



FISCAL CRISIS & MANAGEMENT
ASSISTANCE TEAM

Special Education Review

January 20, 2023



Fairfield-Suisun Unified School District

Michael H. Fine
Chief Executive Officer

January 20, 2023

Sheila McCabe, Assistant Superintendent of Educational Services
Fairfield-Suisun Unified School District
2490 Hilborn Road
Fairfield, CA 94534

Dear Assistant Superintendent McCabe,

In July 2022, the Fairfield-Suisun Unified School District and the Fiscal Crisis and Management Assistance Team (FCMAT) entered into an agreement for FCMAT to review the district's special education program. The agreement stated that FCMAT would perform the following:

1. Review the organizational structure and staffing of the special education department in the district's central office to determine whether administration, clerical and administrative support, program specialists, teachers on special assignment, and overall functionality are aligned with those of districts of comparable size and structure, and make recommendation for greater efficiencies, if needed.
2. Analyze staffing and caseloads for related service providers, including but not limited to speech pathologists, psychologists, occupational/physical therapists, behavior specialists, adaptive physical education, and other staff who may be related services providers, and make recommendations for improvement, if any.

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

FCMAT appreciates the opportunity to serve the Fairfield-Suisun Unified School District and extends thanks to all the staff for their assistance during fieldwork.

Sincerely,



Michael H. Fine
Chief Executive Officer

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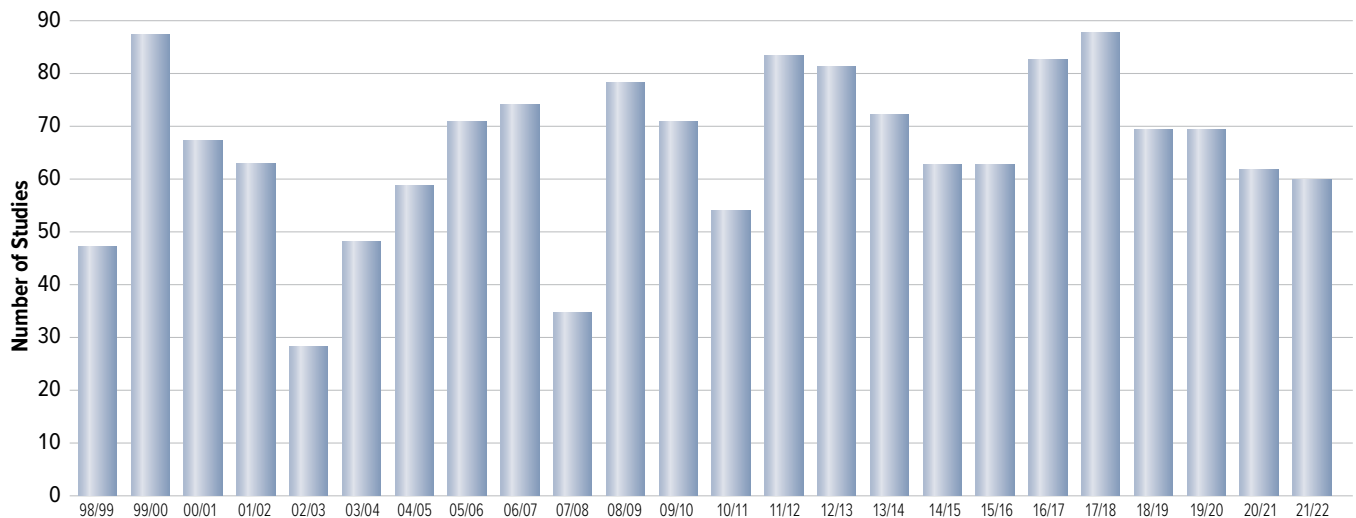
About FCMAT

FCMAT’s primary mission is to assist California’s local TK-14 educational agencies to identify, prevent, and resolve financial, human resources and data management challenges. FCMAT provides fiscal and data management assistance, professional development training, product development and other related school business and data services. FCMAT’s fiscal and management assistance services are used not just to help avert fiscal crisis, but to promote sound financial practices, support the training and development of chief business officials and help to create efficient organizational operations. FCMAT’s data management services are used to help local educational agencies (LEAs) meet state reporting responsibilities, improve data quality, and inform instructional program decisions.

FCMAT may be requested to provide fiscal crisis or management assistance by a school district, charter school, community college, county office of education, the state superintendent of public instruction, or the Legislature.

When a request or assignment is received, FCMAT assembles a study team that works closely with the LEA to define the scope of work, conduct on-site fieldwork and provide a written report with findings and recommendations to help resolve issues, overcome challenges and plan for the future.

Studies by Fiscal Year



FCMAT has continued to make adjustments in the types of support provided based on the changing dynamics of TK-14 LEAs and the implementation of major educational reforms. FCMAT also develops and provides numerous publications, software tools, workshops and professional learning opportunities to help LEAs operate more effectively and fulfill their fiscal oversight and data management responsibilities. The California School Information Services (CSIS) division of FCMAT assists the California Department of Education with the implementation of the California Longitudinal Pupil Achievement Data System (CALPADS). CSIS also hosts and maintains the Ed-Data website (www.ed-data.org) and provides technical expertise to the Ed-Data partnership: the California Department of Education, EdSource and FCMAT.

FCMAT was created by Assembly Bill (AB) 1200 in 1992 to assist LEAs to meet and sustain their financial obligations. AB 107 in 1997 charged FCMAT with responsibility for CSIS and its statewide data management work. AB 1115 in 1999 codified CSIS’ mission.

AB 1200 is also a statewide plan for county offices of education and school districts to work together locally to improve fiscal procedures and accountability standards. AB 2756 (2004) provides specific responsibilities to FCMAT with regard to districts that have received emergency state loans.

In January 2006, Senate Bill 430 (charter schools) and AB 1366 (community colleges) became law and expanded FCMAT's services to those types of LEAs.

On September 17, 2018 AB 1840 was signed into law. This legislation changed how fiscally insolvent districts are administered once an emergency appropriation has been made, shifting the former state-centric system to be more consistent with the principles of local control, and providing new responsibilities to FCMAT associated with the process.

Since 1992, FCMAT has been engaged to perform more than 1,400 reviews for LEAs, including school districts, county offices of education, charter schools and community colleges. The Kern County Superintendent of Schools is the administrative agent for FCMAT. The team is led by Michael H. Fine, Chief Executive Officer, with funding derived through appropriations in the state budget and a modest fee schedule for charges to requesting agencies.

Introduction

Background

The Fairfield-Suisun Unified School District is located in Northern California between San Francisco and Sacramento. According to [DataQuest](#), 20,715 K-12 students were enrolled in the district in 2021-22. The district has 30 schools, including three high schools, four middle schools, 19 elementary schools, five alternative schools, and one adult school. The district is a member of the Solano County Special Education Local Plan Area (SELPA), which includes five school districts (Benicia, Dixon, Fairfield-Suisun, Travis, and Vacaville) and the Solano County Office of Education. In 2021-22, 14.96% of the district's students were identified as English learners, and 12.24% of the district's K-12 students were identified as requiring special education, compared to 12.65% of K-12 students statewide.

In July 2022, the Fairfield-Suisun 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 special education program. The study agreement specifies that FCMAT will perform the following.

1. Review the organizational structure and staffing of the special education department in the district's central office to determine whether administration, clerical and administrative support, program specialists, teachers on special assignment, and overall functionality are aligned with those of districts of comparable size and structure, and make recommendation for greater efficiencies, if needed.
2. Analyze staffing and caseloads for related service providers, including but not limited to speech pathologists, psychologists, occupational/physical therapists, behavior specialists, adaptive physical education, and other staff who may be related services providers, and make recommendations for improvement, if any.

Study and Report Guidelines

FCMAT conducted in-person interviews on September 15 and 16, 2022 with district and school administrators, district clerical staff, coordinators, and related service providers. Following fieldwork, FCMAT reviewed and analyzed data and documents. This report is the result of those activities and is divided into the following sections:

- Executive Summary
- Background and Context – Transforming Education to Improve Outcomes for Students with Disabilities
- District Organization and Structure to Support Students Receiving Special Education Services
 - Ways to Support the Organizational Structure
 - Staffing to Support Students Who Receive Special Education Services
- Special Education Student Identification and Outcomes
 - District Special Education Identification Rate
 - District Outcomes for Students Who Receive Special Education Services
- Related Service Provider Staffing and Caseloads

FCMAT's reports focus on systems and processes that may need improvement. Those that may be functioning well are generally not commented on in FCMAT's reports. In writing its reports, FCMAT uses the Associated Press Stylebook, a comprehensive guide to usage and accepted style that emphasizes conciseness and clarity. In addition, this guide emphasizes plain language, discourages the use of jargon and capitalizes relatively few terms.

Study Team

The study team was composed of the following members:

Carolynne Beno, Ed.D., CFE
FCMAT Intervention Specialist

Nelarie Romo
FCMAT Consultant

John Lotze
FCMAT Technical Writer

All team members reviewed the draft report to confirm accuracy and achieve consensus on the final recommendations.

Executive Summary

Approximately five years ago, the district revised its structures and systems to support students who receive special education services. The Educational Services Department's structure is designed to promote open communication, collaboration and shared responsibility between general and special education administrators in support of all students while retaining a special education department. The district's vision is for a special education teacher to interact with his or her principal for support; the principal in turn collaborates with his or her educational services coordinator for assistance. Educational services coordinators may consult with the special education coordinator, a special education assistant director, the senior director, special education, or with the senior director, elementary or secondary education, depending on their support need. FCMAT believes the district's Education Services Department is well organized and structured to support positive outcomes for students with disabilities because of its alignment with concepts from the 2015 ONE SYSTEM report, including that students with disabilities are general education students first, that integrated systems should be used, and that all educators have a collective responsibility for all students.

During interviews, staff reported a need to clarify whom to contact for support and who has decision-making responsibilities. It would benefit the district to create and distribute a document such as a matrix or decision tree to clarify the roles and responsibilities of the special education administrators, educational services coordinators and site principals so staff know whom they should contact for different types of questions or support. In addition, most staff interviewed reported their job orientation and training experience was inadequate to address the needs of their position in areas such as electronic data management systems, continuum of service options for students in special education, and district and department processes and procedures. The district needs to develop a comprehensive job orientation and training plan.

FCMAT conducted a survey of several unified school districts in California with enrollments and unduplicated pupil percentages (UPP) similar to those of the district. FCMAT requested information on central office special education administrator and administrative support positions. The district employs fewer special education administrators in its central office than comparison districts (9.0 full-time equivalent positions, or FTE, compared to an average of 10.52 FTE). FCMAT recommends the district hire an additional 1.0 FTE central office administrator. The district has more special education administrative support positions in the central office than comparison districts (6.0 FTE compared to 4.55 FTE). However, during interviews, the educational services coordinators expressed a need for administrative support. The district should evaluate how to use its present support staff in the Educational Services Department to support the educational services coordinators.

FCMAT analyzed the district's related service provider staffing. Related services are the developmental, corrective, and other supportive services required to help a child with a disability benefit from special education (34 CFR 300.34). FCMAT found the district's related service provider staffing adequate. The district should develop a vision and common expectations districtwide for how school psychologists and speech and language pathologists are part of one coherent system to support all students. The district should monitor speech and language pathologist, adapted physical education, occupational therapist, and school nurse caseload averages and student needs annually to determine if staffing changes are warranted.

Findings and Recommendations

Background and Context – Transforming Education to Improve Outcomes for Students with Disabilities

Over the past two decades, educational reform movements emphasizing accountability have highlighted achievement gaps among students based on factors such as race and ethnicity, family income, language ability, and disability. Although some progress has been made in California to reduce inequities in educational outcomes for these student groups, students with disabilities remain among the lowest performing subgroups. California convened a statewide special education task force in 2013 to end persistent poor outcomes for students with disabilities, including infants, toddlers, preschoolers, students in California K–12 schools and those up to age 22. The task force was to examine the complex systems for serving students with disabilities and forward recommendations to the State Board of Education, the Commission on Teacher Credentialing, and the California Department of Education (CDE). In March 2015, the task force’s report, One System: Reforming Education to Serve ALL Students, Report of California’s Statewide Task Force on Special Education was published. The executive summary can be found at the following web address: <https://www.casponline.org/pdfs/legislative/Executive%20Summary%20W.%20CONTACTS-1.pdf>.

The 2015 one system report stated:

California’s current policies, including funding, credentialing, and a range of service delivery options, tend to ‘bolt on’ special education to general education. While there are certainly examples throughout the state of well-integrated models of supports, these are the exceptions rather the norm. Our prevailing model has made it acceptable, and in some instances seem desirable, to isolate special education as a unique and separate system that parallels general education.

The 2015 one system report explained the way special education operates as its own separate program disregards current research, which suggests that “inclusive practices, integrated systems, and coherence are essential to provide high-quality, cost-effective special education programs within (rather than apart from) a well-articulated system of education.”

The 2015 one system report identified the following seven distinct and interconnected areas of focus to improve outcomes for students with disabilities:

1. Early Learning
2. Evidence-Based School and Classroom Practices
3. Educator Preparation and Professional Learning
4. Assessment
5. Accountability
6. Family and Student Engagement
7. Special Education Financing

Among the areas of focus and many recommendations in the 2015 one system report was the predominant theme that California’s special education system would improve if one coherent system was designed to address the needs of all students. In this one coherent system, general education and special education work together to address the needs of all students. The taskforce report explained:

In a coherent system of education, all children and students with disabilities are considered general education students first; and all educators, regardless of which students they are assigned to serve, have a collective responsibility to see that all children receive the education and the supports they need to maximize their development and potential, allowing them to participate meaningfully in the nation’s economy and democracy.

The 2015 one system report identified a need to transform our understanding of special education from being “a place where students go to receive more or different services, to a viewpoint that includes special education services as one of many programs of support under the umbrella of general education.

In 2020, the CDE tasked WestEd with reporting on policy and system changes that have affected students with disabilities since the 2015 one system report. The 2021 WestEd report, *California’s Progress Toward Achieving ONE SYSTEM: Reforming Education to Serve ALL Students*, explains that the 2015 one system report was intended to create momentum and discourse in California’s efforts to reform special education. To evaluate special education reform efforts, WestEd examined the 2015 one system report’s seven focus areas and made additional recommendations in each area. WestEd concluded, “numerous improvements have been made to California’s general and special education landscapes.”

Using the 2015 one system and 2021 West Ed reports as a guide, districts should focus on inclusive practices, integrated systems, and coherence to develop a well-articulated system of education to support positive student outcomes for all students. Districts should recognize that students who receive special education services are general education students first and should operate with the understanding that special education services are one of the many programs of support under the umbrella of general education, not a place where students go to receive more or different services.

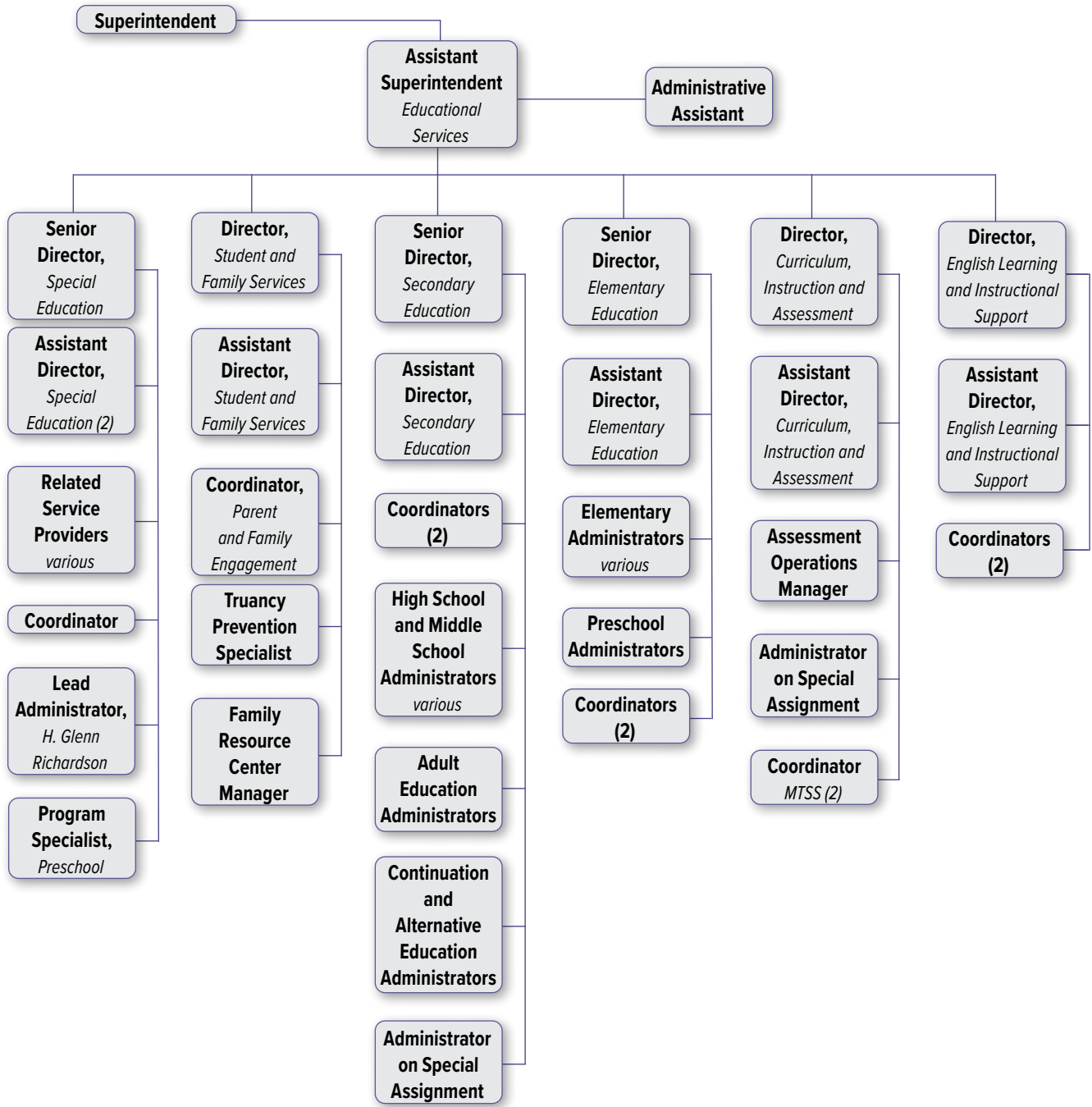
District Organization and Structure to Support Students Who Receive Special Education Services

Educational Services Department Structure

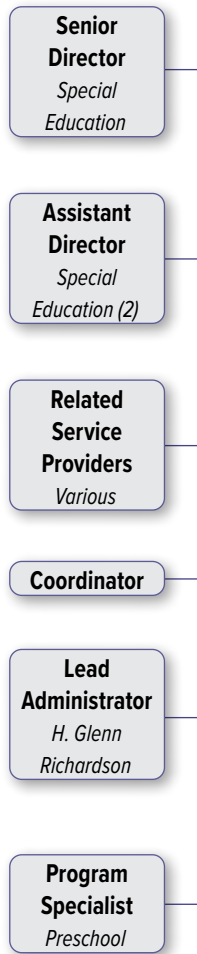
Approximately five years ago, the district revised its structures and systems to support students who receive special education services. The district's new approach was aligned with several important themes from the 2015 one system report, including the following:

- All students with disabilities are considered general education students first.
- It is undesirable to isolate special education as a unique and separate system that parallels general education. In a coherent system, general education and special education work together to meet the needs of all students.
- All educators have a collective responsibility to see that all children receive the education and the supports they need.
- Special education services are one of the many programs of support under the umbrella of general education, not a place where students go to receive more or different services.

Under the district's revised structure, the assistant superintendent of educational services supports six administrators, each of whom is in a director role and all of whom have a shared responsibility to support all students, including students who receive special education services. Three of the directors (senior director, special education; senior director, secondary education; and senior director, elementary education) have job responsibilities that directly support students who receive special education services. The district's Educational Services Department is organized as shown below.



The Educational Services Department’s structure is designed to promote open communication, collaboration and shared responsibility between general and special education administrators in support of all students while retaining a special education department. The district’s Special Education Department is organized as follows.



Job responsibilities related to supporting students who receive special education services are divided between the Educational Services Department’s three senior directors. Their roles and responsibilities related to special education are divided as follows:

	Job Responsibilities Related to Special Education	Administrators Supervised, Evaluated and Supported
Senior Director, Elementary Education	Guiding program design and implementation for all students in alignment with overarching broad course of study and board policy Special education school site teacher staffing recommendations based on enrollment projections Facility placement of regional special education programs Guiding discipline decisions for all students, including students in special education	School Principals Educational Services Coordinator Special Education Teacher on Special Assignment
Senior Director, Secondary Education	Guiding program design and implementation for all students in alignment with overarching broad course of study and board policy Special education school site teacher staffing recommendations based on enrollment projections Facility placement of regional special education programs Guiding discipline decisions for all students, including students in special education	School Principals Educational Services Coordinators (2)

	Job Responsibilities Related to Special Education	Administrators Supervised, Evaluated and Supported
Senior Director, Special Education	General oversight of all special education programs Nonpublic school oversight Litigation reduction and management Legal and technical support Fee for service Contracts Regional programs Special education compliance / data identified noncompliant (DINC) Special Education Plan	Special Education Assistant Director, Secondary Special Education Assistant Director, Elementary Special Education Coordinator Principal, H Glenn Richardson School (Special Education School) Program Specialist, Preschool

Source: District information.

The following positions work under the senior director, special education:

- Two special education assistant directors of secondary and elementary, who perform duties such as supporting and evaluating related service provider teams, attending contentious IEP meetings, case managing students who attend nonpublic schools, and monitoring IEP compliance.
- One special education coordinator, who performs duties such as supporting the speech language pathologist team, coordinating IEPs for students who attend private schools, and case managing students who attend nonpublic schools.
- One special education program specialist, who performs duties such as supporting district preschool programs, overseeing the child find/referral process, and facilitating student transitions from Part C infant/toddler services to district Part B preschool programs.

The following positions work under the senior directors, elementary and secondary education:

- Four educational services coordinators, who directly support students receiving special education services and perform duties such as supporting school principals, performing case and educational benefit reviews, and aiding in special education enrollment and project work.
- School principals, who perform duties related to special education such as supporting the child find process, serving as administrative designee at IEP meetings, assisting with positive behavior supports, making discipline decisions, addressing concerns and complaints, scheduling courses, and hiring, supervising, evaluating and scheduling special education teachers.

The district’s vision is for each special education teacher to interact with his or her principal for support. In turn, each principal collaborates with his or her educational services coordinator for assistance. Educational services coordinators may consult with the special education coordinator, a special education assistant director, the senior director, special education, or the senior director, elementary or secondary education, depending on their support need.

During interviews, some administrators reported a need to better understand their role and job duties. Before FCMAT’s visit, the district had identified decision making as an area needing clarification. Certain administrators had reported not fully understanding their job responsibilities; however, the district came to understand that these individuals did not recognize what decisions they could make. The district is developing a decision-making matrix to clarify who makes what decisions. This is part of the special education department’s shift from a top-down vertical structure to a culture of shared responsibility for decision

making. As a next step, it would benefit the district to consider developing a decision tree so staff know whom to contact for support. The district may be able to add the educational services coordinators and school principals to its Special Education Administrative Responsibilities chart or adapt its decision-making matrix to meet this need.

FCMAT believes the district's education services department is well organized and structured to support positive outcomes for students with disabilities because of its alignment with concepts from the 2015 one system report. These include the concept that students with disabilities are general education students first, the use of integrated systems, and a shared belief that all educators have a collective responsibility for all students.

Ways to Support the Organizational Structure

In addition to clarifying whom to contact for support and decision-making responsibilities, the district will need to focus on building the capacity of staff to make informed decisions regarding special education by focusing on its job orientation and training, and ongoing professional development.

Job Orientation and Training

Most staff reported their job orientation and training was inadequate to address the needs of their position in areas such as electronic data management systems, continuum of service options for students in special education, and district and department processes and procedures. Certain related service provider leads reported providing support for new staff on their teams, but their efforts duplicated activities of other leads and thus did not appear to be coordinated. The district needs to develop a comprehensive job orientation and training plan that addresses at least the following areas:

- The district and its Educational Services Department's mission, vision, and all means all philosophy (meaning that all students, including those with disabilities, are treated equitably and are the responsibility of all staff).
- The district's organizational structure and departments, department functions, and a delineation of the support that different departments provide.
- The Educational Services Department's organizational structure, staffing and functions, and an explanation of the support different positions provide.
- Training for staff who use electronic data management and reporting systems such as the Aeries Student Information System, the Special Education Information System (SEIS), and the California Longitudinal Pupil Achievement Data System (CALPADS).
- An overview of the continuum of services options for special education.
- Key district policies and procedures.

Professional Development

Staff reported having access to professional development, but several administrators indicated a need for professional development aimed at building their capacity to make informed decisions regarding special education. Professional development regarding special education laws and compliance, and training for administrative designees, was specifically requested. It would benefit the district to conduct a needs assessment annually with central office and site-based staff and prioritize professional development that

focuses on supporting its all means all vision. The district should continue to provide professional development in the following areas:

- Universal design for learning (UDL)
- Special education evidence-based practices and methods
- Special education compliance with procedural and substantive free appropriate public education (FAPE)
- Best practices for administrative designees
- Alternative dispute resolution
- Positive behavior supports

Recommendations

The district should:

1. Create and distribute a document such as a matrix or decision tree to clarify the roles and responsibilities of the special education administrators, educational services coordinators and school principals so staff know whom they should contact for different types of questions or support.
2. Develop a comprehensive job orientation and training plan for new staff.
3. Conduct an annual needs assessment with central office and site-based staff to help create the department's professional development plan. Ensure that professional development focuses on supporting the department's all means all vision.

Educational Services Department Staffing

The district has the following full-time equivalent (FTE) special education administrators in the central office, which includes positions such as program specialists, assistant directors, and coordinators, as shown below.

Position Title	Number of Positions	Total FTE
Senior Director, Special Education	1	1.0
Assistant Director, Special Education	2	2.0
Coordinator of Educational Services*	4 (2 Secondary and 2 Elementary)	4.0
Coordinator of Special Education	1	1.0
Program Specialist, Special Education (preschool)	1	1.0
Total		9.0**

Source: District data.

*One of the coordinators of educational services positions is vacant and the district is using a program specialist in educational services to fill this role.

**The senior directors of elementary and secondary education are not included in the total FTE of administrators who support special education in the central office. While their job responsibilities include supporting the needs of students who receive special education services, FCMAT believes these job functions fall under support for all students, including students with disabilities.

The district has the following FTE administrative assistant positions that perform special education related functions in the central office.

Position Title	Number of Positions	FTE
Secretary II	2	2.0
Secretary III	1	1.0
Typist Clerk	1	1.0
Data Processing Control Clerk	1	1.0
Special Education SEIS Technician	1	1.0
Total		6.0

Source: District data.

The district also employs two translators in the Educational Services Department who support special education. These positions are not being analyzed in this study because many districts contract with nonpublic agencies for these services, limiting the usefulness of comparisons.

Special Education Staffing Comparison

Similar Districts

FCMAT conducted a survey of several unified school districts in California with enrollments and unduplicated pupil percentages (UPPs) similar to those of Fairfield-Suisun. The information below summarizes responses from five districts that replied to FCMAT's request for information about central office special education department staffing. FCMAT requested information in two areas:

1. Central office administrator positions, including positions such as directors, assistant directors, coordinators, program specialists, and teachers on special assignment.
2. Central office administrative support positions, including positions such as secretaries, administrative assistants, filing clerks, and data technicians.

Comparison districts have an average of 10.52 FTE administrator positions in the central office that support special education; Fairfield-Suisun has 9.0 FTE. Comparison districts have an average of 4.55 FTE special education administrative support positions in the central office; Fairfield-Suisun has 6.0 FTE.

District Name	County Name	2021-22 Census Day Enrollment*	FTE Administrator Positions and FTE-to-Enrollment Ratio **	FTE Administrative Support Positions and FTE-to-Enrollment Ratio**
Downey Unified	Los Angeles	22,261	12.6 (1-to-1,766.75)	5.0 (1-to-4,452.20)
Hayward Unified	Alameda	20,546	9.0 (1-to-2,282.89)	5.0 (1-to-4,109.20)
Napa Valley Unified	Napa	16,793	10.0 (1-to-1,679.30)	5.75 (1-to-2,920.52)
Oceanside Unified	San Diego	18,671	10.0 (1-to-1,867.10)	4.0 (1-to-4,667.75)
Vista Unified	San Diego	22,092	11.0 (1-to-2,008.36)	3.0 (1-to-7,364)
Average FTE			10.52	4.55
Fairfield-Suisun Unified	Solano	20,715	9.0 (1-to-2,301.67)	6.0 (1-to-3,452.50)

Source: *EdData - Comparisons (ed-data.org). **Informal FCMAT survey. Any variances in FTE are due to FCMAT's interpretation of the information shared via survey. Teachers on special assignment (TOSAs) were included in administrator FTE if they were performing administrator functions in the central office.

Compared to districts of similar enrollment and UPP that responded to FCMAT's survey, the district employs fewer special education administrators in the central office (9.0 FTE compared to an average of 10.52 FTE). During interviews, many staff identified a need for an additional central office administrator.

Compared to districts of similar enrollment and UPP that responded to FCMAT's survey, the district has more special education administrative support positions in the central office (6.0 FTE compared to an average of 4.55 FTE). During interviews, the educational services coordinators expressed a need for administrative support; they do not have an administrative support position assigned to their team. The district needs to evaluate how to use its present support staff in the Educational Services Department to support the educational services coordinators with tasks such as scheduling meetings, data entry, and clerical work.

Nearby Districts

FCMAT surveyed four additional unified school districts located in the same geographic region as the district for comparison. The information below summarizes responses from the districts that replied to FCMAT's request for information on central office special education department staffing.

These districts have an average of 8.95 FTE administrator positions in the central office that support special education; Fairfield-Suisun has 9.0 FTE. Comparison districts have an average of 5.05 FTE special education administrative support positions in the central office; Fairfield-Suisun has 6.0 FTE. Although the district was interested in learning about the central office staffing of these nearby districts, their enrollment and UPP are not similar, so they are not considered comparable.

District Name	County Name	2021-22 Census Day Enrollment*	FTE Administrator Positions and FTE to Enrollment to Ratio **	FTE Administrative Support Positions and FTE to Enrollment Ratio**
Mt. Diablo Unified	Contra Costa	29,789	14.0 (1-to-2,127.79)	6.0 (1-to-4,964.83)
Vacaville Unified	Solano	13,074	9.7 (1-to-1,347.84)	5.2 (1-to-2,514.23)
Vallejo Unified	Solano	12,717	5.6 (1-to-2,270.89)	5.0 (1-to-2,543.40)
Woodland Joint Unified	Yolo	9,517	6.5 (1-to-1,464.15)	4.0 (1-to-2,379.25)
Average			8.95	5.05
Fairfield-Suisun Unified	Solano	20,715	9.0 (1-to-2,301.67)	6.0 (1-to-3,452.50)

Source: *EdData - Comparisons (ed-data.org).

**Informal FCMAT survey. Any variances in FTE are due to FCMAT's interpretation of the information shared via the survey. TOSAs were included in administrator FTE if they were performing administrator functions in the central office.

Recommendations

The district should:

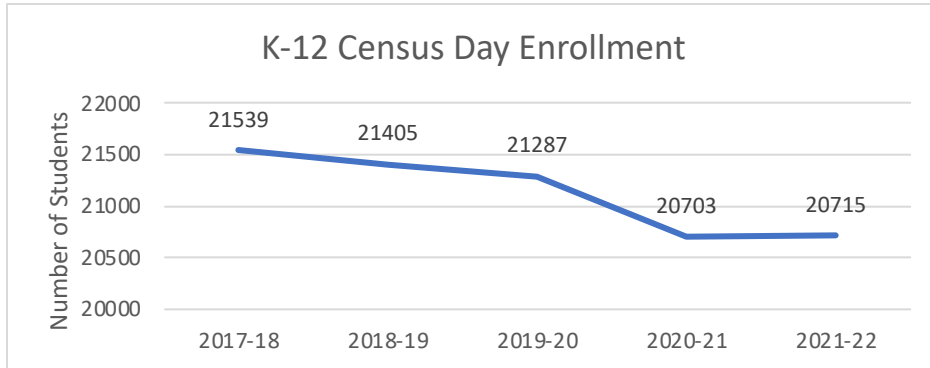
1. Consider hiring an additional 1.0 FTE central office administrator.
2. Evaluate how to use its present support staff in the Educational Services Department to support the educational services coordinators.

Special Education Student Identification and Outcomes

In addition to considering district staffing, it is important to evaluate whether students are properly identified for special education and what their outcomes are under the district’s organization and structure.

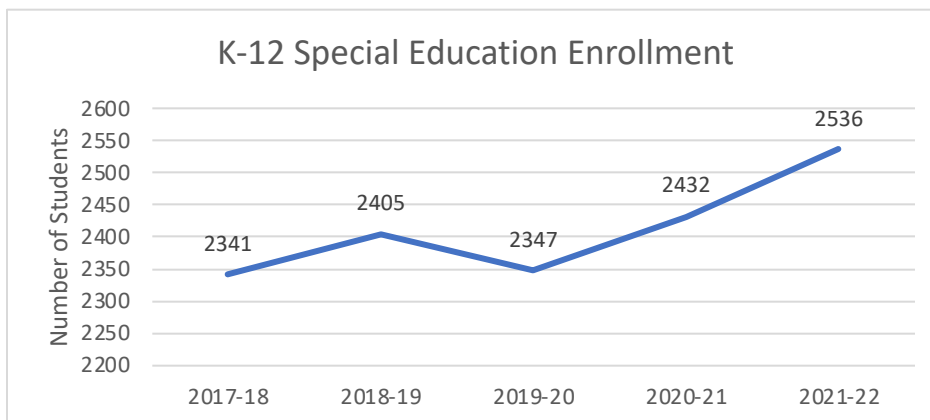
District Special Education Identification Rate

From 2017-18 through 2021-22 the district’s census day enrollment declined by 824 students.



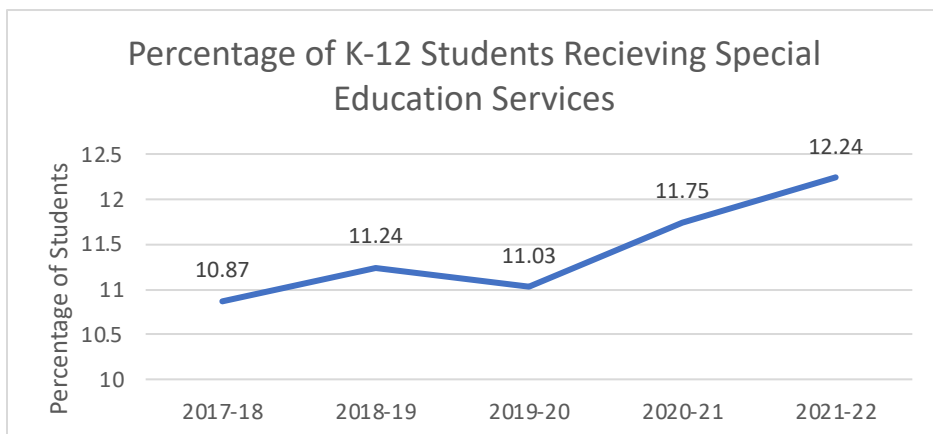
Source: Enrollment by Ethnicity for Charter and Non-Charter Schools - Fairfield-Suisun Unified (CDE).

The district’s special education enrollment increased by 195 students from 2017-18 through 2021-22.



Source: Enrollment by Ethnicity for Charter and Non-Charter Schools - Fairfield-Suisun Unified (CDE).

The number of the district’s K-12 students who receive special education services increased by 1.37% from 2017-18 through 2021-22.



Source: Enrollment by Ethnicity for Charter and Non-Charter Schools - Fairfield-Suisun Unified (CDE).

In 2021-22, 12.24% of the district’s K-12 students were identified as requiring special education services, which is slightly less than the countywide and statewide averages.

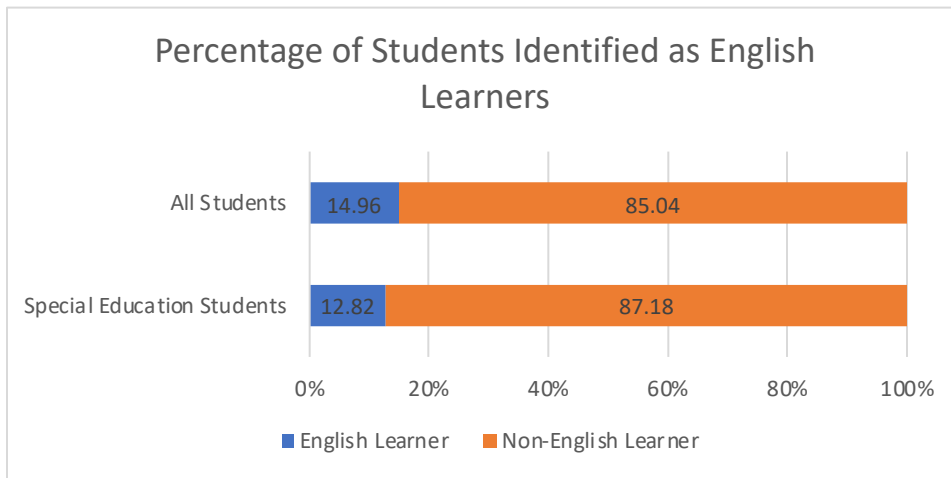
2021-22	District	County	State
K-12 enrollment	20,715	60,492	5,892,240
K-12 enrollment of students with disabilities	2,536	7,524	745,513
Percentage	12.24%	12.44%	12.65%

Source: Enrollment by Ethnicity for Charter and Non-Charter Schools – Fairfield-Suisun Unified (CDE).

The district’s enrollment decline of 824 students from 2017-18 through 2021-22 and corresponding increase of 195 students receiving special education services could indicate a change in the process used to identify students for special education. However, because the percentage of the district’s K-12 students who receive special education services is aligned with statewide and countywide averages, the district appears to be appropriately identifying students for special education. It would benefit the district to monitor the percentage of students who qualify for special education and provide professional development in proper special education identification as needed.

Disproportionality in Special Education Identification

The National Association of School Psychologists defines disproportionality as “the extent to which membership in a given group affects the probability of being placed in a specific disability category.” Put simply, it is the under- or overrepresentation of racial or ethnic groups in special education. English learners are commonly overidentified for special education. In 2021-22, 14.96% of all district students were identified as English learners. Of the district’s 2,536 K-12 students in special education, 325, or 12.82%, were identified as English learners. Because the percentage of English learners in special education is similar to the percentage in the district as a whole, the district does not appear to be overidentifying English learners for special education.



Source: Enrollment by Ethnicity and Grade - Fairfield-Suisun Unified (CDE).

Outcomes for Students Who Receive Special Education Services

California School Dashboard

California's accountability system is based on multiple measures that assess how local educational agencies and schools are meeting students' needs. Performance on these state measures is reported using the [California School Dashboard](#). For each district, student groups are classified into status and change levels based on how well they perform on five indicators:

- Chronic Absence Rate – Grades K-8
- Suspension Rate – Grades K-12
- Graduation Rate – Grades 9-12
- College/Career Readiness– Grades 9-12
- Academic Performance (English Language Arts and Mathematics) – Grades 3-8, 11

Status levels (very high, high, medium, low, very low) are based on a group's current year performance on an indicator. Change levels (increased significantly, increased, maintained, declined, declined significantly) capture how much a group's performance changed on an indicator from the prior year. Combined status and change level data results in five color-coded performance levels for each indicator. From highest to lowest, the performance levels are blue, green, yellow, orange, and red. Revisions to the dashboard have prioritized student group metrics, which now include students with disabilities as a significant student group that requires both state and federal monitoring for compliance.

Because of the COVID-19 pandemic, state law suspended the reporting of state indicators on the 2020 and 2021 dashboards. The district's 2019 performance level (color) for the population of all students in the district is compared to the performance level (color) for students with disabilities, as shown below. English learner progress was not reported on the 2019 dashboard.

	Chronic Absenteeism	Suspension Rate	Graduation Rate	College/Career	English Language Arts	Mathematics
All Students	Orange	Yellow	Green	Orange	Yellow	Yellow
Students with Disabilities	Orange	Orange	Red	Red	Orange	Orange

Source: Fairfield-Suisun Unified Student Groups Report - California Accountability Model (CDE).

Compared to all students in the district, students with disabilities perform similarly on the chronic absenteeism indicator, one performance level worse (orange versus yellow) on the suspension rate and English language arts and mathematics indicators, and significantly worse on the graduation rate indicator (red versus green).

The district's lower performance for students with disabilities across many of these indicators is not unique. Policy Analysis for California Education (PACE) published a [brief](#) in 2020 about districts that were eligible for differentiated assistance (DA) in 2019 based on the performance of their students with disabilities. Under California's system of support, differentiated assistance (DA) provides supports to eligible districts to increase the performance of student groups. According to the 2020 PACE brief, for more than half of the 333 districts that were eligible for DA in 2019, eligibility was driven in part by the performance of students with disabilities. Those 187 districts were most frequently identified for DA based on the performance of students with disabilities in priority 4 (pupil achievement – English language arts and mathematics) and priority 5 (pupil engagement – graduation rate or chronic absenteeism).

To help these students improve performance, the PACE 2020 brief recommends districts use their continuous improvement process to understand the root causes of what PACE believes are intersectional challenges (that is, where more than one aspect of a student's experience and identity affect the support he or she needs) facing students with disabilities. PACE recommends conducting a root-cause analysis and states:

... districts should consider conducting finer grained analyses of the kinds of students facing these complex challenges—including by students' disability type, and also by their gender, race, and ethnic background. Doing so can, for instance, shed light on disproportionate challenges that can lie at the intersection of a child's race and disability status. This more intersectional approach can reveal who is most in need of supports so that assistance can be tailored and targeted to improve their performance. Knowledge of how challenges play out at both the system and student levels can be critical in developing more holistic and robust strategies to promote the performance levels of students with disabilities.

PACE's intersectional approach may be particularly important for a district like Fairfield-Suisun. The district's population of K-12 students who are African American is 13.31% as of 2021-22, which is far greater than the statewide average of 5.1%. In addition, of the 2,536 K-12 students enrolled in special education in the district in 2021-22, 489, or 19.28% (almost one in five), were African American students, who are a historically marginalized group with unique educational needs resulting from opportunity gaps driven by societal factors, including systemic and attitudinal racism.

It would benefit the district to leverage its continuous improvement process as outlined in the 2020 PACE brief to understand the root causes of the intersectional challenges faced by students with disabilities, with an emphasis on how race-related societal factors combined with disability may be affecting the achievement and outcomes of students with disabilities. Once the root causes are better understood, the district can make plans to improve achievement and outcomes for its students with disabilities.

Special Education Annual Performance Report

The Special Education Annual Performance Report Measures are reports published by the CDE to distribute educational data about students with disabilities. These reports are required by the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (20 United States Code 1416(b)(2)(C)(ii) and 34 Code of Federal Regulations 300.602). Districts are evaluated based on 14 indicators, for which the target is met or not met. The district's Local Level Annual Performance Report 2020–21 is shown below.

No.	Indicator	Rate	Target	Target Met?
1	Graduation Rate	57.47%	>90.0%	No
2	Dropout Rate	25.17%	≤11%	No
3	Assessment: ELA Participation	N/A	N/A	N/A
3	Assessment: Math Participation Rate	N/A	N/A	N/A
3	Assessment: ELA Achievement Rate	N/A	N/A	N/A
3	Assessment: Math Achievement Rate	N/A	N/A	N/A
4a	Discipline (>10 days) Rate	0.33	<2.18	Yes
4b	Discipline (>10 days) Areas Disproportionate *	0	0	Yes
5a	LRE Rate: In Regular Class more than 80%	65.23%	≥58%	Yes
5b	LRE Rate: In Regular Class less than 40%	14.37%	≤19.5%	Yes
5c	LRE Rate: Separate Schools	2.70%	≤2.9%	Yes
6a	Preschool LRE: Regular Program	50.25%	>39%	Yes
6b	Preschool LRE: Separate Class	36.45%	<33%	No
6c	Preschool LRE: Home	3.94%	<3.5%	No
7a	Positive Socio-Emotional Skills Substantially Increased	69.70%	>85.2%	No
7a	Positive Socio-Emotional Skills Functioning within age expectations	61.40%	>76%	No
7b	Acquisition of Knowledge/Skills Substantially Increased	53.57%	>76%	No
7b	Acquisition of Knowledge/Skills Functioning within age expectations	54.55%	>76%	No
7c	Use of Appropriate Behaviors Substantially Increased	71.43%	>76%	No
7c	Use of Appropriate Behaviors Functioning within age expectations	58.93%	>76%	No
8	Parent Involvement Rate	99.61%	>95.0%	Yes
9	Overall Disproportionality Areas	0	0	YES
10	Disproportionality by Disability Areas	0	0	YES
11	Rate of Eligibility Determined within 60 days	100.00%	100%	Yes
12	Rate of Part C to Part B Students with Timely IEPs	96.36%	100%	No
13	Rate of Students with Transition Goals/Services	91.33%	100%	No
14a	Rate of Post School Outcomes: Higher Education	30.00%	>55.0%	No
14b	Competitive Employment or Higher Education	61.54%	>75.04%	No
14c	Any Employment or Education	90.00%	>87.0%	Yes

Source: Annual Performance Report Measures - Data Collection & Reporting (CDE).

The CDE explains that performance on these indicators should not be viewed as the sole determinants of the quality of a district's special education program but can help districts examine their programs and prioritize focus areas. One focus area identified by both the dashboard and the above performance report

is the district's graduation rate for students with disabilities. According to the annual performance report, students with disabilities had a graduation rate of 57.47%, which is far below the target of 90%. FCMAT does not believe the district's organizational structure is a root cause of the low graduation rate for students with disabilities. Rather, the district's structure places a shared responsibility for special education student outcomes, such as graduation rate, on general and special education. It would benefit the district to use its continuous improvement process to identify root causes of the low graduation rate for students with disabilities and implement plans to address them. The district's annual performance report can help the district prioritize areas of focus for its improvement efforts annually.

Recommendations

The district should:

1. Monitor the percentage of students who qualify for special education, and provide professional development in proper identification of students for special education as needed.
2. Use its continuous improvement process to understand the root causes of the intersectional challenges faced by students with disabilities, with an emphasis on how race-related societal factors combined with disability may affect the achievement and outcomes of students with disabilities. Focus on the graduation rate for students with disabilities.
3. Continue to use the annual performance report and dashboard to prioritize areas of focus for its improvement efforts for students with disabilities annually.

Related Service Provider Staffing and Caseloads

Related services are the developmental, corrective and other supportive services required to help a child with a disability benefit from special education (34 CFR 300.34). These services are written into an IEP and include but are not limited to psychological services, speech and language therapy, adapted physical education, and occupational therapy. Staff indicated that the district uses either district staff or contracted services to provide all related services for its students according to the needs outlined in each student's IEP.

It is a best practice for a district to analyze regularly whether its related service provider staffing ratios are aligned with industry standards. FCMAT uses the following industry standards when analyzing related service provider staffing.

Provider Type	Industry Standard Provider-to-Student Ratio
School Psychologist	1-to-977
Speech and Language Pathologist (Preschool)	1-to-40
Speech and Language Pathologist (ages 5-22)	1-to-55
Adapted PE Teacher	1-to-45-55
Physical Therapist	1-to-45-55
Occupational Therapist	1-to-45-55
Vision and Orientation/Mobility	1-to-10-30
Deaf/Hard of Hearing	1-to-15-25
Nurse	1-to-2,274

Source: Industry standards, and Education Codes 56441.7(a) and 56363.3.

Many related services providers interviewed indicated they do not know how the district determines provider-to-student staffing ratios. The district needs to share its criteria with related service providers.

School Psychologists

The district has 31.0 FTE school psychologist positions. District documents identified 2.0 of the 31.0 FTE as providing services solely for preschool students. Documents and interviews with staff indicate the roles and responsibilities for school psychologist positions generally comply with state and professional standards. The district employs or contracts for mental health clinicians and has a behavior support team that helps school psychologists accomplish their duties. The district has 9.0 FTE mental health clinician positions. The district has 10.0 FTE behaviorist positions, which include 7.0 FTE board certified behavior analysts (BCBAs) and 3.0 FTE behavior intervention specialists.

The district does not have a staffing ratio in its contract for school psychologists. In 2021-22, the district's average caseload for the 29.0 FTE K-12 school psychologist was 714.31 students per 1.0 FTE. Compared to the industry standard of 977 students per 1.0 FTE school psychologist, the district is adequately staffed, at 7.8 FTE higher than the industry standard. FCMAT does not believe reducing school psychologist staffing would be of benefit for at least two reasons. First, during interviews, staff consistently reported increased mental health and social emotional support needs districtwide, which school psychologists and other positions are helping address. Second, school psychologists serve important roles in the vision of one coherent system to support all students in the district. Examples of these roles include supporting the student study team process, response to intervention and instruction, multitiered systems of support, and crisis response. Staff indicated that school psychologists support many of these areas but noted variances from school to

school. The district needs to develop a vision and common expectations districtwide for how school psychologists are part of one coherent system to support all students in the district.

Provider	No. of FTE	2021-22 Total Caseload*	Caseload Average	Industry Standard	District Staffing Above (+)/Below (-) Industry Standard
K-12 th Grade School Psychologists	29.0	20,715	714.31	1-to-977	+7.8

Source: District provided data and industry standards.

*Enrollment by Ethnicity for Charter and Non-Charter Schools - Fairfield-Suisun Unified (CDE).

Speech and Language Pathologists

Education Code Section 56363.3 establishes a maximum caseload of 55 students for speech and language pathologists (SLPs) who serve students ages five to 22, and Education Code Section 56441.7(a) establishes a maximum preschool caseload of 40 students. District SLPs are part of the Fairfield-Suisun Unified Teachers bargaining unit, and its agreement with the district matches SLP caseloads to those given in Education Code Sections 56441.7(a) and 56363.3. District data shows 36.5 FTE SLP positions and 1.0 FTE speech language pathology assistant (SLPA). Of these, 25.1 FTE serve K-12 students, 8.4 FTE serve preschool students, and 3.0 FTE serve a mixture of preschool through grade 12 students. FCMAT included the 3.0 FTE SLPs who serve both preschool and K-12 students in the preschool maximum staffing calculation.

At the time of FCMAT’s fieldwork, the district’s average caseload for its 25.1 FTE K-12 SLPs was 34.10 students per 1.0 FTE. Compared to the industry standard of 55 students per 1.0 FTE SLP, the district is adequately staffed, at 9.54 FTE more than the industry standard. The district’s average caseload for the 11.4 FTE preschool SLPs is 32.89 students per 1.0 FTE. Compared to the industry standard of 40 students per 1.0 FTE preschool SLP, the district is adequately staffed, at 2.02 FTE more than the industry standard. FCMAT does not believe changing SLP staffing would be beneficial at this time; however, the district could benefit from monitoring caseload averages and student needs annually to determine if staffing changes are warranted. It would also benefit the district to develop expectations for how SLPs support the vision of one coherent system to support all students. Examples include supporting the student study team process and providing classwide language push-in support and social skills groups.

Provider	No. of FTE	Total Caseload	Caseload Average*	Education Code Maximum Ratio	District Staffing Above (+)/Below (-) Ed Code
Speech and Language Pathologist (ages 5-22)	25.1	856	34.10	1-to-55	+9.54
Speech and Language Pathologist (Preschool)	11.4	375	32.89	1-to-40	+2.02

Source: District data, Education Codes 56441.7(a) and 56363.3.

*Caseload averages were calculated using the total number of eligible students who receive and speech and language service as indicated in their IEPs.

Adapted Physical Education Teachers

The district has 5.0 FTE adapted physical education teacher positions. Article 37 of the Fairfield-Suisun Unified Teacher’s Agreement stipulates a districtwide average caseload ratio of 1-to-55 for adapted physical education teachers. At the time of FCMAT’s visit, the district’s average caseload for the 5.0 FTE adapted

physical education teachers was 30.4 students per 1.0 FTE. Compared to the district staffing ratio and upper end of the industry standard range (55 students per 1.0 FTE adapted physical education teacher), the district is adequately staffed, at 2.76 FTE more than the industry standard and bargaining agreement ratio. Compared to the lower end of the industry standard range (45 students per 1.0 FTE adapted physical education teacher), the district is still adequately staffed, at 1.62 FTE more than the industry standard. FCMAT does not believe the district needs to change adapted physical education staffing; however, it would be beneficial to monitor caseload averages and student needs annually to determine if staffing changes are warranted.

Provider	No. of FTE	2022-23 Total Caseload	Caseload Average*	Industry Standard	District Staffing Above (+)/Below (-) Industry Standard**
Adapted Physical Education Teachers	5.0	152	30.4	1-to-45-55	+2.24

Source: District data and industry standards.

*Caseload averages were calculated using the total number of eligible students who receive an adapted physical education service in their IEP.

**The 1-to-55 industry standard was used because it is consistent with Article 37 of the Fairfield-Suisun Unified Teacher’s Agreement.

Occupational Therapists

The district has 11.0 FTE occupational therapist (OT) positions and 3.0 FTE certified occupational therapist assistants (COTAs). The district does not have a caseload ratio in its contract for occupational therapists. At the time of FCMAT’s fieldwork, the district’s average caseload for its 11.0 FTE occupational therapists was 40.91 students per 1.0 FTE. Compared to the upper end of the industry standard range (55 students per 1.0 FTE occupational therapist), the district is adequately staffed, at 2.82 FTE more than the industry standard. Compared to the lower end of the industry standard range (45 students per 1.0 FTE occupational therapist), the district is still adequately staffed, at 1.00 FTE more than the industry standard. FCMAT does not believe the district needs to change occupational therapist staffing; however, it would be beneficial to monitor caseload averages and student needs annually to determine if staffing changes are warranted.

Provider	No. of FTE	2022-23 Total Caseload	Caseload Average*	Industry Standard	District Staffing Above (+)/Below (-) Industry Standard**
Occupational Therapists	11.0	450	40.91	1-to-45-55	+2.82

Source: District data and industry standards.

*Caseload averages were calculated using the total number of eligible students who receive occupational therapy service as indicated on their IEP.

**The 1-to-55 industry standard was used.

School Nurses

The district has 10.0 FTE school nurse positions. The district does not have a staffing ratio in its contract for school nurses. In 2021-22, the district’s average caseload for the 10.0 FTE school nurses was 2,071.5 students per 1.0 FTE. Compared to the industry standard of 2,274 students per 1.0 FTE school nurse, the district was adequately staffed, with 0.89 FTE more than the industry standard. FCMAT does not believe reducing school nurse staffing at this time would be beneficial; however, it is a best practice to monitor caseload averages and student needs annually to determine if staffing changes are warranted.

Provider	No. of FTE	2021-22 Total Caseload*	Caseload Average	Industry Standard	District Staffing Above (+)/Below (-) Industry Standard
K-12 th Grade School Nurses	10.0	20,715	2,071.5	1-to-2,274	+0.89

Source: District data and industry standards.

*Enrollment by Ethnicity for Charter and Non-Charter Schools - Fairfield-Suisun Unified (CDE).

Recommendations

The district should:

1. Regularly analyze whether related service provider staffing ratios are aligned with current laws and industry standards and meet district needs.
2. Share the criteria used to determine staffing and caseload size with related service providers.
3. Develop a districtwide vision and common expectations for how school psychologists and speech and language pathologists are part of one coherent system to support all students.
4. Monitor speech and language pathologist, adapted physical education, occupational therapist, and school nurse caseload averages and student needs annually to determine if staffing changes are warranted.

Appendix

Study Agreement



**FISCAL CRISIS & MANAGEMENT ASSISTANCE TEAM
STUDY AGREEMENT
June 29, 2022**

The Fiscal Crisis and Management Assistance Team (FCMAT), hereinafter referred to as the team, and the Fairfield-Suisun 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 local education agencies (LEAs). The district has requested that the team assign professionals to study specific aspects of the district's operations. These professionals may include staff of the team, county offices of education, the California Department of Education, school districts, or private contractors. All work shall be performed in accordance with the terms and conditions of this agreement.

In keeping with the provisions of Assembly Bill 1200, the county superintendent will be notified of this agreement between the district and FCMAT and will receive a copy of the final report. The final report will also be published on the FCMAT website.

2. SCOPE OF THE WORK

A. Scope and Objectives of the Study

1. Review the organizational structure and staffing of the special education department in the district's central office to determine whether administration, clerical and administrative support, program specialists, teachers on special assignments, and overall functionality are aligned with those of districts of comparable size and structure, and make recommendations for greater efficiencies, if needed.
2. Analyze staffing and caseloads for related service providers, including but not limited to speech pathologists, psychologists, occupational and physical therapists, adaptive physical education and other staff who may be related service providers, and make recommendations for improvement, if any.

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 team's procedures and 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. Exit Meeting – 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 – Approximately 10 days after the exit meeting, the team will issue an exit letter briefly memorializing the topics discussed in the exit meeting.
5. Draft Report – Electronic copies of a preliminary draft report will be delivered to the district’s administration for review and comment.
6. Final Report – Electronic copies of the final report will be delivered to the district’s administration and to the county superintendent following completion of the review. Printed copies are available from FCMAT upon request.
7. Follow-Up Support – If requested by the district within six to 12 months after completion of the study, FCMAT will return to the district at no cost to assess the district’s progress in implementing the recommendations included in the report. Progress in implementing the recommendations will be documented to the district in a FCMAT management letter. FCMAT will work with the district on a mutually convenient time to return for follow-up support that is no sooner than eight months and no later than 18 months after completion of the study.

3. PROJECT PERSONNEL

The FCMAT study team may include:

Carolynne Beno, Ed.D., CFE
To be determined

FCMAT Staff
FCMAT Consultant

4. PROJECT COSTS

The cost for studies requested pursuant to Education Code (EC) 42127.8(d)(1) shall be as follows:

- A. \$800 per day for each staff member while on site, conducting fieldwork at other locations, preparing or presenting reports, or participating in meetings. The cost of independent FCMAT consultants will be billed at their actual daily rate for all work performed.
- B. All out-of-pocket expenses, including travel, meals and lodging.
- C. 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 the district’s acceptance of the final report.

Based on the elements noted in section 2A, the total not-to-exceed cost of the study will be \$17,100.

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

Payments for FCMAT’s services are payable to Kern County Superintendent of Schools - Administrative Agent, located at 1300 17th Street, City Centre, Bakersfield, CA 93301.

5. RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE DISTRICT

A. The district will provide office and conference room space during on-site reviews.

B. The district will provide the following if requested:

1. Policies, regulations and prior reports that address the study scope.
2. Current or proposed organizational charts.
3. Current and two prior years’ audit reports.
4. Any documents requested on a supplemental list. Documents requested on the supplemental list should be provided to FCMAT only in electronic format; if only hard copies are available, they should be scanned by the district and sent to FCMAT in electronic format.
5. Documents should be provided in advance of fieldwork; any delay in the receipt of the requested documents may affect the start date and/or completion date of the project. Upon approval of the signed study agreement, access will be provided to FCMAT’s online SharePoint document repository, where the district will upload all requested documents.

C. The district’s administration will review a draft copy of the report resulting from 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 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 different phases of the study and will be established upon the receipt of a signed study agreement:

Orientation:	to be determined
Staff Interviews:	to be determined
Exit Meeting:	to be determined
Draft Report Submitted:	to be determined
Final Report Submitted:	to be determined
Board Presentation:	to be determined, if requested
Follow-Up Support:	if requested

7. COMMENCEMENT, TERMINATION AND COMPLETION OF WORK

FCMAT will begin work as soon as it has assembled an available and appropriate study team consisting of FCMAT staff and independent consultants, taking into consideration other jobs FCMAT has previously undertaken and assignments from the state. The team will work expeditiously to complete its work and deliver its report, subject to the cooperation of the district and any other parties from which, in the team's judgment, it must obtain information. Once the team has completed its fieldwork, it will proceed to prepare a draft report and a final report. Prior to completion of fieldwork, the district may terminate its request for service and will be responsible for all costs incurred by FCMAT to the date of termination under Section 4 (Project Costs). If the district does not provide written notice of termination prior to completion of fieldwork, the team will complete its work and deliver its report and the district will be responsible for the full costs. The district understands and agrees that FCMAT is a state agency and all FCMAT reports are published on the FCMAT website and made available to interested parties in state government. In the absence of extraordinary circumstances, FCMAT will not withhold preparation, publication and distribution of a report once fieldwork has been completed, and the district shall not request that it do so.

8. INDEPENDENT CONTRACTOR

FCMAT is an independent contractor and is not an employee or engaged in any manner with the district. The manner in which FCMAT's services are rendered shall be within its sole control and discretion. FCMAT representatives are not authorized to speak for, represent, or obligate the district in any manner without prior express written authorization from an officer of the district.

9. INSURANCE

During the term of this agreement, FCMAT shall maintain liability insurance of not less than \$1 million unless otherwise agreed upon in writing by the district, automobile liability insurance in the amount required under California state law, and workers' compensation as required under California state law. Upon the request of the district and the receipt of the signed study agreement, FCMAT shall provide certificates of insurance, with Fairfield-Suisun Unified School District named as additional insured, indicating applicable insurance coverages.

10. HOLD HARMLESS

FCMAT shall hold the district, its board, officers, agents, and employees harmless from all suits, claims and liabilities resulting from negligent acts or omissions of FCMAT's board, officers, agents and employees undertaken under this agreement. Conversely, the district shall hold FCMAT, its board, officers, agents, and employees harmless from all suits, claims and liabilities resulting solely from negligent acts or omissions of the district's board, officers, agents and employees undertaken under this agreement.

11. COVID-19 PANDEMIC

Because of the existence of COVID-19 and the resulting shelter-at-home orders, local educational agency closures and other related considerations, at FCMAT’s sole discretion, the Scope of Work, Project Costs, Responsibilities of the District (Sections I, IV and V herein) and other provisions herein may be revised. Examples of such revisions may include, but not be limited to, the following:

- A. Orientation and exit meetings, interviews and other information-gathering activities may be conducted remotely via telephone, videoconferencing, etc. References to on-site work or fieldwork shall be interpreted appropriately given the circumstances.
- B. Activities performed remotely that are normally performed in the field shall be billed hourly as provided as if performed in the field (excluding out-of-pocket costs).
- C. The district may be relieved of its duty to provide conference and other work area facilities for the team.


12. FORCE MAJEURE

Neither party will be liable for any failure of or delay in the performance of this study agreement due to causes beyond the reasonable control of the party, except for payment obligations by the district.

13. CONTACT PERSON

Name: Sheila McCabe
Assistant Superintendent of Educational Services
Telephone: (707) 399-4325
E-mail: SheilaMc@fsusd.org

dk  June 29, 2022
Laneia Grindle, Date
Assistant Superintendent of Business Services
Fairfield-Suisun Unified School District



Michael H. Fine, Date
Chief Executive Officer
Fiscal Crisis and Management Assistance Team