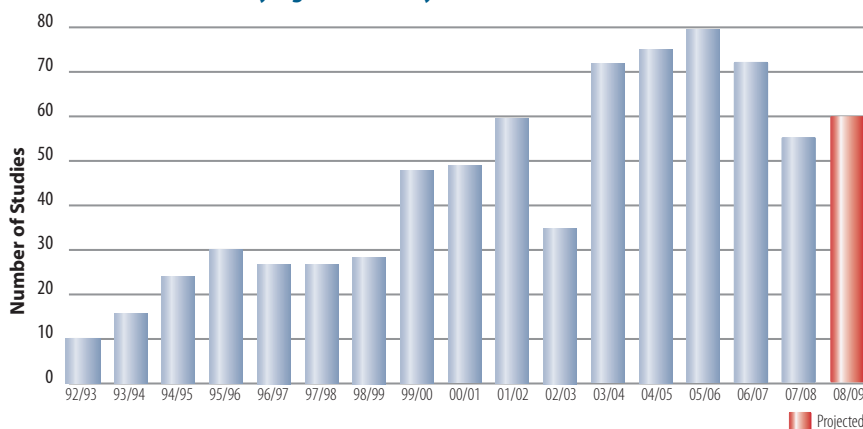
Introduction

Background

Bordered by the San Francisco Bay to the west and the Berkeley Hills to the east, the Albany Unified School District is home to six schools that provide services to more than 3,800 students. The district's academic performance index scores rank among the highest in the state and are a reflection of strong instructional practices and consistent support from parents and the community.

In August 2008, the district and the Fiscal Crisis and Management Assistance Team (FCMAT) entered into an agreement for FCMAT to perform the following:

1. Review the district's administrative technology implementation and make recommendations for improvement.

2. Review the district's instructional technology implementation and make recommendations for improvement

3. Review the district's network infrastructure and make recommendations for improvement.

4. Review the district's staffing and organizational structure for technology services delivery and make recommendations for improvement.

Study Guidelines

FCMAT visited the district October 13-14, 2008 to interview employees, collect data and review information. This report is the result of those activities and is divided into the following sections.

    I. Executive Summary

   II. Leadership and Communication

 III. Staffing and Support

 IV. Instructional Technology

  V. Administrative Technology

 VI. Appendices

Study Team

The study team was composed of the following members:

Andrew Prestage
FCMAT Management Analyst
Bakersfield, CA

Bob Dragge*
Technology Consultant
Redwood City, CA

Kris Saunders
Network Systems Engineer
California School Information Services
Sacramento, CA

John Lotze
FCMAT Public Information Specialist
Bakersfield, CA

*As a member of this study team, this consultant was not representing his employer but was working solely as an independent contractor for FCMAT.

Executive Summary

Many of the district's key management personnel have been with the district for a relatively short period of time. The superintendent is the only district administrator with long-term service (10 years) in the district. The assistant superintendent of business and the director of curriculum and instruction have each been with the district for less than one year.

The criteria and standards created in compliance with Education Code sections 33128 and 33129 define minimum reserve levels for school districts. As a district with an average daily attendance (ADA) between 1,001 and 30,000, Albany Unified is required to maintain a reserve for economic uncertainties equal to 3% of its general fund total expenditures and transfers out. Because of the reserve requirement, the district has taken a conservative approach to its budget and expenditures and in prior fiscal years has maintained a reserve of approximately 9.5%. Because the state has implemented midyear funding reductions to education in both 2008-09 and 2009-10, the district will need to examine its budget carefully in an effort to make a commitment to technology. Depending on the results of the governor's May revision to the budget, the district may need to be conservative in its technology spending. This approach would include prudent expenditures during a difficult state financial crisis.

> The district lacks a districtwide technology plan or vision, including goals for the near future and long term.

The district lacks a districtwide technology plan or vision, including goals for the near future and long term. The district should consider creating a technology director position, in lieu of the existing network administrator position, to assume responsibility for all aspects of instructional and administrative technology.

Network performance issues have frustrated users of the new student assessment system, student information system, and financial system. The network administrators were unable to define a solution or plan to solve the problem. Network performance issues must be resolved immediately. The district should engage an external vendor to conduct a network performance audit; it is unlikely that the current network administrator can accomplish this task.

During interviews, many site users indicated frustration regarding the lack of integration of technology and curriculum. Some certificated staff stated that they have given up because they encounter too many problems when attempting to integrate technology into the curriculum and instruction.

The district's computer equipment is not replaced regularly, and much of it is old. The district needs to evaluate computer replacement needs and implement an equipment replacement plan.

Although academic performance scores at the district's six school sites are among the highest in the state, the district could benefit substantially from an infusion of technology into the curriculum because a technology-enriched curriculum would further enrich instruction. This report contains recommendations relating to personnel, leadership, communications, and network infrastructure that will help the district achieve its goals.

Findings and Recommendations

Leadership and Communication

A properly managed technology-enriched curriculum improves the delivery of instruction, enhances learning, and leads to gains in student achievement. The district's students earn consistently high academic scores, despite the fact that the district's technology lacks coordination and infrastructure and cannot take advantage of modern curriculum-based technology resources. District administrators point to strong instructional practices, hard-working staff, and consistent community support as the factors that yield high student performance.

Historically, the district's governing board has not made technology a high priority. Increasingly however, instructional staff members have requested technology changes that would improve the district's technology environment. District administrators indicated that cabinet discussions increasingly focus on using technology to improve instruction. However, several obstacles hinder the district's efforts to implement a coordinated technology program, including the following:

> District administrators indicated that cabinet discussions increasingly focus on using technology to improve instruction. However, several obstacles hinder the district's efforts to implement a coordinated technology program.

- No individual employee in the district has been assigned responsibility for all aspects of instructional and administrative technology.

- Sites have a great deal of autonomy and act independently with respect to technology purchasing and system implementation.

- Districtwide technology standards are almost nonexistent. Elementary school site administrators have difficulty meeting to discuss common needs because of disparate technology.

- No individual in the district has developed a vision for how technology could be incorporated into the curriculum to improve instruction.

- The district office lacks the administrative resources required to lead districtwide technology implementation.

- No one in the district has acted to identify funding sources for technology implementation.

- District office resources are weak because of the extremely conservative fiscal approach adopted by district administrators for the past few years.

Some staff members questioned why the district should invest in technology when the district's students' academic scores are already among the state's top 10%. However, most instructional staff members expressed a desire for increased central office technology leadership.

No single employee is responsible for planning and managing all aspects of district technology, and no employee has been assigned to guide professional development or assist teachers with the integration of technology into the curriculum.

A position of technology director would better serve the district's technology leadership needs. Essential skills for this position should include technical knowledge, the ability to maintain excellent communication with all staff and administrators (especially those in curriculum and instruction) and proven staff leadership capabilities. A successful technology director will possess superior skills in all facets of desktop support, local and wide area networking, and be capable of leading and performing the hands-on work. A sample technology director job description is included in Appendix A.

The network administrator chairs the district's technology curriculum committee (TCC). Some TCC members indicated that under the network administrator's chairmanship there is too much discussion of network hardware, infrastructure and security topics rather than user needs or instructional technology initiatives. Other members stated that meetings feel managed top-down and there is no invitation to submit agenda items in advance. In addition, meeting minutes are not prepared and distributed following every meeting.

> No single employee is responsible for planning and managing all aspects of district technology, and no employee has been assigned to guide professional development or assist teachers with the integration of technology into the curriculum.

At the time of FCMAT's fieldwork, the TCC had met once to begin creating a new strategic technology plan. The director of curriculum and instruction indicated that the technology plan should reflect the goals outlined in the district's new strategic plan. Best practices for technology planning suggest that the TCC membership should be diverse, representing student, parents, teachers, library media specialist, resource specialists, site administrators, district administrators for both curriculum and technology, classified staff, community leaders, business representatives, and partners from higher education.

Site staff members indicated that there is no agreement among sites about which technology programs and strategies are successful. Principals commented that there is a lack of communication and planning with technology department staff regarding site technology needs. In addition, technology support staff stated that communication within their department is insufficient. These issues were highlighted recently when the district received 120 donated MacBook computers intended for use by elementary school teachers. Technology support staff stated that they had no prior knowledge of the delivery and were unprepared for the rollout. The district needs improved communication and a consensus regarding technology needs and priorities.

Recommendations

The district should:

1. Consider creating a technology director position, in lieu of the existing network administrator position, to assume responsibility for all aspects of instructional and administrative technology. The technology director should be a working manager capable of performing network administration tasks while also providing districtwide leadership and communication regarding technology.

   The technology director should communicate regularly with principals regarding site technology needs, and conduct department meetings every two weeks to keep other support staff informed of the district's technology goals and initiatives.

2. Assign the director of curriculum and instruction as chair of the TCC.

3. Ensure that the TCC is composed of a diverse group of representatives.

4. Assign the TCC to create a new five-year strategic technology plan. Development of the plan should include input from classified, certificated and management personnel, as well as from parents, community members and student representatives. The district should develop a list of committee responsibilities, including the following:

   • Review the goals and objectives of the technology services department.

   • Explore available funding sources.

   • Explore available educational systems.

   • Create and review site technology plans.

   • Submit a proposed technology plan and budget to the governing board for consideration.

5. Ensure that TCC members are invited to submit agenda items in advance, and that committee meetings address instructional support and the needs of users.

6. Assign the TCC to develop consensus among school sites about which technology programs and strategies are successful. This should include standards for implementing and using instructional technology materials that accompany new textbooks. Once identified, the standards should be adopted districtwide.

7. Make one staff member responsible for taking minutes at each TCC meeting, and ensure that committee members review and approve the minutes before they are distributed to other staff.

Staffing and Support

The district's information technology (IT) department is comprised of a network administrator and two computer support specialists. Technology personnel costs are paid from parcel tax revenues rather than from the district's unrestricted general fund. Both computer support specialists stated that their job descriptions do not accurately represent their daily functions and duties. In addition, the computer support specialist job title does not accurately convey the variety of services that these two staff members perform.

Technology support staff commented that department meetings are scheduled but are often pre-empted by other priorities. Staff members also indicated that they have not received annual employee evaluations.

Many staff stated that the computer support specialists address the majority of the district's desktop computer support needs. Some staff expressed frustration that the network administrator was often unavailable. The network administrator does not supervise the two computer support specialists daily. Instead, the computer support specialists manage their own daily tasks, and all three staff members work independently of each other. This has hindered the department's ability to establish and enforce consistent technology standards.

Extracurricular responsibilities have affected the network administrator's ability to complete needed support functions. For example, a new Cornell school site server was purchased two years ago but has never been installed.

There is little prioritization or scheduling of projects to be completed during the summer. Most technology departments schedule major projects for completion over the summer while instructional staff members are away. None of the 32 summer projects identified by the network administrator for 2007 were completed by the end of summer.

Site staff stated that it sometimes takes months for new equipment to be installed after it is delivered. The study team noted during fieldwork that some of the equipment awaiting installation could improve network performance.

The district's technology work order system does not provide users with updated information about their requests for support. There are also no rules regarding how users are to submit technology support requests. Some support requests are sent by e-mail and then cannot be tracked because they are never entered into the work order system.

Many school site staff stated that technology support service is disorganized, inefficient, and does not meet their needs. However, district office staff stated that support for users at that location is very timely.

Site staff members perceive that those who are more aggressive or frequent in their requests for technology support often receive priority. At the same time, technology support staff expressed frustration that the backlog of user support requests often prevents them from providing users more assistance with support needs that are genuine but for which there was no official request. A good work order system would alleviate some of these issues by giving users the ability to track the progress of service requests, and serve as a scheduling tool for technology support staff. In addition, giving technicians the authority to provide unscheduled support to users as needed would improve both customer service and the department's reputation.

Support staff members indicated frustration that the network administrator will assign certain support requests to himself and then take weeks or months to provide the requested support. Technology staff members stated that when questioned about the status of those requests, the network administrator typically indicated that he would attend to the issue. However, despite repeated assurances, the network administrator rarely followed through.

The IT department lacks an assignment schedule that places a technology support employee at a particular school site on assigned days. Principals indicated that technology support staff are frequently called away to provide support at other sites. In addition, technology support staff do not have district-issued cell phones or radios that would allow them to be contacted during critical situations regardless of their location.

> The district lacks an equipment replacement strategy to ensure that computers are updated regularly.

Equipment replacement and disposal

Technology support staff estimated that there are approximately 1,000 computers in the district. The district lacks an equipment replacement strategy to ensure that computers are updated regularly. A common strategy in the industry is to implement a five-year cycle so that 20% of all computers, or approximately 200 in the district's case, are replaced each fiscal year. Over time, this would ensure that none of the district's computers are more than five years old, and the lower average age of equipment would decrease the need for support.

The district lacks an equipment disposal policy to ensure that old equipment is taken out of service. As a result, outdated equipment remains in use, and maintaining it requires an inordinate amount of technology support time. Staff estimated that some of the district's legacy servers and some of the systems at the middle school site are approximately 10 years old. The district also lacks an equipment donation policy. A sample computer disposal policy is included in Appendix B, and a sample donation policy is included in Appendix C.

Technology support staff stated that all new computers go to the high school; older computers displaced by the new equipment are moved to the middle school; and computers displaced at the middle school are moved to the elementary schools. This results in computers being relocated several times and staying in use well beyond their useful life. Industry best practices include ensuring that a computer is not displaced more than twice.

Network and Standards

Many site users indicated that network performance is unacceptably slow and unreliable. Because the district's network is not configured as a single domain, support and administrative functions required to keep the network running are more time consuming than necessary. Users also stated that wireless access points at the school sites have been installed in a haphazard manner and that wireless connections are slow.

The district lacks districtwide standards for technology. For many years, sites have planned and purchased technology assets independently. As a result, there are disparate and incompatible systems, and potential collective purchasing power has been lost. The presence of nonstandard equipment on a network increases support costs. For example, technicians must carry twice the number of software drivers, create twice as many images for a computer that has malfunctioned, and receive twice the amount of training on the specifics of the machines that need to be sup-

ported. A standards-based approach to technology implementation would improve the technology department's ability to provide timely support.

The district's spam filter does not permit technology support staff to make global configuration changes; instead, users must make configuration changes to control spam. The district's Internet content filtering system is not configured properly and is provided through a filter that also serves as the district's firewall. The district recently purchased the 8e6 content filter but has not yet installed it on the network. This content filter can be customized according to individual instructional staff requirements, provide access to a wider area of Internet resources, and ensure continued student safety on the Internet.

The network administrator occasionally installs cabling associated with technology installations. Most districts contract out or have qualified maintenance staff perform this time-consuming and labor-intensive task.

Acceptable Use Policy

The district recently obtained board approval of its updated acceptable use policy (AUP). Not all staff members have signed an AUP indicating their acceptance of its terms and conditions. Some instructional staff members commented that students are required to sign an AUP prior to using district computers, but the requirement is not strongly enforced.

Staff Training

Technology support staff indicated that they rarely attend training courses, workshops, in-service sessions or conferences. It is important for technology support staff members to occasionally attend these events to update their skills, develop a network of colleagues, and foster new ideas for solving common problems.

Purchases

Not all technology purchases are routed through the technology department for approval. In many cases, site administrators have acted independently to meet site technology needs for equipment and support. Technology support staff members provide specifications for new equipment upon request; however, site administrators are not required to follow these specifications. Increased coordination of hardware acquisition would benefit schools and departments, and save site resources.

E-Rate Funding

The district contracts with an E-rate consultant to apply for federal E-rate funding. Applying for E-Rate discounts is complex, and users must be thoroughly familiar with technology and the numerous strict application filing deadlines. School districts increasingly contract with E-Rate consultants to ensure maximum discounts and minimum delays associated with inquiries from representatives of the organization overseeing this federal discount program. E-Rate consultants typically charge a flat rate per year, or a small percentage of the discount the district receives. If the latter, an amount not to be exceeded is established in advance.

The relatively small cost for these services can be justified by ensuring that an experienced consultant maximizes allowable discounts.

Recommendations

The district should:

1. Update the computer support specialists' job descriptions to ensure that they accurately indicate the daily functions and duties performed by these staff members.

2. Ensure that technology department meetings are held every two weeks so that staff members remain aware of issues, goals and initiatives.

3. Ensure that technology support staff receive annual employee evaluations.

4. Assign the technology director to work with the other two technology staff members to identify and establish desktop and network technology standards. The TCC should review and approve the standards before they are implemented districtwide.

5. Assign the technology director to work with the TCC to agree upon and prioritize technology projects to be completed over the summer. Because of the small number of technology staff, the director should identify only a few high priority projects so that support staff can focus their efforts and complete projects.

6. Ensure that all new equipment is scheduled for timely installation.

7. Purchase a commercially available work order system, and train staff who will use it so that they can submit and track support requests.

8. Develop a strategy for setting support priorities that ensures equitable support for the district office and school sites.

9. Ensure that technology support technicians have authority to provide unscheduled support to users as needed.

10. Ensure that all technology support requests are resolved in a timely manner. Support requests that require more than one week to resolve should be updated in the work order system to ensure that the user knows the status of the request.

11. Develop a site visitation schedule that places technology support technicians at specific sites on certain days. The schedule should be developed with the assistance of the TCC, and principals should be informed of the schedule so they can know in advance when a technician will be on site. The schedule should be interrupted only for critical emergencies.

12. Purchase push-to-talk radios or cellular telephones that will allow technology support staff members to be contacted and communicate with each other when working at sites.

13. Assign the TCC to develop an equipment replacement strategy.

14. Develop a computer equipment disposal policy.

15. Develop a computer donation policy.

16. Ensure that older computers are not displaced by newer systems more than twice. Computers that have been moved more than two times should be taken out of service and disposed of.

17. Consolidate the multiple network domains into a single domain to provide more efficient network administration and improve security.

18. Develop coordinated purchasing practices to obtain the maximum benefit from limited financial resources.

19. Review and enforce the standards used for hardware and software purchase approvals.

20. Update the AUP annually to ensure that it reflects changes and emerging trends in technology. Several examples of good AUP documents can be found on the Internet.

21. Ensure that every employee signs an AUP annually.

22. Purchase and install a new spam filter that includes global configuration controls to allow technology support staff to make districtwide changes.

23. Install and configure the 8e6 Internet content filter.

24. Ensure that either a qualified contractor or qualified staff members from the district's maintenance department perform cabling installations.

25. Encourage technology support staff to take advantage of professional development opportunities, including attendance at technology training courses, workshops, in-service sessions and conferences.

26. Continue contracting with an experienced E-Rate consultant to help complete applications accurately and ensure that critical deadlines are met.

Instructional Technology

Many certificated staff members expressed a perception that technology has become an obstacle to instruction. As a result, some teachers have chosen not to use technology because it interrupts instruction. For example, one teacher complained that an interesting science lesson using Internet-based resources was interrupted when the entire site network went down. Because a password was required to access the screens needed to correct the problem, the issue could not be resolved and the lesson could not be completed. Fifteen minutes were spent trying to resolve the issue, without success. This teacher lost not only valuable instructional time, but also any interest in using technology to deliver instruction in the future.

Some instructional staff members commented that when a new curriculum is adopted there is no apparent method for extending technology materials (e.g., assessment tools, research tools and simulations) to the classroom. Teachers stated that it is difficult to use the instructional materials that come with new curricula (such as for science) because not all classrooms are properly equipped and mobile computer carts are not always available. As a result, technology materials bundled with new curricula are sometimes not used to support instruction.

> Instructional users are interested in pursuing technology-enriched curricula, but indicated that in many cases they cannot because of antiquated computer equipment.

Instructional users are interested in pursuing technology-enriched curricula, but indicated that in many cases they cannot because of antiquated computer equipment. For example, the district recently purchased Microsoft Office 2007 using Microsoft Voucher funding; however, few district systems are capable of running the new application.

During interviews, principals shared concerns that their computer lab facilities are not capable of handling the technology resources bundled with new textbooks. Two of the district's elementary school sites do not have a computer lab. Effective instructional technology support is needs-based, often beginning with a survey to determine the needs at various school sites. It is also critically important to identify priorities for curricular goals, the needs of instructional users, and the resources required to meet these needs.

Many teachers indicated that they use their personal e-mail accounts rather than the district-sponsored e-mail application. This makes it impossible to communicate with teaching staff throughout the district regarding instructional issues, goals and initiatives.

Recommendations

The district should:

1. Assign the technology director to work with the director of curriculum and instruction to improve understanding of each department's needs, capabilities and limitations.

2. Assign the TCC to survey instructional staff to identify site-based instructional goals. Identified goals should be prioritized based on districtwide goals for integration of technology into the curriculum.

3. Assign the technology director to inventory the computer labs at each school site. Schools that do not have a computer lab should be provided with the resources to

develop a lab for instruction. All district computer labs should be capable of running the instructional applications that are bundled with new textbooks.

Administrative Technology

A district employee has been assigned to ensure that the student information system (SIS) backup tapes are rotated daily. However, staff members were unable to confirm that the tapes are rotated consistently or that the backup process was running successfully. As a result, the integrity of data backups is at risk.

Several SIS users indicated that logging on to the school SIS server takes an extremely long time and that they get faster access to the SIS from home. One attendance clerk expressed frustration that the SIS randomly shuts down. Principals stated that when they log in and enter a student name, the program automatically logs out. Other staff members indicated that multiple applications are running on the SIS, which could be hampering system performance.

The district uses the Squirrel Mail e-mail application for employee e-mail, but has not developed a standard name format for e-mail addresses, making it impossible to reliably e-mail district staff members using a standard name format. Many employees do not have a district e-mail account, opting instead to use applications such as Yahoo or Gmail. The district also lacks a global e-mail address book, making it impossible to send messages to all staff.

The high school was the first site to implement the district's new assessment software last year. Technology support staff have not confirmed that the network is functioning at a level that will support additional sites.

The district's SIS calling system is used to notify parents about student absences, but has not worked properly since the beginning of the 2008-09 school year.

Recommendations

The district should:

1. Ensure that the SIS backup is running successfully and that backup tapes are rotated daily.

2. Research and correct the problems reported by SIS users regarding slow system performance, random logouts, and shutdowns.

3. Develop a standard naming convention for all e-mail accounts.

4. Implement a more robust e-mail application, and ensure that all staff have access to a district e-mail account.

5. Contract with an external vendor to conduct a network audit, including evaluating the network to determine if additional sites can be brought online to use the new student assessment software. Any issues that negatively affect network performance should be corrected prior to bringing additional sites online.

6. Identify and resolve the problems with the SIS calling system.

Appendices

Appendix A

Technology Director Sample Job Description

Albany City Unified School District
Technology Director Sample Job Description

JOB TITLE: Technology Director, Technology Services

SUMMARY

Under the general direction of the Superintendent, assumes primary management responsibility for the Technology Services Department; ensures efficient delivery of information system services and technology resources for users districtwide; and performs other essential job-related work as required. The fundamental objective of this position is to ensure that computers and technology efforts are consistent with the overriding objective of effective delivery of quality educational services for the students, parents, and community.

DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The following are examples of duties related to this position:

1. Plans, organizes, leads, directs, develops, and monitors all aspects of the Technology Services Department; supervises and provides direction to other technology department staff members.
2. Directs and facilitates ongoing districtwide needs assessment and development of technology implementation plan to ensure delivery of efficient and effective day-to-day and ongoing information system and technology services districtwide.
3. Directs research, evaluation, assessment and testing functions, and district standardized testing program.
4. Oversees, develops, and implements the district plan for information systems and technology. Sets policy for the purchase and repair of computers, peripherals, and audiovisual equipment.
5. Directs, facilitates, and monitors information system implementation efforts to ensure that the Department keeps pace with day-to-day and future needs. Assures compliance with graduation requirements. Guides and assists departments and sites in the development of appropriate educational technology implementation and curriculum.
6. Maintains frequent group and one-on-one communication and works in a collaborative manner with department directors and other administrators and professionals districtwide to facilitate decision making and problem solving in the area of

computers and technology services and assessment.

7. Oversees progress toward objectives relating to migration and other project management efforts.

8. Oversees the management of the interconnection of operating systems, desktop computer applications, network protocols, and mainframe applications.

9. Reviews, monitors, and facilitates negotiations with vendors and agencies to provide cost-effective resources in terms of day-to-day demands and longer term goals and objectives.

10. Complies with applicable state, local, and federal rules, regulations, and laws, as well as the policies and procedures of the district.

11. Establishes and maintains effective working relationships with a variety of groups, including teachers, students, administrators, coworkers, vendors, consultants, and others as required.

12. Demonstrates and models safe, prudent, and healthful work behaviors and practices; identifies and works toward the elimination of unsafe or unhealthful work area conditions.

13. Performs other essential job-related work as required.

SUPERVISORY RESPONSIBILITIES

Assign and supervise of all technology department employees. Carries out supervisory responsibilities in accordance with the districts policies and applicable laws. Specific requirements include, but are not limited to, the following:

1. Manages substantial data bases and other information such that the quality, quantity, time lines, and facility of data retrieval and reporting support district and site needs.

2. Manages resources so that the technology department provides timely and essential customer service, training and user support.

3. Utilizes knowledge sufficient to manage complex data base systems, network management [LAN and WAN environment] and protocols, intranet and Internet access, mini-computer operations, and multiple hardware and software platforms.

4. Manages and directs systems that support and assist users at all sites in computer, software, network, and system functions.

5. Develops and manages long-range planning for technology, infrastructure, and network environment to facilitate technology use districtwide.

6. Manages services that provide support through multiple methodologies, including but not limited to, help desk, on site training, equipment repair, and essential data retrieval for management purposes.

7. Clearly commands knowledge and expertise sufficient to facilitate the data needed to support the district's fiscal services, business services, human resources, and student services departments and/or divisions.

8. Manage districtwide network that supports voice, video and data transmission.

QUALIFICATIONS

<u>Education and Experience</u>
Administrative Credential - master's degree preferred.

Evidence of successful experience and management expertise in an educational setting or similar-sized organization involving computers and technology management.

KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS, AND ABILITIES
Typical qualifying knowledge, skills, and abilities would include:

Knowledge, skills, and abilities in the area of information systems and technology resources; principles, practices, and languages used in communication oriented computer systems and programming; the capabilities, capacities, and limitations of computers and peripheral equipment; comparative equipment, planning, and cost control; principles and practices of accounting, statistics, and school district organization, activities, and requirements; principles of administration, human resource administration, departmental budgeting, supervision, and training.

Language Skills. Ability to read, analyze, and interpret common scientific and technical journals, financial reports, and legal documents. Ability to respond to common inquiries or complaints from customers, regulatory agencies, or members of the business community. Ability to write speeches and articles for publication. Ability to effectively present information to top management, public groups, and/or Governing Board.

Mathematical Skills. Ability to apply advanced mathematical concepts to resolve managerial issues and problems. Ability to understand mathematical operations for such tasks as schedules, time lines, hourly commitments, payrolls, probable outcomes, and forecasting *I* estimating.

Reasoning Ability. Ability to define problems, collect data, establish facts, and draw valid conclusions. Ability to interpret an extensive variety of technical instructions in mathematical or diagram form and deal with several abstract and concrete variables.

Physical Demands. The physical demands described here are representative of those that must be met by an employee to successfully perform the essential functions of this job. Reasonable accommodations may be made to enable individuals with disabilities to perform the essential functions.

While performing the duties of this job, the employee is frequently required to walk and sit. Equal time needs to be spent observing employees job performance and accomplishments versus being assigned to only office work on an eight hour basis.

WORK ENVIRONMENT

Work is performed primarily inside an office or office/laboratory environment with occasional exposure to the elements and cleaning solvents/chemicals. Requires occasional

lifting of up to 50 pounds and the full range of fingering, talking, hearing, visual, and other physical and mental work demands.

Appendix B

Sample Computer Equipment Disposal Policy

Computer Equipment Disposal Policy
All surplus district-owned computers, faxes, copy machines, cell phones, and other electronic equipment with printed circuit boards shall be recycled by the district's selected and approved vendor. In addition, all computers or servers declared surplus that contain hard drives shall be wiped clean to at least DOD Level 3 or shall be destroyed by magnetic degaussing.

Rationale:
The State of California recently determined that discarded televisions and computer monitors are classified as hazardous waste, unless properly recycled by a state licensed facility. Monitors and terminals contain from 4 to 8 pounds of lead, and circuit boards of both computers and printers contain lead solder, mercury and cadmium. The proper disposal of this equipment is essential to avoid liability and to be an environmentally responsible corporate citizen. In addition, computer hard disks may contain personal, confidential, and legally protected information that is still readable even when the files have been erased or the hard drive reformatted. Failure to destroy this information could lead to unauthorized access, identity theft, and liability to the district.

The key points of this policy include:

1. All non-working /obsolete computer products should be disposed of in an environmentally sound manner
2. Monitors and terminals are always a hazardous waste (or household hazardous waste, if from household use).
3. Other components of a computer system (e.g., circuit boards, keyboards, mice) could be hazardous depending on their lead, mercury, or cadmium content, which can vary from product to product.

Procedure:
1. Sites or departments that wish to declare computer equipment surplus shall send an email to the Technology Department listing description, serial number, asset tag number, and operational condition of the unit(s).

2. Equipment will be picked up by Technology Department staff.

3. Technology Department staff will package and ship the equipment to a center where it will be recycled in an environmentally safe and responsible manner.

4. The hard drive will be overwritten to at least DOD Level 3 standards, or will be destroyed by magnetic degaussing upon request.

Appendix C

Sample Computer Equipment Donation Policy

Computer Equipment Donation Policy
Albany City Unified School District (ACUSD) appreciates offers to donate used computer equipment. The following guidelines apply to acceptance of donated equipment.

1. All equipment accepted by ACUSD should be in good working order. If the equipment is not in good working order, the accepting department or school assumes responsibility for the costs of putting the equipment in good working order.

    Comment: Often a donor wishes to dispose of equipment that is not in working order. They may have the belief that giving it to ACUSD is a positive way to dispose of it and that the district can make use of it. Unfortunately, there are often significant costs the district would incur to return the equipment to working order. For this reason, it is generally advisable to decline equipment that is not in initial good working order. Technology department staff members may be able to assist district personnel in determining whether a potential donation is in good working order.

2. Whenever possible, accept only equipment that is supported by ACUSD, as defined in the hardware and networking sections of the district Technology Plan document. If the equipment is fully supported by ACUSD and is in good working order when received, then the district will maintain the equipment just as if it had been originally purchased by the district. If the equipment is not a supported item, the school or department that accepts the donation assumes responsibility for costs of keeping the equipment in good working order.

    Comment: Costs for repairing a piece of equipment that the district does not service can be substantial. Replacement of a computer motherboard or hard disk drive, for example, could cost more than the actual value of the equipment itself. In some cases, donated equipment can be viewed as "disposable," with the intent to use it until it ceases to function, and then dispose of it.

3. Technology department staff members can assist with the setup and configuration of donated equipment that complies with the district hardware standards. For equipment that does not comply with the standards, technology support technicians can assist with the setup and configuration as long as the time required does not substantially exceed what would be required to set up equipment that is in compliance with district standards. If the technicians determine that extraordinary time will be required to set up and configure a non-standard piece of hardware, they will advise the accepting department or school that assistance will not be available.

Comment: Non-standard equipment can present serious challenges when inter-connecting with district systems and networks. A substantial amount of time can be spent trying to locate software drivers and troubleshoot systems to make them work properly with other district systems. At some point the time invested to set up and configure the equipment exceeds the value of the equipment.

3. Donated network equipment should not be connected to the district network without specific permission and direction from district network support techni-cians. Donated computers should only be connected to a network after review and approval by district technicians.

    Comment: Networks are complex systems that require careful design and main-tenance. The district strives to install networks that will be reliable and stable. A piece of networking equipment that is malfunctioning or improperly installed can destroy the integrity of the entire network and cause a network failure that impacts many students, staff and services. Under no conditions should anyone connect a hub, switch, router, or other device that affects the topography of a network without direct permission and direction from district network support technicians. Donated computers may contain network cards that are incompatible with district systems. Always check with an IT technician before attempting to connect an untested device to the network. Failure to do this may cause failure of your site network or even the entire wide area network. Technology department technicians are instructed to remove and/or confiscate unauthorized devices connected to any district network.

4. Make sure the donor provides software licenses for any donated software, includ-ing the operating system software.

    Comment: The district makes every effort to be in compliance with copyright laws. If software is loaded on a computer, proof of ownership or license for that software must also be provided. It is not uncommon for a donor to donate a computer that has the Windows operating system and copies of other commercial software already installed. Without proof of license, these software items must be removed or purchased by the district. Since every computer requires an operating system, be sure to understand if you are getting a license for Windows with the computer (Macintosh computers always retain their original OS license), or if the donor has retained the license. If the donor has retained the license for Windows (or never had a legal license), a copy will need to be purchased before the com-puter can be used. This cost should be considered before accepting the donation.

5. If the donor requires a receipt for their donation, provide them with a letter listing the make, model and serial number of donated items. It is the responsi-bility of the donor, not ACUSD, to determine the value of donated items.

Comment: A simple thank-you letter that lists the items that have been donated are appreciated by most donors and useful in many cases for tax purposes. It is not the responsibility of ACUSD personnel to provide the donor with the appraised value of the equipment.

7.   Items offered for donation at the district level will be reviewed by technology department staff for acceptance. Distribution of donated items to departments or schools will be handled by Assistant Superintendent. A donor may choose to designate a specific school or department to receive the donated items. If undesignated, the Assistant Superintendent will determine appropriate distribution by an assessment of need, or by soliciting proposals for usage of the equipment and selecting the recipient(s) on the merit of their proposal(s). A school or department may accept a donation directly if guidelines in this document are followed.

8.   Any donated computer equipment, regardless of value, or other items valued at over $500 should be added to the fixed assets system. Final recipient of donated equipment should provide a list, including the source of the donation, serial numbers, descriptions, models, brands, and approximate values to appropriate personnel in the Business Office whereupon bar codes will be provided for the recipient to attach to the equipment for inventory control purposes.

9.   Technology department staff members can answer questions about the advisability of accepting donations.

Appendix D

Study Agreement

FCMAT
FISCAL CRISIS & MANAGEMENT
ASSISTANCE TEAM

CSIS California School Information Services

FISCAL CRISIS & MANAGEMENT ASSISTANCE TEAM
STUDY AGREEMENT
August 21, 2008

The FISCAL CRISIS AND MANAGEMENT ASSISTANCE TEAM (FCMAT), hereinafter referred to as the Team, and the Albany City Unified School District hereinafter referred to as the District, mutually agree as follows:

1. ## BASIS OF AGREEMENT

   The Team provides a variety of services to school districts and county offices of education upon request. The District has requested that the Team provide for the assignment of professionals to study specific aspects of the Albany Unified School District operations. These professionals may include staff of the Team, County Offices of Education, the California State Department of Education, school districts, or private contractors. All work shall be performed in accordance with the terms and conditions of this Agreement.

2. ## SCOPE OF THE WORK

   A. ### Scope and Objectives of the Study

   The scope and objectives of this study are to:

   1. Review the district's administrative technology implementation and make recommendations for improvement.
   2. Review the district's instructional technology implementation and make recommendations for improvement
   3. Review the district's network infrastructure and make recommendations for improvement.
   4. Review the district's staffing and organizational structure for technology services delivery and make recommendations for improvement.

   B. ### Services and Products to be Provided

   1) Orientation Meeting - The Team will conduct an orientation session at the District to brief District management and supervisory personnel on the procedures of the Team and on the purpose and schedule of the study.

   2) On-site Review - The Team will conduct an on-site review at the District office and at school sites if necessary.

3) Progress Reports - The Team will hold an exit meeting at the conclusion of the on-site review to inform the District of significant findings and recommendations to that point.

4) Exit Letter - The Team will issue an exit letter approximately 10 days after the exit meeting detailing significant findings and recommendations to date and memorializing the topics discussed in the exit meeting.

5) Draft Reports - Sufficient copies of a preliminary draft report will be delivered to the District administration for review and comment.

6) Final Report - Sufficient copies of the final study report will be delivered to the District following completion of the review.

7) Follow-Up Support – Six months after the completion of the study, FCMAT will return to the District, if requested, to confirm the District's progress in implementing the recommendations included in the report, at no costs. Status of the recommendations will be documented to the District in a FCMAT Management Letter.

3. PROJECT PERSONNEL

The study team will be supervised by Anthony L. Bridges, Deputy Executive Officer, Fiscal Crisis and Management Assistance Team, Kern County Superintendent of Schools Office. The study team may also include:

A. Andrew Prestage, FCMAT Management Analyst
B. Kris Saunders, CSIS Network Systems Engineer
C. Bob Dragge, FCMAT Technology Consultant

Other equally qualified consultants will be substituted in the event one of the above noted individuals is unable to participate in the study.

4. PROJECT COSTS

The cost for studies requested pursuant to E.C. 42127.8(d)(1) shall be:

A. $500.00 per day for each Team Member while on site, conducting fieldwork at other locations, preparing and presenting reports, or participating in meetings.

B. All out-of-pocket expenses, including travel, meals, lodging, etc. The District will be billed for the daily rate and expenses of the independent consultant, only. Based on the elements noted in section 2 A, the total cost of the study is estimated at $6,500. The District will be invoiced at actual costs, with 50% of the estimated cost due following the completion of the on-site review and the remaining amount due upon acceptance of the final report by the District

C. Any change to the scope will affect the estimate of total cost.

Payments for FCMAT services are payable to Kern County Superintendent of Schools-Administrative Agent.

5. RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE DISTRICT

A. The District will provide office and conference room space while on-site reviews are in progress.
B. The District will provide the following (if requested):

   1) A map of the local area
   2) Existing policies, regulations and prior reports addressing the study request
   3) Current organizational charts
   4) Current and four (4) prior year's audit reports
   5) Any documents requested on a supplemental listing

C. The District Administration will review a preliminary draft copy of the study. Any comments regarding the accuracy of the data presented in the report or the practicability of the recommendations will be reviewed with the Team prior to completion of the final report.

Pursuant to EC 45125.1(c), representatives of FCMAT will have limited contact with District pupils. The District shall take appropriate steps to comply with EC 45125.1(c).

6. PROJECT SCHEDULE

The following schedule outlines the planned completion dates for key study milestones:
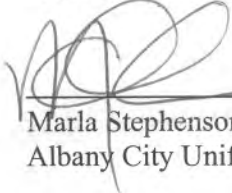
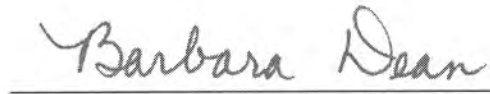|	
Orientation:	*to be determined*
Staff Interviews:	*to be determined*
Exit Interviews:	*to be determined*
Preliminary Report Submitted:	*to be determined*
Final Report Submitted:	*to be determined*
Board Presentation:	*to be determined*
Follow-Up Support:	*If requested*

7.   CONTACT PERSON

Please print name of contact person: Laurie Harden, Assistant Superintendent

Telephone (510) 558-3751   FAX (510) 559-6560

Internet Address laurie.harden@albany.k12.ca.us

_____   9/4/08
Marla Stephenson, Superintendent   Date
Albany City Unified School District

Barbara Dean
_____
Barbara Dean, Deputy Administrative Officer   August 21, 2008
Fiscal Crisis and Management Assistance Team

In keeping with the provisions of AB1200, the County Superintendent will be notified of this agreement between the District and FCMAT and will receive a copy of the final report.