

KELLER INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT
COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW

**KELLER ISD BUSINESS OPERATIONS
Maintenance and Operations Department**

Submitted by School Business Group

I am pleased to present the attached Executive Summary and District Response to the School Business Group's Comprehensive Review of the district's Maintenance and Operations Department.

The Comprehensive Review document includes 3 volumes of material that will be of significant benefit to the administration, particularly in the next two years as we begin to develop a baseline of programs, services, and procedures under total in-house management and supervision. While the process of getting to this point was often difficult and sometimes controversial, the resulting product of SBG's efforts is a compendium of ideas for consideration as well as recommendations to deal with problems that have vexed the Maintenance and Operations department for a number of years.

Of particular note is the range of programs that are provided as part of the Comprehensive Review package submitted by SBG. These include a multitude of training programs specifically targeted to Maintenance and Operations personnel. These programs are:

- Conflict Resolution
- Improvement Initiatives
- Training To Be a Leader
- Professionalism for Everyone
- Strategies of Management
- Effective Communications
- Accountability and Productivity
- Continuous Quality Improvement
- Marketing (Maintenance and Operations)
- The Good and Bad of Teams
- Communication Process
- Job Order Contracting

In addition to these programs, SBG has also provided a basic Energy Management Program that focuses on the areas of administrative guidelines, energy education, utility cost analysis, and energy management policy. The program outlines some basic actions to be taken to implement a program of management for heating, ventilation, air conditioning, lighting, and water resources to reduce wasted energy and water consumption in district facilities. While a significant amount of work and improvement is needed in this area, this basic program provided by SBG, if followed, is a good beginning toward the

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implementation of a comprehensive energy management program that has long been needed in the district.

Finally, the Comprehensive Review documents contain a number of useful tools, many of which have been in use simply out of necessity since nearly the beginning of the transition to in-house management. These tools enable and empower the Maintenance and Operations management team to increase productivity through more effective scheduling and by properly managing and evaluating both workers and their work. These tools include the following:

- Custodial Schedules
- Evaluation and Rating forms
- Quality Control and Inspection forms
- Daily Time Accountability Sheet
- Lunch and Break Guidelines
- Custodian Task List
- Conflict Resolution Self-Assessment process
- Auxiliary Services Management Assessment process and forms
- Comprehensive Safety Manual for Maintenance and Operations

The Comprehensive Review is now on active duty in the Maintenance and Operations department, which is as it should be. As the current year unfolds, Steve and his management team will be evaluating the processes and procedures that have been implemented as a result of the SBG recommendations. There are no implicit or explicit guarantees in the Comprehensive Review, nor were any expected. The success of the department rests ultimately on the collective talents, skills, knowledge, and energy of the management team and the employees. However, the body of work contained in the Comprehensive Review is a significant resource made possible by the willingness of the Board of Trustees to engage a group of individuals who could plant the seeds of success in a department that has not known success for a very long time.

Respectfully submitted,

Bill Stone, Asst. Supt.
Business Operations

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SCHOOL BUSINESS GROUP EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The administration hired the SCHOOL BUSINESS GROUP (SBG) to help with the transition from contract management of the maintenance and operations departments to in-house management and to perform a Comprehensive Review.

The following report is based on discussions with the maintenance and operation management and staff, central administrators, facility exterior and interior site visits, and the investigation of data, both visual and written. SBG followed the Comprehensive Review proposal as an outline and all items were reviewed. The maintenance and custodial management and operations were reviewed globally. We had the opportunity to interview the majority of all the Maintenance and Operations (M&O) staff. We were directed by the Administration to offer recommendations that would help facilitate a more effective and compliant distribution of services and funds for the district.

The District assigned Mr. Levering to introduce us to the management company's personnel and he stated each assignment and area of responsibility. The management company discussed personnel distribution and gave us an organizational chart that represented their day-to day operation.

The following administration, maintenance and operations personnel were interviewed as part of our review:

- Assistant Superintendent
- Executive Directors
- Principals
- Directors of Maintenance and Operations
- Supervisors
- Leads
- Office Staff
- Workers

The following information was reviewed:

- Existing organizational charts
- Maintenance budgets for prior years
- Job descriptions, handbook policies and procedures
- Work order forms

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- Purchase orders and invoices
- Personnel training programs
- Customer satisfaction survey instruments
- Facility and acreage information prior years

SBG had weekly meeting with Mr. Stone and Mr. Levering discussing the information that we had gathered and areas of concern and the possible improvements that could immediately take place while the transition was being completed.

Note: The following recommendations are part of the Executive Summary of the SBG Comprehensive Review. A number of the recommendations provided by SBG have already been implemented by the management team of the Maintenance and Operations department. Of particular note are the recommendations pertaining to staffing levels and organizational structure of the overall department. The administration has previously presented, and the Board has approved, the Maintenance and Operations organizational structure recommended by SBG. The department is currently in the process of fully implementing all components of this organizational structure.

Both the SBG recommendations and the district's responses to each recommendation are presented in the pages that follow. Following the recommendations are conclusions from both the School Business Group and the district's administration.

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RECOMMENDATIONS

1. The administration must ensure the safety of the maintenance and operations personnel in the district facilities or properties. The district should train an existing worker, or hire someone, to serve as a safety coordinator to train the maintenance and operations personnel monthly. Films/DVDs can be purchased to help with this process. This person should be responsible for all MSDS paperwork and the HAZ/COM programs.

The Keller ISD Maintenance and Operations Department, including Warehouse Services, will undergo extensive safety, craft skill and environmental training throughout the 2006-2007 school year. We already completed Asbestos and Mold training in July 2006 with the entire maintenance department and all the head custodians. Steve Levering will be the facilitator for all safety and craft skill training and will work with the district's new safety and emergency management coordinator as an additional resource to the department.

2. The district should implement programs that increase the maintenance and operations staff's efficiency by tracking the existing work orders and should utilize a time accountability program. The district was utilizing an ineffective work order system and could not track daily accomplished work. A new maintenance management system has been purchased and implemented.

The Keller ISD M&O Department is currently using a "Time Accountability Sheet" to track work locations, time on task and travel times between job assignments. We use the "Maintenance Direct" software from School Dude to develop, track and cost out work orders. Invoices are the third part to our accountability process. Our goal is to tie all three documents together to complete the total job process. The new system was really operated on a partial year basis since the system was not implemented until the final departure of the management company. As such, there is still a "learning curve" as the department moves toward full implementation of the system and all of its features.

3. The district should hire certified/licensed craft people whenever possible. At this time, the management needs to have support from the Human Resources Department to offer:

1. Professional Credential Tuition Reimbursement
2. Professional Development Programs
3. License Upgrades or Incentive Programs
4. Certification Training
5. Supervisor Training
6. Experience Pay Adjustments
7. Goal Setting Training

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8. Long Range Planning
9. leadership Training
10. Mentoring

The new in-house management of M&O and existing Human Resource (HR) department has not coordinated the hiring of personnel to fill current open positions in the maintenance and operations departments. The lack of coordination between the in-house M&O and HR departments might stem from the past lack of coordination between the District and the contract management company. SBG has completed a full-time-equivalent (FTE) analysis that will meet the district's meet through the 2006-2007 school year without hiring any additional personnel. The district's difficulty of hiring personnel for the vacated positions has been exacerbated by the overtime budget being cut while at the same time having the need to hire personnel, even though the district had between \$300,000.00 and \$600,000.00 of overtime the preceding 4 years. The shortfall of the overtime budget seems to have been fiscally covered by not hiring personnel for the vacated, very much needed positions. This practice has caused the maintenance and operations departments to minimally maintain the facilities and to be unable to perform preventative maintenance at all.

The administration believes that the intent of this recommendation is to highlight some important areas that will help with attracting and retaining highly capable maintenance employees. SBG is not attempting to assign responsibility for these areas to one department over another. To attract licensed or certified employees in the crafts, we need to re-examine our wage scale for these levels of employees. We are having a very difficult time competing with private business and other districts who offer much higher hourly wages. Key positions in the areas of HVAC, electrical and plumbing need to be filled by licensed or master-qualified individuals. Along with these key positions, we must, and have already undertaken efforts to develop higher levels of expectations for the journeymen and lead personnel to conduct our work. If they are going to be in a lead position, then they must reflect the skills, craftsmanship and leadership traits that are implicit in those types of positions. It is the district's duty to properly compensate these individuals in recognition of these skills and qualities.

Once licensed and credentialed employees are hired, the district needs to assist them in their continuing education in order to maintain their license. The district needs to extend the same opportunities for them to participate in professional development activities as it does for exempt employees. Any individual who is not a lead or journeyman should naturally incur the cost of training for an appropriate license, but once they obtain their license, the district should also provide some means of support for these employees to maintain their license and grow professionally, as well.

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Training of management personnel can be achieved by active participation in such organizations as the Texas Association of School Business Officials (TASBO) and the North Texas Maintenance and Operations Association (NTMOA) and attending their training sessions on various supervisory techniques. Attending state conventions and following the certification track that is offered through TASBO is very beneficial for strengthening personnel management skills. In-house staff development has already occurred. Several mini sessions have been held in goal setting, business plan development, department procedural handbook development, etc.

The M&O Department has been working hard to improve communication and coordination with the Human Resources Department. The change to in-house management poses new challenges and new opportunities for both departments. During the contract management tenure, the role of HR by necessity had to be different than what is now required. While daily supervision of M&O employees was the responsibility of the contract management company, it remained that many decisions and actions relating to M&O employees emanated from the HR department and not from the M&O department. Whether this came about because of a lack of interest on the part of the management company or for some other reason, the lingering effect of those years of benign interest in district employees has been an obstacle that we have had to overcome.

Responsibility and control for how and where employees are utilized must shift to the M&O department. The M&O department must have the flexibility to utilize employees' skills in the most productive way. HR also needs to be willing to support difficult recommendations that might be made with respect to certain employee actions if the recommendation is supported by fact and is in the best interests of the department and the district.

It often takes a very long time to fill a vacant position. Some of this is due to lack of applicant interest resulting from an uncompetitive wage, but part of it comes from the process itself and the fact that HR and M&O operate out of completely separate facilities. If the department has sufficient clerical and administrative support, then it will be in a much better position to assume more responsibility in this area and work together with HR to improve the system.

4. The Management should select the most cost-effective and timely methods for completing the work, and improvements should be made daily to increase productivity. Time accountability evaluations should be preformed weekly. A

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time accountability form has been designed, given to the management, and implemented.

As stated in the response to recommendation #2, the M&O Department has been using an instrument to document and measure the amount of productivity being accomplished. Along with the time accountability sheets, we recently evaluated all the M&O employees for the first time in a number of years. This enables us to establish a baseline to measure future growth. The process needs to become more formalized as well as embedded in the total HR process of the district.

5. The district should maintain proper levels of materials and parts to support timely repair or replacement of existing equipment or systems.

Keller ISD Maintenance and Operations (M&O) must be cognizant of the accumulative purchasing requirement of like products/services, as stated in *Texas Local Government Code*, as well as local board policies/guidelines. The Purchasing Director should assist the maintenance and operations departments with purchasing guidelines and materials should be bulk purchased and stored in a M&O mini-warehouse to reduce the miles and time that maintenance and operations employees are driving to and from the local part stores.

The administration should retrain the maintenance and operations personnel and clerks about purchasing guidelines, labor laws, chemical and life safety, and personnel accountability and efficiencies. SBG recommends the attached personnel reorganization which includes an executive director secretary, warehouse secretary, and data entry clerk. These specific positions will help better coordinate all of the paperwork and personnel to more effectively utilize the monies budgeted for the departments.

The M&O department should construct a small mini-warehouse in the existing maintenance and repair shops location. The purchasing department should better assist the management in the timely resolution of purchases and budget requests. The main warehouse will need to be doubled in size in the next few years so that bulk materials can be purchased and there will be enough room for off-loading and delivery. By adding a double stack of storage shelving and the purchase of a new type of forklift, the district can temporarily handle the materials and supplies. The textbooks should be relocated into another facility as a temporary solution for absence of space.

Steve Levering, the Executive Director of M&O, has recently completed all coursework for his TASBO certification as a “Certified Texas School Business Official.” This is an important accomplishment for both Steve and the district. As part of the completion of that certification process, Steve took three courses in the area of purchasing that provided over 18 classroom hours of training in this important area. This has been a real benefit to our key management personnel in the M&O

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department, as most of them have not had prior exposure to public school purchasing. However, as a group the management team has had extensive exposure to private sector and other governmental procurement, and the collective experience of these individuals is already leading to implementation of better purchasing practices. Of course, improvement is expected and will be an important goal of both the management team and the district's administration in the coming year.

Implicit in SBG's recommendation is the fact that the M&O department has been historically under-staffed and under-trained with respect to clerical and administrative support personnel. Issues and problems identified when the district assumed in-house management of the department suggested that the previous management company did very little, if anything, to improve administrative processes and procedures in the M&O department. The Board of Trustees has enabled the administration to begin to rectify the concerns in this area by approving SBG's recommended organizational structure, which provides the necessary clerical support to effectively manage the clerical functions of the department.

Having an effective organizational structure in place was part of our discussions with the board from the outset. We have close to 300 employees and serve 36 facility sites. We provide maintenance, custodial services and shipment of supplies and textbooks to these sites. The department needs additional staff to perform important clerical and administrative functions that are supportive of all of this activity.

We have plans to establish an M&O warehouse with supplies, tools, hardware & fasteners, lights and filters to reduce "windshield" time for our employees. Using SchoolDude's "InventoryDirect" software, we will be able to maintain enough supplies to carry out daily work order requests with very little windshield time, assuming certain budgetary constraints for next year are removed. There is not sufficient space in the current facility to extensively expand in this area, but thoughtful planning and design will enable the department to improve considerably in this area.

6. The departments should accurately track and compile all costs of maintenance and operations and be able to compare the costs against local, state, and nationally recognized standards. The new maintenance management software will compile these costs and historical data. The warehouse should inventory and enter data for each repair request. The district operations department is overstaffed, while at the same time the maintenance staff is understaffed or misallocated.

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The M&O Department is currently tracking all expenditures. Historical spending cycles are being developed for better planning for order requests. Each member of the management team will be monitoring their own budget during the 2006-2007 school years and the executive director will analyze their expenditures by comparing them with local, state and national averages. Both the district warehouse and the M&O warehouse will journal all inventory requests and shipments. Load levels will be monitored and product usage will be measured.

7. The Management should develop and implement a cost effective preventative maintenance program. The lack of historical information from the preceding management team, and the deferring of needed preventative maintenance, has created a fiscal shortfall in the funds needed to accomplish this work, now and for the future.

The Maintenance Department has established a “Maintenance Action Service Team” (MAST) that will work from 3:30 pm to 12:30 am. Their responsibility will be to work at one facility for 7-10 days completing minor and medium type work orders. They will then move to another facility to repeat the process. This will enable the department to move towards a more effective preventative maintenance program once these types of repairs are identified and taken care of.

8. The management should schedule all work in advance and minimize the need for emergency type repairs and the improvement projects should be funded separately from the regular maintenance and operations funds.

Ultimately, the scheduling of most work will be done in advance, once we move further into our preventative mode of operations. While we currently schedule critical or key jobs as suggested in the recommendation, much of what is done daily remains reactive in nature. Our goal is to achieve a “predictive” maintenance program where characteristics of equipment and facilities can be foreseen to take corrective actions before they actually create downtime.

There definitely needs to be a separation between everyday work orders and projects when budgeting for these operations. Not all work orders are projects and not all projects are work orders. The determination of what is a usual work order and what is a project will be determined by the director of maintenance and the maintenance supervisor.

9. The management should establish guidelines for projects vs. work orders and establish a good understanding with the principals regarding the differences as follows:

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Project definition – anything not already in or on an existing facility, playground or athletic facility is a project. These projects should be approved and funded separately from the maintenance and operations budget.

(Example 1) Add electrical outlet for a new computer – project, because it has to be added to the building.

(Example 2) Install sidewalk from concession stand to bleachers – project, has to be added to existing athletic facility.

Work order definition – Repair of an existing facility, playground or athletic facility.

(Example 1) Replace filters on HVAC units on Administration Building – Work order, replacing existing filters.

(Example 2) Change lock on front door at Smith Elementary – work order, working on an existing door.

The distinction between work orders and projects will be explained to campus principals this school year. We will create a better communication link by email, web page and personal visits to each location to assist them in understanding their facility better as well as what work we are doing in their facility. The administration, through the business operations department, has already developed an administrative regulation and process dealing with minor modifications to a facility. The responsibility for oversight of the process is assigned to the Executive Director of M&O. Because of the past somewhat disconnected approach in dealing with these types of projects, it is going to take some time to get everyone in the district fully acclimated to a formalized process, but it is our goal to ensure that this process is effectively implemented in the coming year.

10. The management should regularly monitor the progress of all ongoing work, both visually and historically, by utilizing a written evaluation document that is filed weekly. This form was designed, implemented, and included in this report.

A significant improvement is already being seen in this area; nevertheless, this process will be constantly monitored by all management levels. The executive director will be out in the schools 40% of his work week, interfacing with principals and their staff, to see how we can better service their needs. This will give both his staff and him an opportunity to verify the work that was completed and determine whether call backs are needed. All of this will be communicated back to the facility administration.

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11. The in-house M&O management should cross-train all of the operations staff to assist the maintenance department during the summer and holidays. The operations personnel should easily produce more work in less time, because of the district's purchase of the new custodial equipment. The custodial personnel should be retrained quarterly, on the care and use of all the new equipment. The operations personnel were completing 50% of the work with more FTE's than required, while under the direction of the contract management company. The previous contract management company allowed the operations personnel to work overtime hours rather than move the required tasks to non-school hours for efficiency.

This is a long range goal for the M&O department. We can minimize the temporary help by utilizing current staff during different seasonal times of the year. Select personnel will be cross-trained in both departments. An implicit expectation in SBG Recommendation #3 is that the district would be willing and able to provide the needed resources to train and develop employees in maintenance and operations. Cross-training employees will take time and likely will require some financial inputs in order to obtain some additional assistance in providing this type of training. The payback, as noted above, will come from the minimization and hopefully elimination of temporary employees during key times of the year.

12. The management should ensure that goals are met with prior approved line-item budgets and if not, retraining and discussions should take place on a regular basis until corrected and understood.

Because of the past lack of involvement by district M&O personnel in the budget process during the period of contract management, there is a lack of experience and history that might explain how previous budgetary goals/needs were identified and dollars assigned to match those goals or needs. It will take a full budget year before the current management team really has a complete feel for how the projected budgetary baseline meets or impacts total operations in the department.

Regarding the M&O department's non-payroll budget for 2006-07, it was hoped that, at least for one year, the department would be able to invest a significant part of the monies that were previously earmarked for contract management in projects and other needs that have been identified since the transition to in-house management. Although still uncertain as to what will be approved in the budget, the management team in the M&O department nevertheless came through with their commitment to develop a "Plan for Greatness" that includes goals in the areas of maintenance, operations, warehouse services and textbook management and activities planned in 2006-07 year to meet those goals. It will remain to be seen how much can actually be

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achieved within the budget that will be approved, but the department and its personnel will be diligent in the pursuit of their goals and in managing whatever funds are available to meet them.

13. The management should adjust the staffing levels for each craft and employee category. Use state and national standards set by APP, ASU, PEIMS, and SBG, to help request employees as needed to serve the district. SBG has recommended the FTE allocations to the district.

The recommendations from SBG regarding staffing levels for custodial and warehouse operations have already been approved and are now in place. Early indications are that the SBG plan in these areas is working successfully. We are aware, however, of some concerns expressed by campus administrators regarding custodians on their campuses. The new structure and schedule is definitely a paradigm shift for the entire district and not just custodial operations. Effective communication is going to be essential in the coming year. It will take most of the year before everyone is fully comfortable with the new structure and schedule. The department will be mindful of any concerns that may be expressed and will work closely with each campus to make sure that everyone is doing their part and that key objectives and needs are being met.

The administration is awaiting approval of the SBG recommendation for maintenance staffing as well as clerical and administrative support.

14. The management should establish an annual M&O calendar and establish dates for annually bidding in areas such as pest control, boiler certification, elevator inspections, stage rigging inspections, fire inspections, and other regulatory services. Staff holidays, required state or federal compliance meetings, the TASBO state conference, and annual certification training should be scheduled, as well.

This item has been established and is in place for future reference and practice.

15. The administration should establish better communication guidelines by initiating a business services monthly meeting. Each director should deliver a monthly report, written and verbal, on department events and expenditures, upcoming calendar events, and plans to provide services and cost, if applicable. This report should include planned capital expenditures and how they affect the other departments.

This will be initiated in the coming school year and will become an on-going function within the M&O Department. Awareness of the effects of spending, scheduled activities, training, and work

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in process will be communicated to the assistant superintendent of business operations. It will be produced by the executive director of M&O and created by the directors and coordinator of their own department.

16. The management and the staff should attend local NTM&O (North Texas Maintenance and Operations) meetings (a strong peer group with unlimited experience and knowledge available at little expense). The District should budget for participation in the TASBO (Texas Association of School Business Officials) annual state conference. This organization has the most up-to-date information on local, state, and national issues for public schools. They offer certification classes that are available to all members and school personnel.

Several members of the M&O staff are already involved in these groups and organizations. Keller ISD is also pleased to serve as host to the May 2007 NTMOA meeting where a number of area districts will be in attendance.

CONSULTANT'S CONCLUSION

The contract management company that managed the maintenance and operations departments did not control costs and did not efficiently utilize personnel or resources in the district. The district's administration should have given specific direction to the contract management personnel in regards to overtime costs, personnel utilization, and the proper maintenance of the districts equipment, buildings, and grounds. The attached pictures are a representation of the districts overall health with regard to the maintenance, operations, and warehouse departments.

The Keller Independent School District Maintenance and Operations Department should be commended for the work that is being accomplished each day. The departments are understaffed with many unlicensed and uncertified personnel, and contractors are hired regularly to accomplish work that could be completed with district personnel. The maintenance department does not have enough qualified personnel to maintain the services necessary to keep up with the growing district.

There is a unique opportunity to utilize the Maintenance and Operation Department's staffing more efficiently to serve the district in this time of growth. There are many custodial workers at each school who could be better utilized or reassigned. The employees could be cross trained in multiple job assignments throughout the district at no additional cost to the district. By taking advantage of these workers to work in more than one assignment while at the same location, the district can reduce immediate and future personnel needs and increase efficiencies. The district has an excess number of custodians and grounds personnel and not enough maintenance personnel. SBG's study and analysis of the departments show how to reallocate and better utilize personnel and resources, while cutting costs and increasing productivity.

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The district should concrete the area immediately next to the M&O departments so that the trucks and equipment can be parked in numbered and organized spaces. The Grounds department should be relocated to the same property as the M&O departments along with a new craftsman work area. The management of the M&O, transportation, and warehouse departments should be located in the existing building and the daily work relocated to a new facility.

The M&O vehicles should be replaced on a schedule that is based on mileage or age. The M&O department needs to replace many of its vehicles.

The M&O department transition will take more than a year before trust can be seen by the customers at each facility. The surveys show that much work is ahead for the M&O departments. The management staff is new and the realignment has started to take place. As all of this happens, the M&O management should spend a large percentage of their time evaluating the services that are provided to the schools.

It is the opinion of district administration and the Maintenance and Operations executive director that the review conducted by the School Business Group is right on target. The administration has already addressed the fact that, because of the difficulties encountered during the transition process, some of the recommendations have been in place for a good part of the past school year, the results of which have proven to be positive. Employee morale has improved, though there are still a few employees that are not quite fully on board with all the changes that are being made. We are experiencing lower accident rates in vehicles, lower personal injury rates, and better daily attendance. Overall, it seems that our M&O employees have a greater appreciation for the department as well as for their own assigned jobs and responsibilities.

We still have a few employees who are not working in the area that they are best suited for, but this will be corrected in the near future. In that respect, it is important to reinforce the idea that it should be the ability and prerogative of the M&O department to manage their personnel in such a way as to place them when and where they are needed most. Ultimately, both the district and the employee will benefit when this realization is achieved.

Customer Service has to be the number one focus of the Maintenance and Operations Department. We need to do our part in meeting the goals and objectives of the District Improvement Plan by providing a safe, clean, well-supplied and well-maintained environment for our students to learn in and our staff to work in. We can accomplish great success by “planning our course and following our plan.” We believe that the entire body of work encompassed in SBG’s Comprehensive Review will

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help steer the department in the right direction in the coming years.