

KEY FINDINGS:

Yoncalla School District Business Practices Review

August 2008

In August 2008, the Oregon Association of School Business Officials led an independent review of business operations in the Yoncalla School District. OASBO's key findings and recommendations:

COMMENDATIONS

- **The district provides an exceptional mentor program for first-year teachers.**
The program provides a stipend to the mentor and time for mentor/mentee meetings.
- **Technology is a clear priority for the district.** Full-time technology coordinator manages the district Website and technology upgrades needed to equip students.
- **The district has reduced costs and increased efficiencies in transportation.** Actions include reducing idling times of buses, adopting a replacement plan for buses and coordinating extra-curricular transportation with neighboring districts.
- **Solid internal communications keep staff morale high.** An annual summer barbecue hosted by the superintendent and ongoing opportunities for staff to get into the classrooms create an enjoyable working environment.
- **Dedicated staff keeps school buildings operating without interfering with student learning.**

OPPORTUNITIES FOR IMPROVEMENT

- **Make technology a priority in the business office.** As the hub of the district, the business office needs to meet the increasing demands of regulatory agencies, vendors, the community, schools and departments.
- **Develop a multi-year plan for the overall educational budget and more detailed financial reports to the board.** Long-term forecasting will be key in providing consistent and stable educational services. Reports should compare actual spending with budget projections.
- **Launch a Community Relations Advisory Committee.** This will help build community support and unify the board and district.
- **Require all reference checks to be performed by district administrative personnel.** Having volunteers do this creates significant liability concerns.
- **Provide additional training to the board and administration on public meetings law, labor and employment issues.** This will help avoid inadvertent contract violations and make employment disputes less likely.
- **Focus on proactive rather than reactive maintenance.** Review the system for planned tasks and procedures for major building development.
- **Ensure consistent and appropriate use of the school bus video recording policy.** Revise the policy to indicate who may view the recorded material, why it will be viewed, how long information will be retained and how it can be used.
- **Expand and improve school dining areas.** A pleasant dining environment is likely to result in higher participation by students who qualify for free and reduced meals.
- **Keep the superintendent a part-time position.** Hiring a full-time superintendent when the district already has two principals does not seem fiscally prudent.

Read the final report: www.chalkboardproject.org/images/yoncallafinal.pdf