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Superintendent's Transition Advisory Team Report 2012



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Dear Parents, Guardians, and Community Members,

When I began as Superintendent in August, I launched a 100-day Entry and Learning Plan. The plan was designed to guide my first three months on the job, assess where we are as a district, and most importantly, to hear from the people who know our schools best – our students, parents, educators, other staff, and community partners.

This 100-day transition plan has been facilitated by a team of experts from inside and outside the field of education. Their findings have been consolidated into this report which will guide me and all of us in finalizing a plan moving forward to take the Santa Fe Public Schools to the next level of excellence.

Through the entry process, I have learned a great deal about where we've been and where we are today. I am so grateful to everyone who generously gave of their time to share their experiences and reflect on the challenges and opportunities facing the Santa Fe Public Schools.

Over the next month, I will be seeking your feedback on the recommendations in this report, as well as input on the direction, pace and strategies within our efforts for improving teaching and learning, increasing accountability, ensuring equity across schools, and engaging parents and families. I look forward to seeing you at one of the many meetings or roundtables that we will be holding.

Thank you again for your ongoing partnership and support as we work to put every student on a path to college and career success.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Joel Boyd". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Joel" and last name "Boyd" clearly distinguishable.

Joel D. Boyd
Superintendent of Schools

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Introduction



Upon his appointment as Superintendent of the Santa Fe Public Schools, Joel Boyd presented the Santa Fe community with a Superintendent's Entry and Learning Plan. In the plan, Superintendent Boyd outlined his goals and activities for the first 100 days of his stewardship. In the plan, he outlined the features of his "listening and learning tour," designed to provide him with first-hand knowledge of the strengths and weaknesses of SFPS and of the aspirations of the students, parents, community, business leaders and school board members.

PHASE 1 — Listening — has been underway since early July, as Superintendent Boyd has met with students, teachers, parents, partner organizations, political leaders, key community stakeholders and school board members. He has attended open forums in every community in Santa Fe and listened intently to the myriad voices.

PHASE 2 — Planning — has involved collecting, organizing and analyzing all of the data gathered during the listening phase.

PHASE 3 — Leading — the Superintendent will present his recommendations to the School Board on how he intends to lead the community in accelerating the pace of change to meet the premier goal of the School Board's Strategic Plan 2012 — Create an Environment That Raises Expectations and Promotes the High Academic Performance of All Students at 100% of Santa Fe Public Schools.

Premier Goal of the School Board's Strategic Plan 2012 - Create an Environment That Raises Expectations and Promotes the High Academic Performance of All Students at 100% of Santa Fe Public Schools.

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As a key part of the entry process, Superintendent Boyd appointed a Transition Advisory Team to assist him in the Listening and Planning phases. In the invitation to the transition team, it was stressed that the purpose of convening an external panel of educational leaders was to assist Superintendent Boyd. “As (he) prepares his entry plan for the Santa Fe School Board and community, he will use our collective assistance in data gathering and analyses, gathering of current research and best practice and structured discussions to assist SFPS in crafting a reform agenda that is bold, attainable, and appropriate for student needs.” During the past three months the team has visited Santa Fe schools and classrooms, met with teachers, principals, central office leaders, and community representatives, and gathered data in every area of the school district. The team has used that data to seek and prepare recommendations for short and long-term action. Although the bulk of these recommendations are presented for the first time in this report, the team made recommendations for immediate action when it saw an urgent need, such as a large number of teacher vacancies, fulfillment of obligation to Special Education students and English language learners, and a reorganization of the leadership of the central administration. Superintendent Boyd has addressed these issues and others in his preparation for the opening of schools in August, the reorganization of SFPS for greater efficiency and accountability, and his presentation to the SFPS School Board on his reform plan.

The Team

The transition team consisted of the following members:

DR. ROBERT S. PETERKIN, *Chair, CPS Transition Advisory Team, and Professor Emeritus, Harvard Graduate School of Education*

ALMUDENA (ALMI) ABEYTA, *Assistant Academic Superintendent for Middle and K-8 Schools, Boston Public Schools*

DR. ARLENE ACKERMAN, *CEO/President, The Ackerman Education Strategies Group*

DR. JAMES HONAN, *Senior Lecturer, Harvard Graduate School of Education*

MAREE F. SNEED, ESQ., *Partner, Hogan Lovells*

DR. JOSEPH WISE, *Co-founder /Chief Education Officer, Atlantic Research Partners, Inc.*

LATIFAH ALFONSO PHILLIPS, *Consultant, Transition Advisory Team*



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The team was comprised of three sub-committees:

- 1) Equity/Culture/Context,
- 2) Teaching and Learning, and
- 3) Operations.

All sub-committee work was brought back to the full team so that the ultimate recommendations would be “unified” in support of a focus on student learning.

The team brought approximately 220 years of cumulative teaching, support and school leadership experience to the entry/transition processes. We recognize, however, that we were able to bring this experience in a short timeframe to the examination and analysis of the Santa Fe Public Schools. Thus, the report is meant to be incorporated into Superintendent Boyd’s entry activities, core beliefs, and professional acumen. The team hopes that the evidence and recommendations in this report will serve to inform Superintendent Boyd and the School Board in their efforts to improve educational outcomes and the life chance of all Santa Fe’s students — All Means All.

It should be noted that during the transition process Ms. Abeyta and Ms. Phillips were appointed as Chief Academic Officer and Chief of Staff respectively, as part of Superintendent Boyd’s reorganization. This reorganization came about partly due to an early recommendation by the transition team due to its concern over the need for accountability in SFPS leadership.

The Need

In order to meet the School Board’s goal of creating an environment of high expectations and academic outcomes for all SFPS students, as well as Superintendent Boyd’s expectation that SFPS will be the best school system in New Mexico within 5 years, we offer three overarching areas that must be confronted aggressively and successfully. These areas are:

- creating a culture of urgency,
- creating and supporting leadership for instructional improvement (teaching and learning), especially for underserved student populations, and
- establishing metrics, clear expectations for performance and transparent accountability for all employees. The system must be seen by all constituents as one of *excellence and equity*, one that

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offers students equitable opportunities to achieve excellent outcomes.

Creating a Culture of Urgency

The Santa Fe Public Schools has both a unique opportunity and a formidable challenge. On the positive side, SFPS has shown incremental gains as demonstrated by progress on Standards Based Assessment (SBA) tests and New Mexico's new A-F rating system. A new Superintendent and the current School Board share a common agenda and have the opportunity to improve schools and the outcomes for students through greater teacher and administrator support and accountability.

On the other hand, SFPS has a graduation rate of 56.5%. Evaluations, reevaluations and some services for special education students are routinely overdue. English Language Learners with identified language support needs go unserved for months and even the entire school year. Visits to schools revealed unclear or unstated expectations for students. Teaching positions went unfilled by the start of the school year. Multiple interviewees described this lack of urgency as an example of SFPS' "Mañana" culture, which the team finds both culturally offensive and operationally dysfunctional.

Conversations with staff and update reports requested by Superintendent Boyd revealed a lack of urgency on a range of areas that the team considered essential to effective and efficient school operations. By this, the team does not mean some mindless adherence to bureaucratic procedures, but a sense of immediacy for the care and support of students and those who teach them. By immediacy and urgency, we do not mean *haste*, but thoughtful, planned direction to the combined effort of a school system and its leaders, to the needs and demands of students. This latter approach is generally accomplished when expectations are clear, where there is a shared sense of purpose and responsibility (not "working in silos," as several interviewees described the current condition), and focused support toward common goals. Efficiency in the use of resources and the equitable distribution of new and more effective resources obtained through a rigorous examination of expenditures and subsequent recommendations for savings offered herein are essential to aggressively pursuing equity and excellence.

The system must be seen by all constituents as one of excellence and equity, one that offers students equitable opportunities to achieve excellent outcomes.



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Creating and supporting leadership for instructional improvement, especially for underserved student populations

Instructional improvement is the primary responsibility of school and district leaders. One educational saying that holds true is that there are only two groups of employees in a school district — teachers and those that support teachers. Teachers should be equipped with high expectations to teach their subjects expertly, analyze student data and differentiate their teaching to meet diverse student needs, and ensure that students make at least grade-to-grade academic progress.

To accomplish the above, teachers must have adequate facilities and equitable resources to use in their teaching, classroom mentoring, monitoring and support in on-time, on-site basis, and administrative support for school and community issues. Principals need to understand and share the instructional vision for the district, use tools to assist teachers in improving instruction and be prepared to hold the school community accountable for improved student outcomes.

The team found that principals are called out of their schools by central office on a repetitive basis for central administrative obligations that could be better handled through memoranda or technological means. Their absence means that teachers, especially those new to the district, do not always have access to their principals on a timely basis. Additionally, the monitoring program for new teachers is limited to one visit per month with less than two full-time mentors in the district. On visits to schools, the team saw the need for principals to assist teachers in setting and posting classroom objectives, organizing classrooms, checking for understanding, and assigning and monitoring rigorous tasks.

Establishing metrics and clear expectations for performance and transparent accountability for all employees

Our conversations revealed a school system that is not aligned nor organized for student success. Key leaders were appointed from positions of success, to positions for which they held no visible professional expertise. The table of organization divided SFPS into “silos,” each out to achieve individual or departmental goals without cohesive impact on system priorities or goals. Essential functions are absent (research and development) or artificially divided (student data from assessment).



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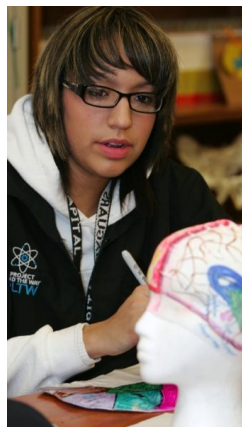
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In addition to being a waste of resources and collaborative potential, such dysfunction leads to a lack of accountability where it is most needed – at the student level. In the end, what impact do the efforts of the adults in the system have on student outcomes? In such an organization, how are leaders held responsible for the impact of their individual effort and that of their area of responsibility to the system’s goals for students? How are decisions made on resource allocation without a holistic approach to student needs? The team felt so strongly about the lack of transparency and accountability that it felt compelled to write a memorandum to Superintendent Boyd with recommendations for an immediate reorganization of the central office responsibilities, with the creation of positions to oversee the important area of teaching and learning (See Appendix A). Additional recommendations will address the other issues described above.

Some of the other pressing issues that the team addressed in its work that is reflected in the report include:

- 1) Identifying and enhancing leadership for improved teaching and learning.
- 2) Examining current evaluation practices and processes to create assessments for SFPS leaders that include student performance data and robust professional development structures, supports and systems.
- 3) Analyzing common curriculum standards and assessment portfolio.
- 4) Engaging parents and community members, including those who historically have not had a voice in SFPS.
- 5) Identifying the causes, scope, and impact of the “loose coupling” between instruction outcomes and operations, and developing organizational structures and strategies for balancing the budget while supporting an agenda of enhanced academic improvement.
- 6) Understanding the various forms of data that are collected and analyzed in the district, such as district benchmark assessments, and their relationship to improved classroom practice.
- 7) Developing strategies for serving our English Language Learners and students with special education needs.

Based on the issues we observed, analysis of the data and conversations with the SFPS community, the team believes that this is an opportune time for SFPS to consider the recommendations offered in this report. Within



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each of these recommendations, we included a brief description of the key successes and challenges of each issue as well as offered short-term and long-term strategies for consideration.

I: Creating a Culture of Urgency: Teaching and Learning at the Core

The Santa Fe School Board has already begun to address this issue with the approval of the Santa Fe Public Schools 2012 Strategic Planning document, entitled *Choose Success*. Superintendent Boyd added to that foundation with his Entry and Learning Plan and the Transition Advisory Team process. With regard to the Entry and Learning Plan, Superintendent Boyd visited all 28 SFPS schools, centers and academies during the first two days of the school year. Since the start of his tenure, Superintendent Boyd has also begun a series of targeted walkthroughs to systematically observe instruction in district schools and classrooms and give feedback and recommendations to principals and teachers on teaching and learning. He also held, jointly with School Board members, 9 community, 5 student, and 2 teacher forums to see and hear the current condition of district instructional practice and needs. Furthermore, he developed Performance Compacts for principals so that school communities are aware of the student progress expected of them (See Appendix B). The Compacts will go hand-in-hand with the zone concept and the whole school improvement process that will see schools move through the Achievement Zone continuum from Transformation to Acceleration to Innovation.

Not only have these initial reforms begun to create a culture of urgency, but they have also been deliberately *public* processes sequentially and thoughtfully built on data derived from the entry and transition processes and designed to bring SFPS together to accelerate the pace of improvement of all of Santa Fe's students.

Initiating the Transition Process — Adding to the Superintendent's Data

Given the fact that schools were not open when the transition process began in July, team members began their data collection with central office

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personnel. Superintendent Boyd asked each department to provide him with a memorandum describing the following:

- Current priorities and activities of the area of responsibility
- Issues to be completed for a successful opening of schools
- Three “hot button” issues that require immediate attention

Suggestions for innovations or modifications of current practice that will improve outcomes for staff or students, and/or possibly provide cost savings from this year’s budget (Changes that will benefit SFPS now)

At the central office level, the transition team found the lack of coherence of effort to support high quality instruction, usage of data to guide instruction, focus on developing instructional leaders, and appropriate support for the instruction of special education and ELL students exacerbated the need for a culture of urgency. Specific findings and recommendations follow.

Finding 1: Need for Collaboration and Coherence

Key Successes

As a result of our interviews with central office personnel, it became apparent that people are working hard. Each department shared its individual successes, and central office staff members, in general, were helpful and eager for an aligned and coherent strategy to improve schools. While they are proud of the fact that ten schools improved by at least one letter grade during SY 2012, they recognize that they can do better.

Primary Challenges

A major challenge to creating internal coherence and alignment is a lack of collaboration amongst central office departments; thus, the organization functions in silos. A strong theme that emerged from our focus groups was the impact of departments working in isolation. For example, one person explained it this way, “I have felt that I have been in a silo. There has not been good communication and decisions have not been made collectively. We have not worked collaboratively.” Another person stated, “We do not work as a team.”

Another challenge is the lack of a clear vision and implementation plan of how to get there. Due to the fact that there has not been a clear vision,



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there are many programs in the district, but they are not aligned. Staff spoke about wanting clear expectations so that they can align their work. For example, one person stated, “I want someone to say, “This is where we are going, and this is how we are going to get there.” Another person explained, “I remember a time when our arrows were pointed in the same direction. Now there are pointed in different directions.”

Short-Term Goal

- **Seek input from school and district leadership on how to improve collaboration and internal coherence.** To break down the silos and to foster teamwork, school and district leaders must engage in conversations about how to improve communication, decision-making and program alignment for improved student learning. The transition effort and the Superintendent’s listening and learning effort have included sessions with central and school leaders as well as teachers and the greater community. The leaders were candid and straightforward, pointing out the need for a common vision for their work. They were equally candid about the shortcomings of the district. Their input was included in this report as well as in the Superintendent’s reform plan and cabinet reorganization.

Long-Term Goals

- **Establish clear systems and expectations for collaboration at the district level.** To improve systems and structures to better support schools, it will be important to include a cross-function of personnel in decision-making to end working in silos. Use the cabinet reorganization to create a leadership team representing each department to make decisions about curriculum and instruction and supporting schools.
- **Align programs and departments to support teaching and learning.** With the new cross-functional leadership team, establish clear expectations and goals for district personnel through the Performance Compacts. These expectations and goals should align to student learning goals. Once these expectations and goals are developed, district personnel can be supported and held accountable for accomplishing these goals.
- **Align curriculum and instruction department to better support schools.** Curriculum and instruction personnel need to be more involved in schools to support the needs of principals and teachers and the follow-up work of the walkthroughs/instructional rounds.



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Finding 2: Need for Focusing on Data to Guide and Improve Instruction

Key Successes

Interviews with Central Office personnel, principals, and the analysis of documents revealed that there are software systems available for managing data. However, formative assessment data is limited and principals do not have access to real time data.

Primary Challenges

With limited formative assessments, principals lack the tools to use data to guide instruction. Thus, they are unable to monitor students to place them appropriately in courses and in interventions.

Short-Term Goals

- **Train principals and teachers on how to analyze and use formative assessment data to improve instruction.** Now that Discovery formative assessment data are available, it will be critical to train principals and teachers on how to interpret this data so that they understand their students' strengths and weaknesses.
- **Train and support principals in learning how to monitor progress.** Principals need professional development on how to manage their time so that they can make observing classroom instruction a priority. It was apparent through school visits that the monitoring of instruction was inconsistent or not happening in schools. The only way to monitor progress, and to support that progress, is to be in classrooms.

Long-Term Goals

- **Hold principals accountable for monitoring progress in classrooms.** Principals need to observe instruction in classrooms to ensure that instruction improves. Principals must also use data to focus on and strengthen areas of instructional weaknesses.
- **The Assistant Superintendent needs to have systems in place that show evidence of monitoring and supporting instruction.**



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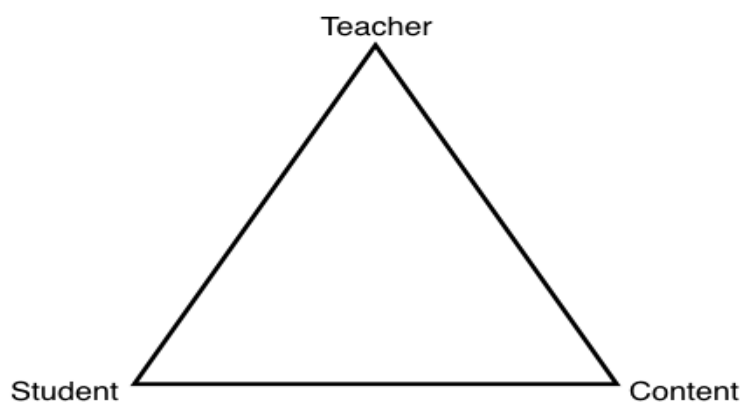
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II: Creating and supporting leadership for instructional improvement, especially for underserved student populations

In addition to meeting with central office leaders, reviewing documents and reports, and analyzing data, the transition team was able to visit schools and speak with principals and join them in classroom visits. Additionally, Chief Academic Officer Abeyta, a member of the transition team, was able to lead instructional rounds, or learning walkthroughs in a small number of schools as she assumed her duties. This is consistent with the belief that the focus of all efforts to improve learning must occur in and around the instructional core — the intersection and interaction of the teacher, student and content (Cohen and Ball, 1999; City, Elmore et al, 2010).



Conversations with principals revealed several obstacles that inhibited their support of instructional improvement. The first was the inordinate frequency with which they are ordered to leave their buildings to attend meetings at central office. The team did not question that *some* of the reasons for this absence from their schools were important — testing protocol, opening of school orientation, or new requirements from state or federal agencies — but rather questioned the *frequency* with which they were called to central office. This was also true for assistant principals, though to a lesser extent.

For teachers to improve their instructional practice, which is the primary way that student learning will improve, teachers need and deserve the

"These leaders embrace the twin goals of equity and excellence as essential to their visions of creating challenging and rigorous environments for their students. They were not satisfied with providing opportunities for all students, seeing such a goal as a part of the unfinished civil rights agenda of another era. The goal for them now is to improve student outcomes for those who had been left behind and for those who leapt ahead academically. Some called it 'raising the floor and the ceiling,' with the ultimate target being the elimination of the achievement gap... For these leaders, no longer were the islands of excellence to be accepted as examples of what the districts could do for its most privileged students while other students languished in underfunded and academically less challenging schools. They will come to be known as 'equity warriors'."
(Peterkin et al, Every Child, Every Classroom, Every Day, 2011)



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support of their principals in monitoring and supporting their growth. Additionally, as Richard Elmore and his colleagues indicate in their book, *Instructional Rounds: A Network Approach to improving Teaching and Learning*, “We learn to do the work by doing the work, not by telling other people to do the work, not by having done the work at some time in the past, and not by hiring experts who can act as proxies for our knowledge about how to do the work.”

Principals must be active participants in the improvement of the instructional core, which means that they need to be knowledgeable about teaching and learning, skills they cannot hone in meetings at central office. Of course, some professional development of principals must be done offsite, especially if the district is also attempting to achieve collaboration and alignment both of content and context. However, such developmental experiences should be a conscious decision made by the leadership team and not by individual departments.

Finding 1: Need to Develop Instructional Leaders

Key Successes

Interviews with central office and school-based personnel and the analysis of documents revealed that staff want to learn and are eager to develop their abilities to lead instruction.

Primary Challenges

With limited focus on professional development to lead instruction, principals have not been developed into the instructional leaders that they need to be in order to lead their schools.

Short-Term Goal

- **Develop principals’ abilities to analyze and evaluate classroom instruction.** Principals need to be given opportunities to discuss what high-quality teaching is in Santa Fe Public Schools. Then, they need to be given opportunities to analyze classroom instruction.

Long-Term Goals

- **Once principals have been trained to analyze and evaluate instruction, they need to be trained and supported in giving effective performance feedback.** Principals need professional development on how to effectively give performance feedback to teachers so that they can improve instruction.



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- **Principals should engage in instructional rounds with their Achievement Zone colleagues so that they can learn from each other. The team suggests that SFPS consider using the Professional Learning Community (PLC) format to group, support and train principals to focus on instructional improvement.** As part of the PLC work, principals should be grouped by their achievement zone status to conduct instructional rounds. The basis of instructional rounds is that task predicts performance. With practicing observation with colleagues, principals will sharpen their evaluation skills and support one another.

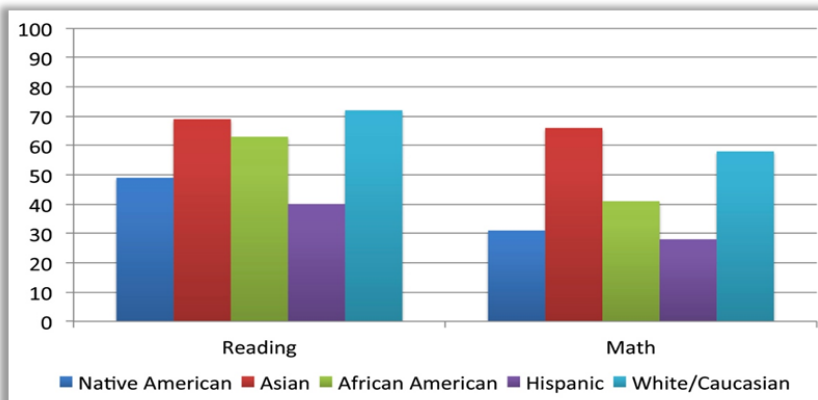
Finding 2: Need for High Quality Instruction for Underserved Populations (Special Education and English Language Learners)

The transition team feels so strongly about the current condition of programs and resources for special education students and English language learners that we devote a significant portion of the report to findings and recommendations in this area. Despite good intentions and delivery of mandated services to a majority of students deserving to have mandated services, we find the non-delivery of these mandated services to hundreds of deserving students to be unacceptable. In our experience, such a situation would call for intervention by an external entity — state department of education, local or federal court, or the U.S. Department of Justice.

We also feel that these two areas stand out as emblematic of the critical issues we have described in the introduction to this report — lack of a culture of urgency, lack of leadership for instructional improvement, and a lack of accountability.



Student Achievement



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Special Education

Key Successes

All staff members who were interviewed expressed commitment to ensuring that services are provided to special education students and advocated for them. Staff also shared that the District is committed to implementing inclusive practices and has provided professional development on inclusive practices for all teachers. The District has seen an increase in the number of autistic students and has provided professional development for teachers on working with autistic students. Finally, the District provides some planning time for special education teachers. This is critical for implementation of inclusive strategies for special education students.

Primary Challenges

Based on interviews and a review of data, there are issues regarding compliance with the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) requirements. For example, during 2011-12, there were over 400 Individual Education Plans (IEPs) and reevaluations that did not meet timelines required by IDEA. The District has posted little information on its website for parents on its special education programs and IDEA requirements. Additionally, staff reported that there is under representation of African American, Latino and Native American students in gifted programs.

District staff also reported that site-based administrators do not know what is required regarding IDEA, particularly regarding IDEA timelines, and that this may be due in part to the number of new site-based administrators and the turnover of site-based administrators.

The District does not have a way for teachers to share information, such as lesson plans. Furthermore, similar to other school districts, the District is struggling with developing and implementing data-driven Functional Behavioral Assessments (FBAs) and Behavior Intervention Plans (BIPs).

Finally, there has been a decrease in special education funding from the state, which is due in part to a change in the funding formula used by the State.



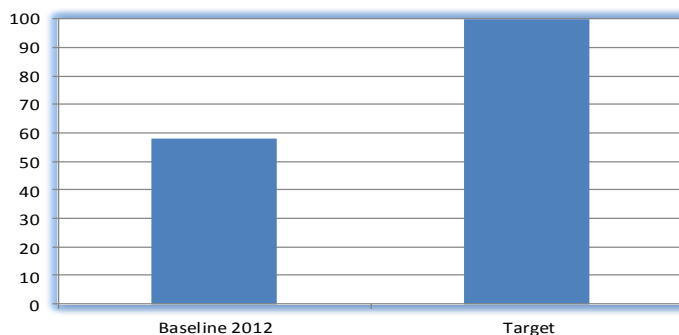
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Special Education Compliance



Immediate Goal

- **Ensure that 100% of the IEPs are up to date by December 1, 2012.** The Superintendent has a Performance Compact with principals to ensure that 100% of the IEPs are up to date by the aforementioned deadline. This is an excellent strategy for improving compliance with at least one of the IDEA timelines.

Short-Term Goals

- **The District should implement a comprehensive strategy to ensure that there continues to be compliance on the IEP timeline and other requirements of IDEA.** An example of a comprehensive strategy is the Special Education Stat process used by Baltimore City Public Schools (BCPS). The Special Education Stat process is one in which on a biweekly basis the leadership team (special education and non-special education) of BCPS meets to review data regarding compliance with IDEA requirements. Based on that review, the BCPS determines strategies for supporting schools in complying with IDEA requirements, which includes conducting site visits, meeting with school site staff to determine the reasons for non-compliance and providing additional staff to assist a school with coming into compliance with IDEA requirements.
- **The District should develop a plan for providing professional development to administrators and key staff regarding IDEA compliance requirements, including systemic issues that may be identified by the Stat process.**
- **The District should develop a process that allows teachers to share lesson plans and best practices in serving special education students.**
- **The District should review its data to determine whether African American, Latino and Native American students are disproportionately identified for special education programs.** If African American, Latino and Native American students are disproportionality identified for special education programs, the District must determine the reasons for such disproportionality and address any concerns raised by the analysis of the reasons.
- **The District should consider posting on its website additional information about special education so that parents will have access to information about special education programs and IDEA requirements.**



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- **The District should review its process and procedures for identifying gifted students and services provided, to ensure that African American, Latino and Native American students have equitable access to gifted programs.** Based on the review of current services being offered, the District should determine what, if any, changes should be made to how gifted ELL students are being served. As one of the changes, the District should consider implementing a pilot program for gifted ELL students.
- **The District should continue the work that it has begun to develop data-driven FBAs and BIPs.**
- **The District should determine whether it has a sufficient number of bilingual special education teachers to serve students identified in need of bilingual special education services.**

English Language Learners (ELL)

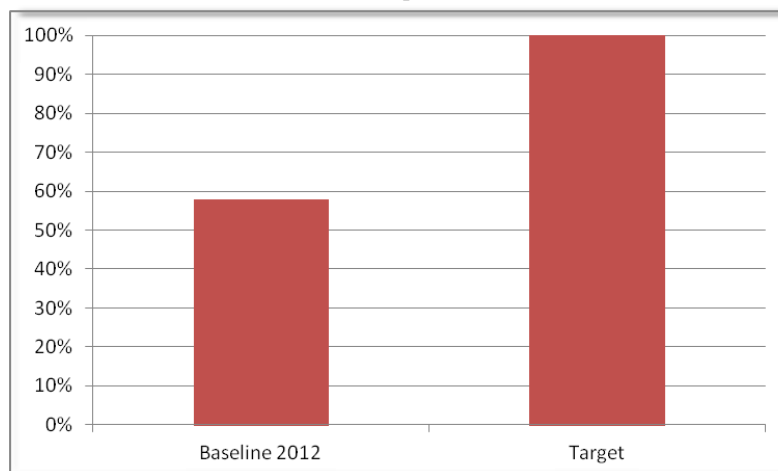
Key Successes

SFPS staff members who were interviewed recognized that all staff in SFPS — not just ELL staff and teachers — are responsible for ensuring that ELL students are provided services.

The District has adopted research-based ELL models that are to be implemented in its schools.



ELL Compliance



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Key Challenges

The District does not have a District-wide ELL plan. Since there is no District-wide ELL plan, there is inconsistency in how each school provides services to ELL students and what models are implemented in schools. Currently, there are 5 bilingual/ELL models in the district. Members of the transition team have never encountered so many models in one district. Schools are not required to develop and submit their plans for providing ELL services to anyone at the District level. In addition, some of the programs being implemented in schools may not meet state requirements. The District also does not assess students for ELL services at the District level. As a result, there are students who have not been assessed to determine if they are in need of ELL services. In some cases, the schools may complete the assessment, but not in a timely manner.

The Transition Team requested ELL enrollment data for the District and by school. The data provided showed that there were a total of 3294 ELL students enrolled in the District during in the 2010-11 school year. In 2010-11, the ELL students enrolled in the District represented approximately 28 percent of the total enrollment of the District.

Of the 3294 ELL students, there were 2197 ELL elementary students enrolled in the District in 2010-11, but 885 of these students were not being served. The data showed that there were five elementary schools that offered no ELL programs for students identified. The remaining elementary schools appeared to offer ELL programs, but did not provide ELL programs for all of the students.

At the secondary level, for the 2010-11 school year, there were a total of 1097 ELL students identified as English Language Learners and 898 of these students were not being served. From the data provided, it appears that, one school — El Dorado Community School — offered no ELL program. The remaining schools offered ELL programs, but did not provide an ELL program for all of the students.

The data provided for 2011-12 school year showed that the total number of students enrolled in the District was 3553 — an increase of 259 students from the 2010-11 school year. In 2011-12, the ELL enrollment was approximately 28 percent of the total enrollment in the District. The 2011-12 data — like the 2010-11 data — indicated that there were ELL students who were not being served.

The Transition Team conducted follow-up interviews to determine why there were ELL students being reported as not being served. During these interviews, the team was told that students were counted as not being served if they were taught by a teacher who did not have a TESOL endorsement or if the students did not have the number of minutes of ELL services required per day.



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Based on a review of data, there are students in ELL programs in some schools who have tested proficient, yet remain in ELL programs. There are ELL students in some schools who have been identified as in need of ELL services, but who are not being provided the minimum services required.

In terms of support, a number of individuals interviewed indicated that there were not sufficient materials for ELL programs, particularly materials for ESOL programs. The District also does not have a plan for providing professional development for principals and staff at each school regarding ELL programs.

Finally, the District does not have a process for monitoring ELL programs being implemented in schools.

Short-Term Goals

- **The District should develop a District-wide ELL plan and require each school to develop a plan to serve ELL students that is consistent with the District ELL plan.**
- **The District should develop a plan to increase the number of certified bilingual teachers.**
- **The District should conduct an audit of instructional resources provided for ELL programs and develop a plan to address any lack of resources identified by the audit.**
- **The District should develop a plan for providing professional development for principals and staff at each school regarding ELL programs.**
- **The District should develop and implement an annual process for monitoring the implementation of ELL programs at each school and the findings.** The ELL Director should write an annual report of the findings and recommendations resulting from this monitoring this process.
- **Conduct an audit of the resources being provided for each of the ELL programs.** Review and analyze data to determine the effectiveness of the programs

Long-Term Goals

- **The District should develop ELL handbooks for administrators, teachers and parents.**



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- **The District should assess ELL students at the District level and conduct this assessment in a timely manner.** In carrying out this recommendation, the District should consider establishing a Welcome Center similar to what other school districts have done. The function of the Welcome Center would be to serve all new students to the District. Its functions would include: screening the English language proficiency of students identified by the Home Language Survey as having a non-English background; determining a student's eligibility to receive services based on screening instrument scores; making appropriate placement recommendations for ELL students; informing new families to the District about instructional programs in the District and resources available in the District and the Santa Fe community.

III: Establishing Metrics and Clear Expectations for Performance and Transparent Accountability for All Employees

School systems that have made consistent and substantial progress in student performance have set clear goals, accelerated the pace of improvement to achieve those goals, and have maintained an aggressive and transparent accountability system. Superintendent Boyd's initial reforms in this area, Performance Compacts and Achievement Zones, were presented to the School Board on October 16, 2012. What may have gone unnoticed, and what the transition team supports, is the Superintendent's use of the concept of "reciprocal accountability (Fuhrman and Elmore, 2004). Essentially reciprocal accountability posits that if school leaders are to be held responsible for specific outcomes, then they must be given the training and support necessary to meet those expectations. In the previous section of this report, we described the support current leaders will need to meet the appropriately ambitious goals of the Superintendent and the School Board. We urge district leadership to continue to provide the appropriate high quality professional development and other support to school leaders and teachers to meet those goals.

As mentioned in the introduction to the report, SFPS is not organized to provide the data in useable and real time fashion to support the performance management systems for which we are advocating. The Departments of Assessment and Student Data are separate and do not appear to serve a research function. The recent reorganization of central office should begin to address this dysfunction, but we stress the need for

"Accountability must be a reciprocal process. For every increment of performance I demand from you, I have an equal responsibility to provide you with that capacity to meet that expectation."
(Fuhrman and Elmore, 2004)



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attention to this functional component of the SFPS new accountability system.

Achievement Zones

Key Successes

Interviews with Central Office and school-based personnel indicated that schools and staff are working hard despite the lack of support and resources which are needed to address the diverse challenges of different schools.

Primary Challenges

Decisions for schools related to funding and resources have largely been provided under a “one-size-fits-all” model driven by central office. The individual needs of schools have not been taken into account and principals have not been given the discretion of providing input into decisions that impact their schools and student achievement. Some principals have successfully advocated for additional resources and supports to improve their schools. However, there is not an objective system in place for identifying the varying needs of different schools and their individual student needs. Furthermore, the current system is one in which finances drive the decision-making in the system rather than instruction. The District must restructure in a way where finances support the academic vision.

Short Term Goals

- **Assign schools to Achievement Zones and provide funding and resources support.** Given that the inequity in funding and resources across schools was identified early in the entry and transition processes, it was recommended that the district develop an index for classifying schools based on the results of their academic performance over the past three years. The end result was the Achievement Zones, which was presented in detail at the October 16, 2012, public Board meeting. Schools are assigned to one of three achievement zones: transformation, acceleration or innovation. Based on the assigned zone, schools will receive differentiated supports and varying levels of autonomy in decision-making around budgeting and educational programming. While Central Office can provide guidance and resources that are needed to improve instruction, schools ultimately should determine how best to use these supports and interventions.



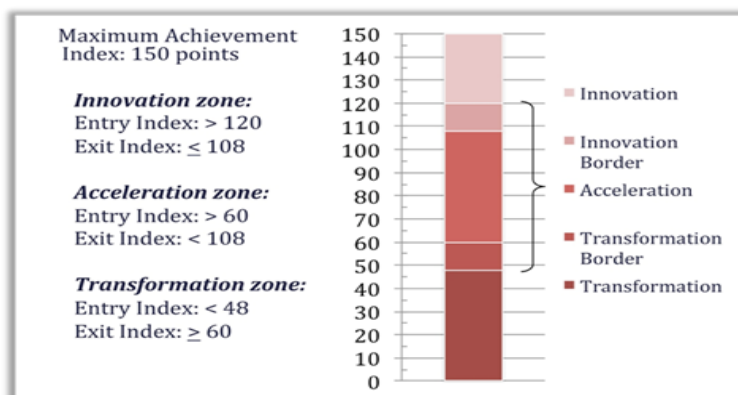
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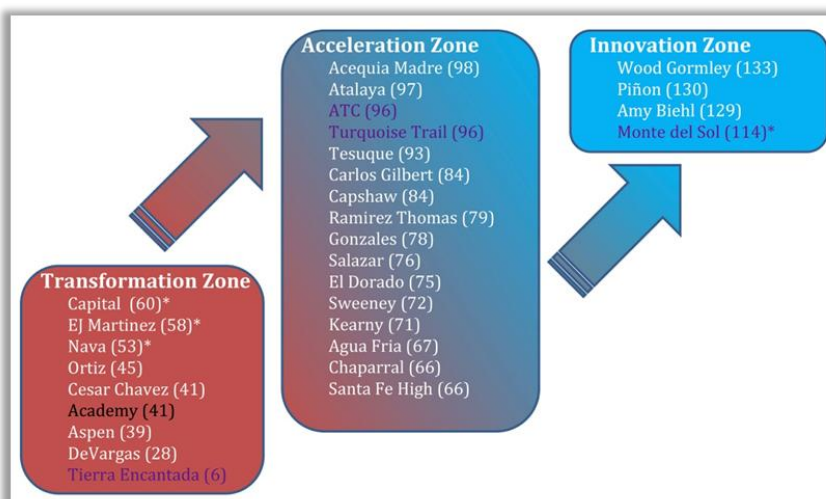
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Achievement Index



Achievement Zone Classification



Long Term Goals

- **Reassess the assignment criteria and resources provided for each of the Achievement Zones based on student achievement and growth outcomes.** The academic achievement of the schools in each of the zones will continue to be monitored and evaluated to ensure that the resources and supports provided to schools within each zone is adequate and yielding results.
- **Implement fair student funding.** Different students have different educational needs, and fair student funding is a way of allocating

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money per student directly based on the individual needs of each student. The District will develop criteria and assign weights to different student variables, such as low income, special education, gifted education, English language learner, etc., and principals will be provided with funding to meet these needs accordingly. This will result in greater equity in funding for our schools, and allow principals the necessary resources to meet their students' needs.

Performance Compacts

Key Successes

Although the district did not have a clear performance management system with annual measureable goals for each school and administrative department in place, several schools still found ways to increase student achievement and school performance. Most notably, the highest performing elementary school in the state resides within the district.

Primary Challenges

Most principals and teachers on average received satisfactory ratings on their annual performance evaluations, even with only 48% of students proficient in reading and 36% proficient in math. Central office staff members were also not consistently evaluated against individual performance goals, departmental goals or school goals. While staff maintained a commitment to serving our students and schools, the absence of clear and measurable goals and objectives made it difficult to identify specific areas of improvement in teaching and learning and staff development.

Immediate Goals

- **Given the early indications of the absence of a coherent approach to performance management, we recommended that the District immediately develop and implement a strategy for shared accountability.** This resulted in the development of Performance Compacts, a system in which schools will receive a comprehensive annual review in four key areas — student achievement, school operations, community satisfaction, and instructional leadership. Both quantitative and qualitative methods of assessment were included in the performance compacts and every principal was provided with clear targets for performance which will be evaluated at the end of the year.

Short Term Goals

- **Develop of a system of accountability for school leaders and Central office staff.** Performance Compacts will be piloted with



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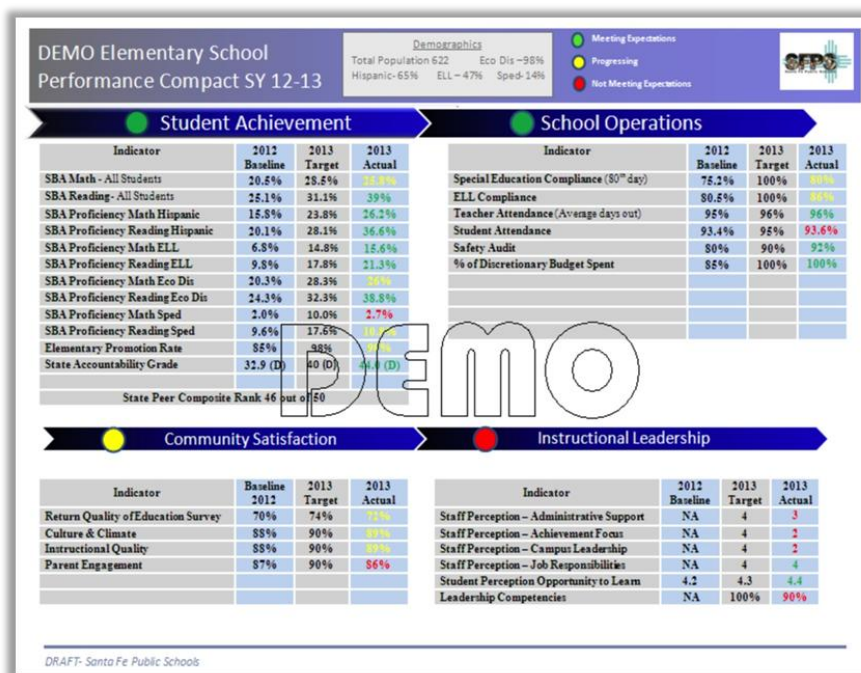
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central office departments, identifying measurable targets and goals for the support services which are provided to schools.

Long Term Goals

- **Reassess the targets and key areas included in the Performance Compacts Achievement.** Outcomes in each of the four key areas will continue to be monitored and assessed to ensure that the identified goals and targets correspond with the overarching mission of improving schools and increasing student achievement.
- **Develop and implement Performance Compacts for all Central Office departments.** Based on the outcome of the learnings from the Performance Compact pilot with Central Office departments, all remaining Central Office departments will receive a compact which outlines key areas to be assessed, and departmental goals and targets for improving performance and services to schools.

Performance Compact



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IV: Resource Allocation, Structures, and Cost Savings in Support of the New Vision

The appointment of a new Superintendent provides SFPS an opportunity to refocus its approach and vision. The transition team knows that SFPS has limited resources to initiate new reforms and programs, has little immediate prospects for additional resources and is not aligned for maximum efficiency. Given those realities, and our focus on teaching and learning, the transition team recognized its responsibility to examine the school district for efficacy and cost savings in the areas of Human Resources, operational efficiency, non-instructional support and business operations.

Key Successes:

Almost all staff members in the business/operations departments were cooperative and seemingly eager for meaningful changes. In fact, during the course of team interaction, several ideas were immediately adopted and implemented.

Key Challenges:

It was reported that SFPS does not possess a culture of professional excellence that easily embraces change. SFPS needs to develop a mission-driven, service-oriented work culture — process and system orientation is needed. Project management protocols and a discipline of follow-through and follow-up needs to be developed district-wide to improve performance and execution. One staff member indicated, “We don’t resource [initiatives] properly.”

A spirit and system of accountability is inconsistent and needs to be developed if students and staff are to be positioned to consistently achieve excellence in their work.

Short Term Goals

Operational Efficiency

- **Due to the economic constraints of the SFPS, investigate any and all cost savings and operational efficiency ideas.** These include the following:
 - Address inefficiencies in Special Education which may be yielding high costs, compliance and instructional deficiencies

Superintendent Boyd has already begun to provide the roadmap to meeting these goals through bold, but tested, approaches to reform.



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- Address absenteeism among teachers and other staff, reported to be almost 2X the national norm.
- Consolidate severely under-utilized school campuses.
- Explore high school redesign options.
- Evaluate current scheduling at high schools. Current implementation of block schedule on high school campuses may be creating academic deficiencies and cost inefficiencies. This appears to be exaggerated at Santa Fe High School due to its size and lack of attention to scheduling and course offerings.
- Collapse AP, pre-AP, and Honors offerings into one section per subject/course. (Note: there was not agreement that actual “honors” level courses are being offered.)
- Address class size state mandate and the degree to which SFPS goes beyond the mandate
- There may be a high number of curricular variations, inconsistencies in adoption, purchases, and uses of textbooks which, if resolved, could yield considerable cost savings and improvements in instruction and professional supports to teachers. These changes will require policy and practice changes.
- Use of teacher and other employee stipends could be restricting funds which could otherwise be used to increase teacher and employee pay.
- Title I strategies for accrual of funds and deployment of resources appears to lack focus and strategic alignment with the needs of Title I eligible students and schools.
- Pension payments (9.4% employee contribution and 10.9% SFPS employer contributions) are high and should be addressed with the state government to seek flexibility in uses of those SFPS funds.
- Align uses of vacancy savings with funding priorities.
- Late IEPs cause late and missed revenue accruals from state government.
- Too many students are transported by SFPS transportation to non-home-school zoned schools, where not required by law.
- Medicaid reimbursement for transportation services is currently managed manually. There are significant improvements available which could increase the reimbursement funds that are billed and collected.
- Additional energy savings should be explored.
- Transportation contract language dictates pay for non-worked hours for bus drivers.
- Improved management of overtime expenses should be explored and achieved, particularly in Transportation and General Services.



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Critical Functions

Due to the current organizational design of the Superintendent's Cabinet which lacked certain critical functions, checks and balances, and necessary focal areas, the team recommended these immediate next steps:

- **A well-qualified Chief Academic Officer/Deputy Superintendent be recruited and appointed as soon as possible.** The curriculum and instruction, schools, and several non-instructional areas of SFPS rely heavily on this type of position. Due to a vacancy in the CAO position, the absence of leadership (operationally and programmatically) has caused a slow-down or halt to many important functions.
- **A well-qualified Assistant Superintendent for Equity and Instruction be recruited and appointed as soon as possible.** This position should report to the CAO/Deputy Superintendent with ancillary reporting to the Superintendent for lines-of-communication only. All SFPS school principals should report directly to this Assistant Superintendent. A span of control of up to 30 principals is certainly within new norms of efficient and effective school districts.
- **A well-qualified Chief Accountability and Strategy Officer be recruited and appointed as soon as possible.** This position should report directly to the Superintendent and assemble and operate a team to design and implement a performance management system, progress monitoring and academic performance accountability data reporting systems, and serve as the program evaluation office to determine returns on resources and investments. This position should also be charged with leading and managing strategy planning and implementation on behalf of the Superintendent, School Board/Superintendent Governance Team and the entire SFPS organization.
- **A well-qualified Chief of Staff be recruited and appointed as soon as possible.** This position should report to the Superintendent and focus on several support areas to the Superintendent and his staff with a supervisory responsibility for Community Engagement, Media and Public Relations, and Legislative Affairs. From a review of comparative school districts it appears that a salary of \$100,000-110,000 be targeted for this position to ensure top-talent and opportunity for longevity for the new executive. The Chief of Staff's office should be staffed with appropriate and highly-talented team members for each of the three functional areas listed above.



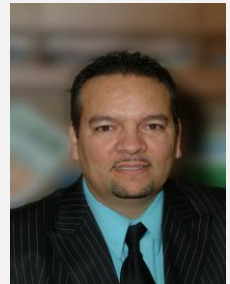
Almi Abeyta,
Chief Academic Officer

Appointed in September 2012

*Previously the Assistant
Academic Superintendent for
Middle and K-8 Schools, Boston
Public Schools*

*Doctoral Candidate, Urban
Superintendents Program,
Harvard Graduate School of
Education*

*Master of Arts in Education
Policy and Management,
Harvard Graduate School of
Education*



James Lujan,
Assistant Superintendent

Appointed in October 2012

*Previously the Principal of
Ernie Pyle Middle School –
Albuquerque Public Schools.*

*Doctoral Candidate,
Educational Leadership,
University of New Mexico*

- **The current Chief Financial Officer holds an important portfolio of leadership and managerial responsibility; thus, the title for this position might be better assigned as Chief Operations Officer.** The position also appears to be staffed with a talented and committed professional who stands ready to make the leap in organizational change and performance improvements anticipated under the new administration. The current salary assigned appears to be equitable but may not be competitive.

Long Term Goals

- **Build organizational capacity and processes that identify poor performers early.** Implement a plan to improve performance and involve the unions and stakeholders in the plan.
- **Implement an electronic timekeeping program that will track employee attendance, tardiness, and overtime worked.** The system should require intervention (in form of conference with deficient employees) after a set number of tardiness or absence infractions. The system should have several reporting capabilities for management to measure and detect trends, balances, and peak periods for comparisons and strategy planning. The system should automate payroll processes to better use, expend, save, and manage taxpayers' funds.
- **Design, implement, and manage a comprehensive system to better align all non-instructional functions to support the instructional mission of SFPS.** Steps required would be redefining and clarifying the instructional mission, assess each functional area's role, establish benchmarks of capacity and improvements needed, and create a performance management system.
- **Complete the Construction Management Team's protocols, data recording, and real-time accounting methods to ensure accuracy of reports.** This will greatly improve the decision-making and accountability lines between among Construction Management, internal SFPS customers, external vendors, Chief Financial Officer, Superintendent, and School Board.
- **Optimize the use of in-house and contracted-out general facilities maintenance.** This will save funds, improve service to schools, and increase morale among top-performers in these areas.
- **Migrate Human Resources from a mostly transactional shop to a strategically aligned department that is a proactive business partner to hiring and supervisory leaders in SFPS.** HR

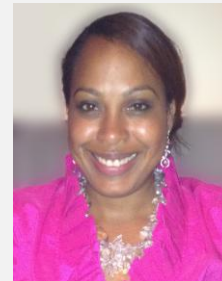


*Dr. Richard Bowman,
Chief Accountability and
Strategy Officer*

Appointed in October 2012

*Previously a Strategic Data
Project Fellow, Albuquerque
Public Schools*

*Ph.D. in Policy Analysis
(Education Policy and
Quantitative Methods),
Pardee RAND Graduate
School*



*Latifah Alfonso Phillips,
Chief of Staff*

Appointed in September 2012

*Previously the Executive
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School District of Philadelphia*

*Master of Education, Secondary
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- Pan American*

*Master of Arts, International
Education Development,
Columbia University - Teachers
College*

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processes and staffing should be organized around the lifecycle of the employee experience (e.g. recruitment and selection; employee support and benefits; employee retirement; intervention; resignation; dismissal).

- **Migrate School Food Service from a mostly nutritional, government compliance department to one that embraces “food service excellence” and is aligned with the instructional mission of SFPS.**
- **Re-cast roles of Construction Management (CM) staff and implementation of CM protocols to improve partnership with key internal customers, and to ensure that CM is not doing the inputs/design work for its internal customers.**
- **Design and implement management protocol to improve attendance and punctuality in school transportation to improve service to students and schools and to improve cost and operational efficiencies in the department.** This is an area that could benefit from and use outside technical assistance productively and would likely recoup any costs associated with same.
- Have a Technology Performance Audit conducted to assist the director in recasting plans, revisiting staffing and other resources in light of a new SFPS administration. There is a wide gap between SFPS technology needs and the technology department’s current capacity.



Conclusion

The Transition Advisory Team to Dr. Joel Boyd and the Santa Fe Public Schools offers this report as an unique opportunity for SFPS to take a fresh look at the data with which they will positively address SFPS’ inherent *promise* to provide rigorous teaching and learning and positive educational outcomes for *all* students. As importantly, SFPS’ leaders can use the findings and recommendation within to fashion a system that fully addresses the *reality* of educational equity for *all* students. The topics selected by Superintendent Boyd—Teaching and Learning, Equity, Culture and Context, and Operations—are essential to eliminating the gap between SFPS’ primary goal for its graduates, creating an environment that raises expectations and promotes the high academic performance of all students at 100% of Santa Fe Public Schools, and its current condition. Our inquiries, discussions, and recommendations examined the successes

Santa Fe Public Schools offers this report as an unique opportunity for SFPS to take a fresh look at the data with which they will positively address SFPS’ inherent promise to provide rigorous teaching and learning and positive educational outcomes for all students.

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of the district but also revealed the considerable challenges inherent in striving to be both equitable and excellent in student outcomes. The District's core beliefs guided our work:

- A high quality education is a fundamental civil right of every child in our schools.
- Teaching and learning are at the core of our work. Everything we do must be in support of what happens in the classroom.
- Parents are our partners. They are our students' first and best teachers.
- There is no silver bullet to improving our schools. Putting every child on a path to college requires hard and steady work, each and every day.
- Every adult in the system is responsible for the academic success of our children.



Some of our recommendations may seem radical, given the incremental progress SFPS had made in student achievement over the past decade. Testimony given by multiple SFPS and community constituencies to Superintendent Boyd and the team, and the performance gaps endured by SFPS students suggest a more aggressive agenda is needed and supported. If not, as Superintendent Boyd reminds us, "If we maintain our current rate of improvement, we will not achieve 100% proficiency until the year 2168". Providing a rigorous curriculum and qualified teachers and leaders available in all classrooms and schools on the first day and each day of the school year and allocating resources according to student need and program success rather than adult convenience will take strategic focus, political courage and a fierce commitment to equity and excellence unparalleled in SFPS or any major, urban school system.

The Transition Advisory Team has attempted to provide evidence of the challenges and suggest potential recommendations for resolution of persistent problems. We recognize that, in a short period of time, we did not address all the issues some may have wished. We did approach our assignment with the conviction that SFPS can be an equitable and excellent school district for all of its students. Nothing that we found changed that conviction.

The Transition Advisory Team thanks Joel Boyd for this opportunity to serve the students of the Santa Fe Public Schools.

If we maintain our current rate of improvement, we will not achieve 100% proficiency until the year 2168.

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DR. JAMES HONAN, *Senior Lecturer*, Harvard Graduate School of Education

MAREE F. SNEED, ESQ., *Partner*, Hogan Lovells

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LATIFAH ALFONSO PHILLIPS, *Consultant, Transition Team*



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Acknowledgements

The Transition Advisory Team would like to acknowledge the SFPS staff who participated and contributed to the entry process. Without their contribution, SFPS would not be poised to take the next steps toward equity and excellence for all SFPS students.

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Nancy Davis, Coordinator of Indian Education
Angela Dawson, Assistant Director for Human Resources
Leanne DeVane, Music Coordinator
Tricia Elmer, Director of Special Education
Laurie Farris, Interim Director of Transportation
Tita Gervers, Director of Student Wellness
Donna Grein, Federal Programs Coordinator
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Cynthia Sanchez, Principal Academy at Larragoite
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Robert Tafoya, Data Specialist
Lynn Vanderlinden, Director of Assessment and Accountability

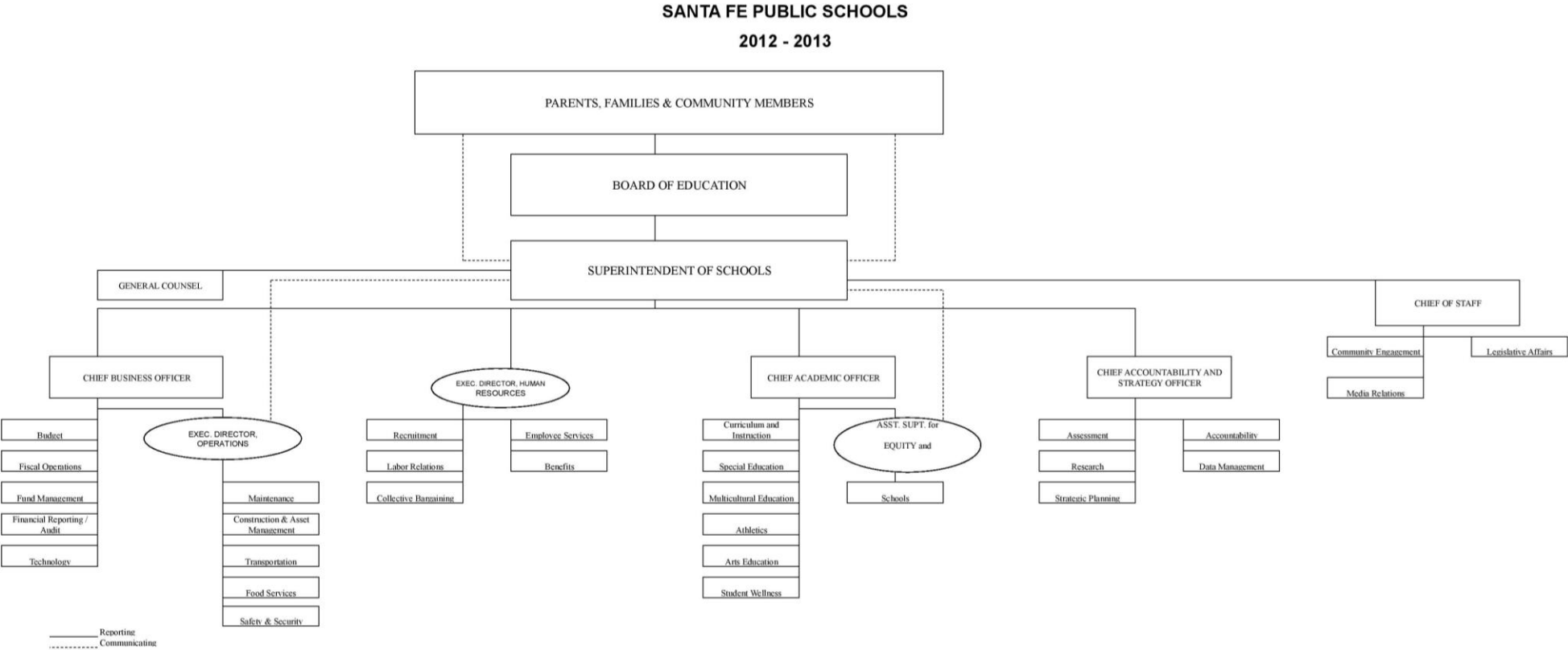
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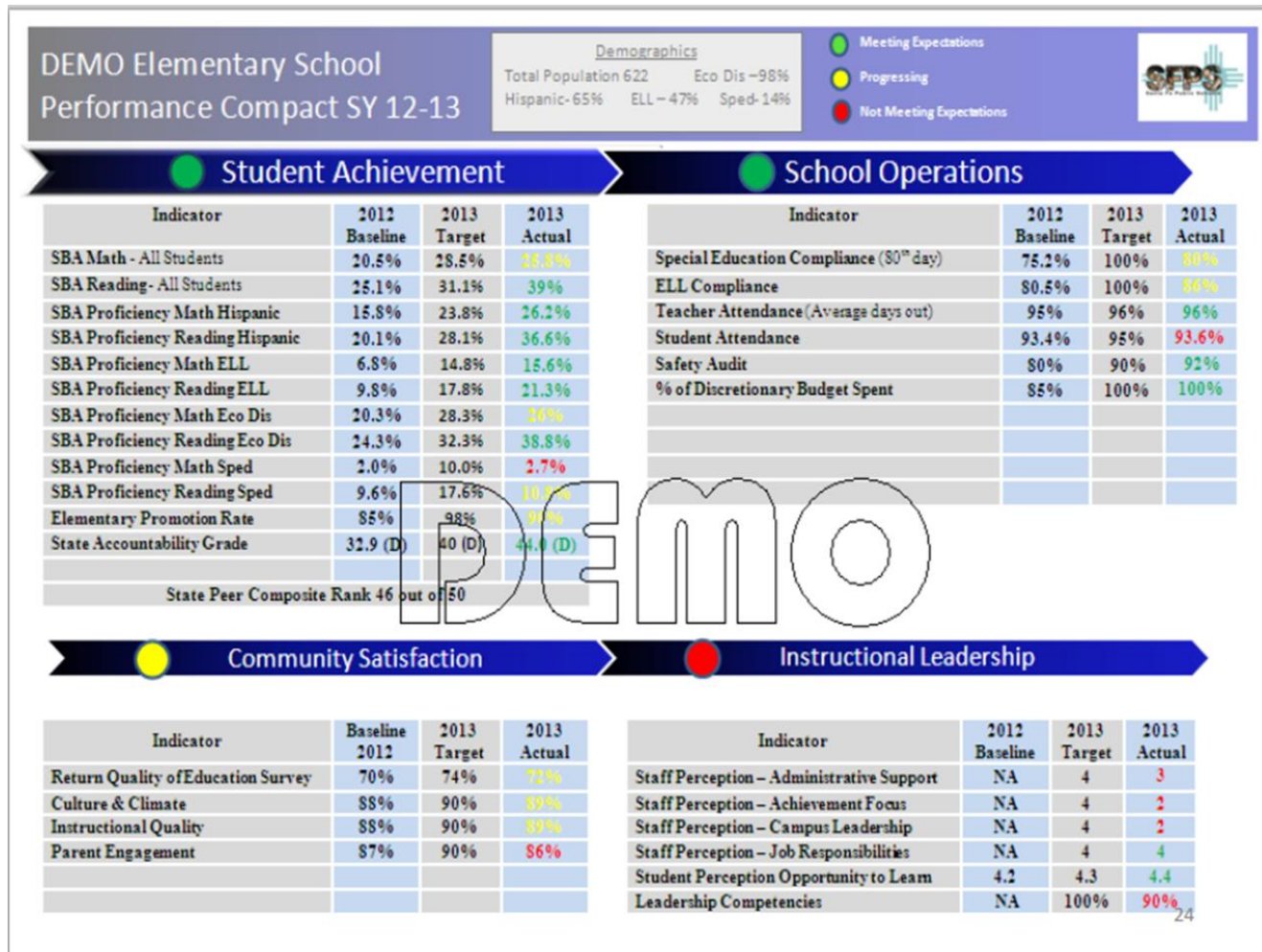
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Appendix A



Appendix B



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