



# KEY FINDINGS: Beaverton School District Business Practices Review

March 2008

In October 2007, the Oregon Association of School Business Officials led an independent review of business operations in the Beaverton School District. OASBO's key findings and recommendations:

## COMMENDATIONS

- ***The district has an excellent process for setting budget priorities that should be replicated in other districts.*** High-level investment decisions are shaped by an “innovations process team” that includes district-wide representation. This team receives and analyzes requests for resources, and directs dollars to the areas of greatest need.
- ***District resource distribution is transparent, fair and predictable.*** The district’s “resource allocation model” has significantly improved the relationship of budget to the needs of each child, based on such factors as student mobility and poverty. As one staff member aptly puts it, “money is matched with district goals.”
- ***The district exercises strong collaborative leadership and community engagement.*** The superintendent is highly regarded and respected, and collaborative leadership is evident in decision-making and in partnerships that have been formed throughout the community with local companies such as Intel and NIKE. The communications and community engagement team already is planning to move on recommendations offered during a recent comprehensive outside audit.
- ***Cooperative purchasing of supplies, materials and food helps keep costs down.*** The district “piggybacks” purchases with other districts and government agencies, which saves time and allows all participants to benefit from the larger purchasing power of the group.
- ***The district has created community partnerships to reduce maintenance costs.*** District staff and contractors work with the Tualatin Hills Parks and Recreation District to maintain districts grounds and facilities, creating savings through those shared costs.
- ***The district has invested in innovations to enhance school safety.*** The district makes good use of outside law enforcement agencies and its own school resource officers. Additionally, more than three million miles a year are covered getting Beaverton students to and from school. To make sure those miles are covered safely, the district replaces 30 buses each year and has added the technological capability to track vehicle positions at all times.

## OPPORTUNITIES FOR IMPROVEMENT

- ***Improve automation of payroll, time keeping, and leave-tracking functions.*** At every level of the district, staff is spending too much time with pencil-and-paper activities that support payroll functions. The district should develop an electronic system to track hourly employee time, coordinate its leave-tracking systems and explore a new payroll system that better meets district needs.
- ***Explore the causes of high staff turnover rates.*** Staff retention is perceived as an area that needs improvement, but there are no data about why staff leave the district (retirements, jobs elsewhere, etc.) The district should create a system that tracks specific information about teacher turnover so causes can be better identified and solutions explored.
- ***Distribute custodial, maintenance and grounds staff across schools in a more efficient manner.***
- ***Pre-plan for facility expansions, including maintenance needs.*** Beaverton is one of the fastest growing districts in the state and is adding buildings and classroom space quickly. The district should consider adding staff to pre-plan and estimate school construction and maintenance needs.
- ***Track cost-effectiveness of the food service program at the school level,*** including an analysis of whether participation at some schools should be boosted to improve the financial stability of the program, and cost effectiveness of adding any new services. Based on this recommendation, Beaverton already is beginning a cost analysis of the use of Styrofoam trays versus reusable trays.
- ***Work innovatively to expand job responsibilities to attract and retain quality bus drivers.*** Beaverton, like many Oregon districts, has trouble attracting and retaining bus drivers. That means other certified transportation department staff are often pulled from their duties to drive. The district should explore new possibilities, such as combining bus driver positions with other part-time positions.

Read the executive summary: [www.chalkboardproject.org/images/PDF/BSDExecSummary.pdf](http://www.chalkboardproject.org/images/PDF/BSDExecSummary.pdf)