

***Rockingham County Schools***  
***CENTRAL OFFICE EFFICIENCY STUDY***  
***EXECUTIVE SUMMARY***

***CONDUCTED BY:***  
***Eury Consulting Services***  
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## **Introduction**

Eury Consulting Services was engaged by the Rockingham County Board of Education to complete three studies: 1) an examination of central office staffing levels and how the central office is organized; 2) an assessment of the community and principal perceptions of the central office; and 3) an examination of the internal pay equity of central office employees.

The first section of this report summarizes the findings of the analysis of the central office staffing levels and central office organization and offers recommendations for improvement. The consultants used information obtained from the results of a survey completed by all principals about central office services, statistical data collected about similar sized school districts, and an analysis of 23 individual interviews with the central office leadership staff. The results from the principals' survey will be integrated into the observations and recommendations section of this report. A summary and complete copy of the principals' and community members' survey results follows this first section. The compensation study and recommendations complete this report.

The consultants want to express appreciation to the Board of Education and all the staff members who reviewed their job descriptions and answered clarifying questions. The consultants were impressed with the overall quality, knowledge, and commitment to the Rockingham County Schools that was evidenced by those interviewed. Central offices in North Carolina are organized in many ways and there is no "best" organizational pattern or "correct" number of employees. In general, central offices staffing patterns and numbers of staff are a function of resources and tradition.

## **Comparison with similar school districts in North Carolina**

A helpful place to begin an examination of staffing and organizational structure is to examine central office staffing patterns in similar districts. The size and wealth of districts are two very important variables to guide the selection of comparison districts. The consultants began with a review of six NC school districts similar in enrollment to Rockingham County. The six comparison districts listed from largest to smallest include: Moore County, Brunswick County, Burke County, Caldwell County, Lincoln County, and Wilson County. Table 1, on the next page, displays the enrollment, the number of teachers at the end of the first month of school, the per pupil teacher ratio, the percent of economically disadvantaged students, and the number of charter schools.

**Table 1 - Comparison data from six districts similar in size to Rockingham County**

School District	Students	Teachers	P/T Ratio*	% Eco. Dis.**	# Charter Schools
Moore County	12,541	818	15.3	45.1	3
Brunswick County	12,458	816	15.3	62.0	2
Burke County	11,999	781	15.4	63.2	1
<b>Rockingham County</b>	<b>11,969</b>	<b>735</b>	<b>16.3</b>	<b>63.1</b>	<b>1</b>
Caldwell County	11,445	799	14.3	62.1	0
Wilson County	11,445	743	15.4	72.1	2
Lincoln County	11,329	729	15.5	48.1	1

\*Pupil Teacher Ratio

\*\* % Economically Disadvantaged

Data Sources: The enrollment, number of teachers, and percent of economically disadvantaged students was taken from the Statistical Profile of NC Public Schools (2017-18).

The number of teachers listed in Table 1 includes teachers paid from all sources. A district with more Title 1 dollars and/or Exceptional Children teachers may artificially reduce the district's average per pupil teacher ratio. Caldwell has the lowest pupil teacher ratio and Rockingham County has the highest. The range for percent economically disadvantaged students ranges from 45.1% in Moore and 72.1% in Wilson. Four districts are nearly identical in the percent of disadvantaged students– Brunswick, Burke, Rockingham, and Caldwell.

Table 2 displays several indicators of school district wealth – the local expenditures per student, the local effort as a percentage of the current spending per student, and the property assessment per pupil.

<u>School District</u>	<u>Local Spending per pupil*</u>	<u>Effort as a % of Revenue per student (current spending*)</u>	<u>Adjusted Property Values Per Pupil*</u>
Moore County	\$1,957	21.6%	\$912,949
Brunswick County	\$2,414	18.2%	\$1,762,049
Burke County	\$1,117	33.8%	\$533,681
Rockingham County	\$1,240	32.6%	\$553,553
Caldwell County	\$1,265	35.0%	\$583,166
Wilson County	\$1,455	36.3%	\$494,383
Lincoln County	\$1,407	24.5%	\$699,997
*2019 Local School Finance Study (Public School Forum)			

Brunswick County's property assessment behind each student is considerably more than the other six districts; however, their effort as a percent of local revenue per pupil current spending is the lowest among the seven districts. With less effort, Brunswick County provides the highest local current expense per pupil of all seven districts. The adjusted property assessment per student in Burke County, Rockingham County, and Caldwell County are very similar; all three make nearly the same percentage effort per student; and produce per pupil expenditures that range from \$1,117 in Burke to \$1,265 in Caldwell.

Looking at Tables 1 and 2 the school districts in Burke, Rockingham, Caldwell, and Wilson Counties are very similar in size, wealth, adjusted tax assessment per student, tax effort per student, and percentage of economically disadvantaged students. Brunswick has a similar percentage of economically disadvantaged students yet spends nearly \$1,000 more per student due to their very high adjusted tax assessment per student (even with a lower percentage effort). Both Lincoln and Moore Counties have similar percentages of students in poverty but are both nearly a third lower than Burke, Rockingham, Caldwell, and Wilson Counties. Moore, Brunswick, and Lincoln Counties have larger adjusted assessment per student and lower percent effort per student than Burke, Rockingham, Caldwell, and Wilson Counties.

Districts use many different job titles and staff their central offices differently. As stated earlier these differences reflect past history and particular emphases on special programs of local interest. Consequently, it is difficult to provide an "apples-to-apples" comparison of central office staffing in a chart. However, it is reasonable to assume that the staffing in the Finance and Human Resource Departments should be similar since the base staffing should be similar and the total number of employees and volume of work should result in proportional differences. Table 3 compares the number of full-time equivalent employees in these two departments for all of the seven districts – Burke, Rockingham, Caldwell, and Wilson are grouped together since all three have similar per-pupil expenditures (Table 2), similar effort (Table 2), similar adjusted property values per student (Table 2), and a similar percentage of economically disadvantaged students (Table 1).

<b>Table 3</b>			
<b>Full Time Positions in Finance and Human Resources Departments</b>			
<b>(based on web-site data)</b>			
<u>School District</u>	<u>FT staff Finance</u>	<u>FT staff HR</u>	<u>Total</u>
Burke County	9	6	15
Rockingham County	9	4	13
Caldwell County	8	4.9	12.9
Wilson County	8	10	18
Moore County	8.5	6	14.5
Brunswick County	12	9	21
Lincoln County	5	7	12

The data points provided for Rockingham and Caldwell Counties in Tables 1 and 2 are nearly identical and their staffing levels in HR and Finance are nearly identical. Caldwell's County's HR department is led by an assistant superintendent who spends 10% of his time working in other areas. Caldwell has essentially one more HR staff member and Rockingham has essentially one more finance person. Burke and Wilson Counties are also very similar to Rockingham and have more staff in HR and Finance - 15 total staff in Burke and 18 total staff in Wilson.

The number of positions for each Finance and HR departments was collected from the directory for each department located on each district's website. All but one Finance Officer verified the data by e-mail. Only three of the HR Directors verified the data via e-mail. Some districts assign benefits specialists to either HR or Finance. Similarly, some districts include technology support staff as a part of either the HR or Finance departments. Caldwell has an assistant superintendent in HR who responded that he spent 90% of his time in HR and 10% supervising other areas. Administrative assistants within HR or Finance may have other duties outside their department. The consultants asked that question via e-mail to the department director and all who responded clarified the role of their reported administrative assistants. Two Finance departments had internal auditors listed in Finance. And there were several "other" positions whose title clearly placed them in Finance or HR. For example, one Finance office had an accountant in addition to payroll, accounts payable, and purchasing staff. The consultants created Tables 4 and 5 using titles that were used in at least two school districts and then placed a "singleton" position in the "other" category. Table 4 includes the titles and numbers of staff included in the Finance departments and Table 5 includes the titles and numbers of staff in the HR departments.

<b>Table 4</b> <b>Finance Department</b> <b>Comparison by Job Titles</b> <b>For Full Time Staff by Selected Districts</b> <b>(per website and email)</b>							
Finance Officer	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Assistant Finance Officer	0	1	1	0	0	1	1
Accounts Payable Specialist	3	1.5	2	3	2	1	2
Payroll Specialist	3	2.5	2	2	2	4.5	3
Purchasing Specialist	0	2	3	1	1	0	1
Finance Tech support	0	0	1	0	0	0	0
Benefits Specialist	1	0	0	0	1	0	0
Internal Auditor	0	1	1	0	0	0	0
Adm. Assistant	1	0	1	0	0	0	0
Other	0	0	0	1	0	1	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>8.5</b>	<b>8</b>

Job Title	Rockingham	Brunswick	Burke	Caldwell	Lincoln	Moore	Wilson
Director	1	1	1	.9	1	1	1
Asst. Dir.	0	0	0	1	0	1	0
HR Specialists	3	2	1	1	3	2	4
Tech Support	0	1	1	1	0	0	1
Adm. Assist.	0	2	2	1	0	1	1
Benefits	0	2	1	0	0	0	2
Other	0	1	2	0	1	1	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>4.9</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>10</b>

In summary, Rockingham and Caldwell Counties are the most efficient among the comparison districts in combined Finance and Human Resources department staffing. The next section of the report will expand on the low number of HR staff members in Rockingham.

**Observations and Recommendations from Staff Interviews (recommendations are highlighted in yellow)**

**1. Technology**

One cannot overestimate the importance of the effective use of technology to deliver quality instruction to students. In all school districts significant investments have been made in purchasing technology for the classroom and keeping technology operational and current. In addition, the use of software to manage many administrative functions for all departments is significant – from “School Dude” in maintenance, to Power School for student accounting, scheduling, student records management to teacher support and staff development training platforms, to data base management in Human Resources and Finance.

Currently, the Chief Technology Officer (CTO) reports to the Assistant Superintendent for Operations and Logistics. The consultants learned in staff interviews that the CTO was not consulted on a decision by the instructional services department to purchase Chromebooks to deliver a new math program. In addition, the financial services department made decisions about a new copier contract without consulting the technology department. In both cases problems occurred. Since technology staff support all areas of the Rockingham County Schools, there are times when technology staff may be assigned to other departments. But when major decisions are being made that will involve the use of technology, the CTO and technology staff need to be involved. For this reason, the consultants would recommend that the CTO serve as a member of the superintendent’s “cabinet” or “senior staff.” The CTO could report to the superintendent or continue to report to the Assistant Supt. for Operations and Logistics. This positioning in the organization makes it more likely that the Technology department staff will



be able to deliver the support necessary for instructional technology applications and other operational applications.

Currently major technology functions reside in four areas: 1) Operations and Logistics (network staff, hardware repair, and technologists); 2) Curriculum and Instruction (Director of Digital Learning and Media); 3) Human Resources (HR data base management and power school); and 4) Finance. The consultants would recommend exploring some other configurations. Moving Power School into the Technology Department could provide some synergy since cyber security issues in the technology department are related to data security in Power School; plus, all Power school updates would be pushed out from the technology department. However, since the current Executive Director of Human Resources and Athletics has extensive experience with Power School in both Va. and NC., the Power school positions should remain in the Human Resources department until there is a leadership change. Similarly, Digital Learning and Media could be moved to the Technology department since media specialists at the school level can directly support and assist technologists working in the technology department. A compromise may be to move the support for media specialist to Technology and leave Digital Learning in Curriculum. At the very least, the CTO should be helping all technology leaders to identify their “customers” and ensure that technology needs are being met across the district.

## **2. Human Resources**

As Table 5 demonstrates, the HR department is very lean with only four HR professionals. Principals ranked the Human Resources department last among the quality of service they received and only 42% awarded the Human Resources department a score of eight or above out of ten. The next lowest ranked department, Communications, received 58%. Two of the nine thematic analysis conclusions that were included in the opportunities for change section were: “Examine staffing in Human Resource and Maintenance to address under staffing,” and “More support personnel in Human Resources to expedite hiring process.” The effective number of HR professionals is actually less than four full-time staff considering the additional duties currently performed by HR staff that are described below.

The consultants have already shared that the Power School staff should continue to report to the executive director of Human Resources and athletics because of his rich experience with Power School. Similarly, the inclusion of central office support for athletics being housed in Human Resources is only due to the background of the current executive director. Athletic supervision can be housed in Instructional Support Services or within Operations and Logistics since there are many safety and maintenance issues associated with operating a comprehensive athletic program.

The director of CTE and the beginning teacher program are also a part of the Human Resources department. The consultants learned that the CTE placement is due to some relationship issues. As soon as practical, CTE should report to the Curriculum and Instruction area. The CTE director also supports classified staff and that duty should be replaced with another Human Resources

professional who can handle classified staff support and other HR duties such as serving as the hearing officer, which the currently being done by the CTE director. This new position would help address the understaffing in Human Resources already identified in Table 5 and indicated by the principals in the staffing survey (see next section for survey results). Beginning Teacher Coordinators are frequently assigned to either Human Resources or Curriculum and Instruction. Since the Human Resources Department is housing some non-traditional areas and is perceived as understaffed by principals, the consultants would recommend moving the Beginning Teacher Coordinator to Curriculum and Instruction.

### **3. Curriculum Services**

Currently, principals are evaluated by four of the Curriculum leadership staff: The elementary director evaluates six elementary schools, the Director of Instructional Programs evaluates four elementary principals and the alternative school, the Secondary Director evaluates the high school and middle school principals, and the Assistant Supt. for Curriculum evaluates two elementary principals and four secondary principals. The Assistant Supt. is evaluating schools that are selected based on special concerns. To improve communication and support for principals at all levels, the consultants would recommend that the Elementary Director coordinate the evaluation of all elementary principals, and the High School Director's position be retitled the Secondary School Director and coordinate the evaluation of all the high school and middle school principals. Using some specific school performance indicators, the Assistant Superintendent could provide additional evaluation support to the six or so schools with the lowest scores on the determined performance indicators. These schools could be at any level, elementary, middle, or high school.

Currently the Director of Instructional Programs supports the following areas: AIG, Title 3, ESL, Migrant student support, McKinney-Vento funds for homeless students, AP, IB, the required capstone projects for high school graduation, the district science fair, NC STAR, and the language immersion program in two elementary schools. If shifting the evaluation of the six principals back to the Director of Elementary Education creates a work load imbalance, then consideration could be given to moving the support for Title 1 to the Director of Instructional Programs. The consultants recommend moving the support for homeless students and the management of the McKinney-Vento funds to the Assistant Director of Instructional Support Services who coordinates and supports the district's social workers.

During the interview with the Curriculum leadership staff, a comment was made about the need to improve communications with the Exceptional Children's (EC) department, particularly in the planning for professional development for teachers. The implementation of MTSS across the district has blurred the lines between "regular" education and "special" education. Clearly, there is a continuum of educational services that supports all students (Tier 1) and more intense services for students who are not achieving instructional outcomes (i.e., Tier 2 and 3 programs). In addition, the consultants learned that Rockingham County has identified 16% of the students as qualifying for EC services. The state cap for funding is now 12.75%. The

consultants have observed in other districts that the implementation of MTSS has resulted in a reduction in the percent of students qualifying for EC services. The cost of locally funding 3.25% or around 400 EC students is substantial. The consultants would recommend moving the Exceptional Children's Dept. from Instructional Support to Curriculum. (This recommendation will be examined in more detail in section 4 – Instructional Support.)

In addition, the consultants discovered that the background checks for fieldtrip chaperones were being checked in the Curriculum department. The consultants would recommend that all criminal background checks be completed by one office. Currently the HR office completes the background checks for new employees and should also handle the background checks for fieldtrip chaperones.

As stated in the Technology section above, the consultants suggested leaving Digital Learning in the Curriculum area but moving the support for media specialists to the technology dept. However, the communication between the directors of Digital Learning and the Technology Dept. should be formalized in bi-monthly or monthly meetings. The consultants learned that media specialists were currently being used to coordinate testing at the school level. Since the training for media specialists is very specialized, the consultants would recommend that another staff position at the school level coordinate the testing program. School level test administrations could be completed with the assistance of one or more clerical staff and an assistant principal, or other instructional support position. It was also shared that media centers were closed during state testing. In the very near future, all student testing will be accomplished on-line and there should not be a need to close media centers during periods of statewide testing.

#### **4. Instructional Support/Exceptional Children's Programs**

The Assistant Superintendent of Instructional Support supervises the Student Health Coordinator and two very large program areas: the student service areas, and the Exceptional Children's (EC) Program. If the district leadership team were to follow the earlier recommendation of moving the EC department into the Curriculum area, then the Instructional Support area could be renamed "Student Services." With approximately 60 percent of Rockingham County's students qualifying for free and reduced lunch and the increase in mental health related issues experienced by students, the linkages with the Department of Social Services (DSS), the Health Department, and Cardinal Mental Health become critical to meeting the needs of students. Developing and sustaining those linkages takes time.

In addition to the EC Department, the current Director of the EC Department also co-directs psychological services, coordinates mental health programs, and serves as the district crisis response and school based mental health director. The consultants recommend that the current EC Dept Director manage a new department that includes psychological services, crisis intervention, and school-based mental health (the consultants would suggest the new department be named. "Student safety and Crisis Intervention"). The current EC Coordinator could become the EC Dept. Director and move to Instructional Services as suggested in Section

3 above. The Consultants would suggest that the areas of supervision for the new Student Safety and Crisis Intervention Director and the EC Director would be divided as follows:

Student Safety and Crisis Intervention Director – responsibilities to include: supervision of school psychologists (including the Lead); the management of district crisis response, planning, and coordination; support of mental health programs (training, Mental Health Advisory Committee, mental health provider organizations, risk assessment); supervision of the district’s Day Treatment program; and supervision and support of after school programs.

EC Director – responsibilities to include: supervision of the EC program (i.e., manage budget, training, compliance with Federal regulations, and adjust programs based on student performance results); the monitoring of all related service providers (occupational therapists, physical therapists, speech therapists, language facilitators, adaptive physical educators, and outreach assistants); and participation on multiple committees (e.g., the MTSS team and the Inventory of Services and Supports (ISS) team).

Another advantage of creating the Director of Student Safety and Crisis Intervention position is that the district psychologists will not be reporting to the EC Director. Since school psychologists complete student evaluations that determine placement in EC programs, not reporting to the EC director assures that psychologists work independently from the EC Department. This practice was followed in Rockingham County in the past.

The Assistant Superintendent for Instructional Support has many duties. The consultants would recommend that several current duties be shifted to staff in other departments: (1) serving as the liaison to the Cultural Arts Teachers (i.e., meeting with the Lead Visual Arts and Drama teacher, the Lead Band Teacher (K-12), and the Lead Music and Choral Teacher (K-12) could be reassigned to the Assistant Supt. for Curriculum who supports the other subject area lead teachers; (2) working with discipline data could be reassigned to Power School (this also supports an earlier suggestion to consider locating Power School in Instructional Support or Technology); (3) serving as chair of the Anti-Bullying Committee could be reassigned to the Operations Assistant Supt.; and managing the large and small professional development rooms at Lawsonville and keeping all the presentation tools operational could be reassigned to technology or media services if moved to Technology.

The pre-school coordinator works with both regular ed pre-K and handicapped pre-K programs. The consultants agree with this single supervisor approach, but it also supports the earlier suggestion that the EC Department be reassigned into the Curriculum Dept.

## 5. Financial Services:

The Assistant Finance Officer was recently approved as the Finance Officer of RCS, which leaves the Assistant Finance Officer position vacant. The duties of the Assistant Finance Officer position have been primarily supervision of Payroll, critical payroll reporting and compliance, with some management of accounting and auditing. The Finance Officer cannot perform the duties of both positions within a reasonable amount of hours per week. Everyone in the Finance Office has been interviewed to get a good understanding of the current division of job duties and the needs within the office. **Based on our interviews, we recommend not filling the Assistant Finance Officer position for the following reasons:**

- Nobody currently in the RCS Finance Office has the background or experience to perform all the duties of the Assistant Finance Officer position without a significant amount of training that results in a long learning curve.
- It is increasingly difficult to attract and retain persons from outside of the school district with the appropriate knowledge, skills, and abilities to perform the current duties of the Assistant Finance Officer's position.
- RCS already has two positions in the Finance Office, a Lead Payroll Accountant and a Lead Accounts Payable Accountant, being compensated at, or close to, other districts' positions of Payroll Supervisor and Accounting Manager, respectively.
- There is capacity for assuming additional duties in the Accounting side of the Finance Office, specifically in the area of accounts payable, while the Payroll side of the Finance Office is accruing significant hours of overtime/compensatory time.

**We recommend that RCS change the title of the Lead Accounts Payable Accountant position to Accounting Manager and assign all the Assistant Finance Officer's former accounting and auditing related duties to that position.** The current position-holder reported spending 60% of her time on accounting management duties and can handle the former accounting and auditing management duties of the Assistant Finance Officer. There should be capacity in the two accounts payable positions in the Finance Office to pick up the 40% of this person's current accounts payable related duties. **In the classification portion of our report, we have proposed classifications that support these recommendations.**

**We recommend that RCS change the title of the Lead Payroll Accountant position to Payroll Supervisor and assign all the Assistant Finance Officer's former payroll-related duties to that position.** Unlike the Lead Accounts Payable position-holder, the Lead Payroll Accountant position-holder reported only 20% of her duties as payroll supervision, while processing payrolls (which is like two Payroll Accountant positions) accounted for the remainder of her time (80%). RCS needs three full-time Payroll Accountant positions plus a full-time Payroll

Supervisor position. Because as much as 80% of the assigned duties for the Payroll Supervisor would be new to any current individual in the Finance Office, we recommend advertising that position. The current Lead Payroll Accountant position-holder should be a strong candidate, but it could not hurt to see if an experienced person from another school district would be interested. If filled internally, a full-time Payroll Accountant position should be advertised and filled. If filled externally, the current Lead Payroll Accountant position would become a full-time Payroll Accountant at the appropriate pay Grade for that position. In the classification portion of our report, we have proposed classifications that support these recommendations.

The consultants also recommend a title change for another position in Financial Services. The Internal Auditor/Accounts Payable Accountant position reported that she spends less than 10% of her time auditing schools and most of her time supporting the school bookkeepers. RCS uses a very powerful web-based bookkeeping system in the schools, and the position-holder in the Finance Office has access at her desk to every transaction occurring in the schools. Problems can be and are being identified earlier and can be addressed without needing to send someone to the schools. Therefore, we recommend changing the title of this position to School Bookkeeper Support/Accounts Payable Accountant.

## **6. Operations and Logistics Dept.**

Conversations with the Assistant Supt. for Operations and Logistics, and the Directors of Maintenance, Transportation, and Child Nutrition suggest that these areas are taking advantage of available efficiencies. Maintenance is using "School Dude" for submission of work orders and the software provides the ability to monitor work order completions and evaluate trouble spots that assist with the targeting of the district's limited capital outlay funds. The recent completion of the Fire Academy and wrestling training center was very cost effective and accommodated a new program (the Fire Academy) and provided a safe and clean area for wrestling. The Transportation Department is utilizing the TIMS scheduling capability and has improved the district's efficiency rating from 83.7 to 90.4 in the last four years. The Department of Motor Vehicle ratings of the bus fleet has improved from a safety rating of 55.6 which is way above the state average to 24.2 (lower ratings are better/safer). The success of the Child Nutrition Department in erasing a \$2 million deficit that occurred due to an insufficient number of students taking advantage of the Universal Free and Reduced lunch opportunity is remarkable. The Child Nutrition Department now has a healthy fund balance in excess of \$1 million.

In the Technology Section of this report the consultants recommended the creation of a Chief Technology Officer which could lead to establishing a stand-alone department reporting to the superintendent. As long as this position is able to participate on the superintendent's cabinet, the Technology Department can continue to report to the Assistant Superintendent of Operations and Logistics.

The consultants learned that the student assignment office is currently located in the Operations and Logistics Dept. Since many of the mid-year student reassignments are related to student discipline, the consultants would recommend that the student assignment office report to the Assistant Superintendent for Instructional Support. Currently the Operations area is requesting information from the Instructional support area to investigate and answer student assignment questions. These repeated interdepartmental communications would be eliminated with relocating the student assignment office to Instructional Support.

As indicated earlier, the consultants are suggesting that the Director of Exceptional Children's Programs be retitled Director of Student Safety and Crisis Management. Currently all the record keeping for tornado and fire drills is maintained by this Director. The Operations and Logistics department handles facility safety (fire department inspections, fire extinguisher inspection schedules. etc.). safety training for all employees, and School Bus safety drills. The consultants recommend that all the documentation for student drills be moved to the Operations and Logistics area. Similarly, employee health related safety training could be housed in Operations and Logistics (e.g., blood borne pathogens training). The consultants would recommend that the Student Health Coordinator, the Director of Student Safety and Crisis Management, and the Assistant Superintendent of Operations and Logistics meet and review all safety compliance training and record keeping and determine the most efficient way to complete and document all safety-related training, and responses to non-compliance.

During staff interviews, the consultants learned that the Assistant Superintendent for Operations and Logistics managed the district strategic plan. The strategic planning process can be managed from any office, but each department must be responsible for monitoring their own indicators. Since most of the strategic plan outcomes are reported through the Curriculum area, a case could be made for housing the strategic planning process under the Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum.

## **7. Public Information**

The consultants support the current practice of the public information officer reporting directly to the superintendent. During staff interviews, the consultants asked staff members to identify any duties that they performed that they thought should be performed elsewhere. Staff members were also asked if there were any duties performed elsewhere that they thought that they or a member of their staff should perform. There were several references to work that they performed but felt the public information officer should either perform or provide assistance. These duties generally fell into the category of assistance with publications – writing, producing, posting, and/or distributing. Clearly each department must be responsible for the content of information shared from that department, but the public information officer should be “on first” regarding the final document and the “branding” of all information that is printed or posted on-line regarding the Rockingham Public Schools. In addition, the consultants referred to the district web-site to locate various information and often could not find it or the information was incomplete. The consultants understand that a new web-site contractor has been employed that will improve the quality of the district's website. Even so, the public

information officer must work closely with the new vendor and provide oversight on all district websites and information that is shared publicly.

The consultants believe that the district should develop a comprehensive communication/marketing plan that identifies various community groups that the school district communicates with regularly via e-mail. The district and individual schools should explore the use of twitter as an outlet for current, timely information to parents and other community followers.



**Rockingham County Schools**  
**Central Office Efficiency Study**  
**Survey of Principals and Community Data**

**QUALITY OF SERVICE**

Principals in Rockingham County schools were asked to provide an opinion of the quality of service received from various central office departments. The response requested was to rank the quality on a scale of 1 to 10 with 10 being the highest quality level.

**Ranking by area when awarding points in reverse order 10 to 1 and multiplying by number of respondents at each point. An average was calculated by dividing the total points by 19 respondents.**

Superintendent's office	9.05
Curriculum and Instructional Services	8.21
Financial Services	7.94
Operational Services	7.10
Communication Services	7.00
Human Resource Services	6.94

**Ranking of departments based on percent of respondents that ranked the department at an 8 or higher.**

Superintendent's office	94.74%
Financial Services	73.69 %
Curriculum and Instructional Services	68.43%
Operational Services	57.89%
Communication Services	57.89%
Human Resource Services	42.10 %

Overall, the perception of the quality of service of 6 departments varied significantly. Staffing perceptions share similar discrepancies.

## PERCEPTION OF LEVEL OF STAFFING

Principals in Rockingham County schools were asked to provide opinions on the level of staffing in various central. Three options were provided: too many, about right, or too few.

### Ranking of departments based on percentage of perception that ranked about right.

Communication Services	78.95 %
Financial Services	73.68%
Superintendent's office	63.16%
Human Resource Services	63.16 %
Curriculum and Instruction Services	52.63%
Operational Services	42.11%

### Ranking from lowest to highest percent of too many staff.

Communication Services	0.00
Operational Services	5.26 %
Human Resources Services	10.53%
Financial Services	10.53%
Curriculum and Instruction Services	10.53%
Superintendent's Office	15.79%

In comparison, principals appear to be concerned with the number of staff in Curriculum and Instructional Services as well as Financial Services in regard to too few members.

**Thematic analysis of principal's comments was completed by examining all narratives provided in the open-ended prompt of the electronic survey. The analysis was completed by merely listing all comments by categories or themes. Listed below are commonalities from this one source of qualitative data. While not possible to provide priorities of concerns from one open-ended instrument, the list includes themes that were consistently referred to in the perception data that represent some trends.**

Thematic qualifiers that were perceived as strengths in the responses provided.

- Ability to connect with the needed individual in a timely manner
- Tremendous support from Central Office

### Thematic qualifiers perceived as opportunities for change

- Examine departmental responsibilities to decrease confusion about who to call and reduce feeling of being overwhelmed
- Examine possibility of increasing communications between departments
- Examine staffing in Human Resource and Maintenance to address under staffing
- Consider more diversity in Central Office
- Consider splitting Title I and Central Office into two positions
- Reduce misinformation from Central Office
- Improve timeliness of information from Central Office
- Reduce micro management of Assistant Superintendents
- More support personnel in Human Resources to expedite hiring process

The majority of comments centered on issues with communications and the need for more timely responses.

Results from survey regarding satisfaction measures as follows. Consideration should be given to the small number of responses

### How satisfied were you overall with response to a recent need?

Ranking choice	Number of responses	Percent of total
Extremely dissatisfied	0	0.00%
Dissatisfied	0	0.00%
Neither satisfied or dissatisfied	0	0.00%
Satisfied	16	84.21%
Extremely satisfied	3	15.79%

**How satisfied were you with how system support staff resolved you most recent problem?**

<b>Ranking choice</b>	<b>Number of responses</b>	<b>Percent of total</b>
Extremely dissatisfied	0	0.00%
Dissatisfied	0	0.00%
Neither satisfied or dissatisfied	1	5.26%
Satisfied	14	73.68%
Extremely satisfied	4	21.05%

**How satisfied were you with the reaction of the Board of Education when you expressed a concern?**

<b>Ranking choice</b>	<b>Number of responses</b>	<b>Percent of total</b>
Extremely dissatisfied	0	0.00%
Dissatisfied	4	21.05%
Neither satisfied or dissatisfied	8	41.11%
Satisfied	6	31.58%
Extremely satisfied	1	5.26%

**How satisfied are you overall with opportunity to be involved in decision-making processes in the system?**

<b>Ranking choice</b>	<b>Number of responses</b>	<b>Percent of total</b>
Extremely dissatisfied	0	0.00%
Dissatisfied	3	15.79%
Neither satisfied or dissatisfied	5	26.32%
Satisfied	10	52.63%
Extremely satisfied	1	5.26%

**How satisfied are you with the transparency exhibited by the school system?**

<b>Ranking choice</b>	<b>Number of responses</b>	<b>Percent of total</b>
Extremely dissatisfied	0	0.00%
Dissatisfied	0	0.00%
Neither satisfied or dissatisfied	3	15.79%
Satisfied	13	68.42%
Extremely satisfied	3	15.79%

Overall, it is apparent there is room for improvement in the level of satisfaction of building leaders with actions in the system.

**Community Satisfaction Responses (N=119)**

**How satisfied (is)are your children in terms of safety and comfort at school?**

<b>Ranking choice</b>	<b>Number of responses</b>	<b>Percent of total</b>
Extremely dissatisfied	4	3.36%
Dissatisfied	23	19.33%
Neither satisfied or dissatisfied	21	17.65%
Satisfied	55	46.22%
Extremely satisfied	16	13.45%

**As a parent, how satisfied are you with how you feel welcomed when you visit your child's school?**

<b>Ranking choice</b>	<b>Number of responses</b>	<b>Percent of total</b>
Extremely dissatisfied	7	5.88%
Dissatisfied	12	10.08%
Neither satisfied or dissatisfied	19	15.97%
Satisfied	58	48.74%
Extremely satisfied	23	19.33%

**How satisfied are you with how well Rockingham County Schools are meeting the needs of students?**

<b>Ranking choice</b>	<b>Number of responses</b>	<b>Percent of total</b>
Extremely dissatisfied	10	8.40%
Dissatisfied	42	35.29%
Neither satisfied or dissatisfied	15	12.61%
Satisfied	43	36.13%
Extremely satisfied	9	7.56%

**How satisfied are you with the reaction of the Rockingham County Board of Education when you have expressed a concern?**

<b>Ranking choice</b>	<b>Number of responses</b>	<b>Percent of total</b>
Extremely dissatisfied	15	12.61%
Dissatisfied	28	23.53%
Neither satisfied or dissatisfied	50	42.02%
Satisfied	22	18.49%
Extremely satisfied	4	3.36%

**How satisfied are you with opportunities to be included in the decision-making processes in the Rockingham County School System?**

<b>Ranking choice</b>	<b>Number of responses</b>	<b>Percent of total</b>
Extremely dissatisfied	19	15.97%
Dissatisfied	36	30.25%
Neither satisfied or dissatisfied	31	26.05%
Satisfied	30	25.21%
Extremely satisfied	3	2.52%

**How satisfied are you with the transparency exhibited by the Rockingham County Schools?**

<b>Ranking choice</b>	<b>Number of responses</b>	<b>Percent of total</b>
Extremely dissatisfied	23	19.33%
Dissatisfied	31	26.05%
Neither satisfied or dissatisfied	31	26.05%
Satisfied	30	25.21%
Extremely satisfied	4	3.36%

**How satisfied are you with how well Rockingham County Schools are preparing graduates for the work force?**

<b>Ranking choice</b>	<b>Number of responses</b>	<b>Percent of total</b>
Extremely dissatisfied	15	12.61%
Dissatisfied	32	26.89%
Neither satisfied or dissatisfied	26	21.85%
Satisfied	41	34.25%
Extremely satisfied	5	4.20%

**How satisfied are you with the response time from Rockingham County Schools when you have contacted them with an issue?**

<b>Ranking choice</b>	<b>Number of responses</b>	<b>Percent of total</b>
Extremely dissatisfied	11	9.24%
Dissatisfied	19	15.97%
Neither satisfied or dissatisfied	34	28.57%
Satisfied	47	39.50%
Extremely satisfied	8	6.72%

**How satisfied are you with the level of courtesy exhibited by the Rockingham County Schools when you contact them?**

<b>Ranking choice</b>	<b>Number of responses</b>	<b>Percent of total</b>
Extremely dissatisfied	9	7.56%
Dissatisfied	13	10.92%
Neither satisfied or dissatisfied	23	19.33%
Satisfied	62	52.10%
Extremely satisfied	12	10.08%

**In your opinion, what is your child's overall level of satisfaction with school?**

<b>Ranking choice</b>	<b>Number of responses</b>	<b>Percent of total</b>
Extremely dissatisfied	6	5.04%
Dissatisfied	21	17.65%
Neither satisfied or dissatisfied	28	23.53%
Satisfied	52	43.70%
Extremely satisfied	12	10.08%

**How satisfied are you with the curriculum and school activities at your child's school with regard to appropriateness and level of challenge?**

<b>Ranking choice</b>	<b>Number of responses</b>	<b>Percent of total</b>
Extremely dissatisfied	17	14.41%
Dissatisfied	25	21.19%
Neither satisfied or dissatisfied	17	14.41%
Satisfied	48	40.68%
Extremely satisfied	11	9.32%



**How satisfied are you with your child's teacher's availability and willingness to discuss your child's needs?**

<b>Ranking choice</b>	<b>Number of responses</b>	<b>Percent of total</b>
Extremely dissatisfied	6	5.08%
Dissatisfied	15	12.71%
Neither satisfied or dissatisfied	17	14.41%
Satisfied	51	34.22%
Extremely satisfied	29	24.58 %

**How satisfied are you with the principal's availability and willingness to talk with you as needed?**

<b>Ranking choice</b>	<b>Number of responses</b>	<b>Percent of total</b>
Extremely dissatisfied	8	6.72%
Dissatisfied	13	10.92%
Neither satisfied or dissatisfied	28	23.53%
Satisfied	49	41.18%
Extremely satisfied	21	17.65%

**How satisfied are you with communications from the school with regard to regularity, clearness, and conciseness?**

<b>Ranking choice</b>	<b>Number of responses</b>	<b>Percent of total</b>
Extremely dissatisfied	12	10.08%
Dissatisfied	15	12.61%
Neither satisfied or dissatisfied	22	18.49%
Satisfied	55	46.22%
Extremely satisfied	15	12.61%

**Thematic analysis of community comments was completed by examining all narratives provided in the open-ended prompt of the electronic survey. The analysis was completed by merely listing all comments by categories or themes. Listed below are commonalities from this one source of qualitative data. While not possible to provide priorities of concerns from one open-ended instrument, the list includes themes that were consistently referred to in the perception data that represent some trends.**

Identified strengths in the thematic analysis of community comments.

- Perception of outstanding customer service
- Total transparency provided by system
- Pleased with leadership of Superintendent
- Expectations for the future are bright

Opportunities for growth in the analysis of community comments.

- Classroom temperatures need attention by seasons
- Announcement of events could occur in a timelier manner
- Consistency in front office demeanor at school sites
- More in-depth follow-up when concerns are voiced

## ROCKINGHAM COUNTY PAY STUDY ANALYSIS

### Why Perform a Classification and Pay Study?

There are many good reasons for performing a classification/salary study on a semi-regular basis, typically every 6-8 years. Pay equity is one of the most important factors in attracting and retaining the quality of personnel needed to support the education of students in a school district. Working conditions, which have not been part of this study, is the other most important factor in, especially, retaining quality personnel.

Salary professionals divide pay equity into internal equity and external equity. Internal equity is properly classifying jobs based on duties and responsibilities and on the knowledge, skills, and abilities required of the job holder to satisfactorily perform those duties and responsibilities. Internal equity also involves equitable methods of advancing employees' pay within their pay classification based on experience and/or increases in their knowledge, skills, and abilities. Absence of internal equity can lead to poor employee morale, lack of adequate job performance, absenteeism, and/or high turnover rates.

External equity is classifying jobs in order to be competitive in the school district's wider job market. Although some school district jobs require knowledge, skills, and abilities that are similar to jobs in the private sector (e.g. maintenance, technology specialists), many school system jobs are very specialized in their requirements. For example, less than 50% of a school district payroll specialist's job is similar to the majority of payroll processing jobs in the private sector, and more than 50% of that payroll specialist's job is unique to North Carolina school districts. For most of their classified positions, most North Carolina school districts are in competition, primarily, with other nearby North Carolina school districts, especially after the employee gains the unique knowledge, skills, and abilities necessary to perform the school district job(s). Absence of external equity can lead to difficulty in hiring and retaining qualified personnel.

Many factors influence internal and external pay equity and those factors are always in flux, making it important to review your system's pay equity regularly.

### Why Engage a Person Knowledgeable with North Carolina School District Jobs and Classifications?

As mentioned above, many school district jobs have duties and responsibilities unique from similar types of jobs in the private sector. A salary professional in the private sector would find many of those unique duties and responsibilities incomprehensible and would likely, therefore, discount them in a study. On the other hand, a salary professional in the private sector would be unfamiliar with budgetary and fund accounting and North Carolina school district finance laws, causing them to be more likely to overweight a few school system jobs with financial-related duties and underweight some other jobs with financial-related duties. Additionally, many school districts have been slower than most private sector employers in moving away from certain types of position titles, such as administrative assistants, even though

many of those school district positions have a significant portion of their job duties that are not traditional administrative assistant duties.

Mr. Crutchfield has 38 years of experience managing the overall salary administration functions for a large North Carolina school district and has taught school district salary administration throughout North Carolina for over 30 years. During his 38 years with the school system he assisted three groups of outside consultants as they performed classification and salary studies for the school district, witnessing and learning from three different methodologies and the results thereof. He also assisted Guilford County Schools with their classification plan when they merged their three districts into the one county district. Since retiring as the Chief Financial Officer of the school district, he has performed classification and salary studies for two other North Carolina school districts.

#### Classification and Salary Study Methodology

There are quantifiable aspects of evaluating job duties and responsibilities in terms of the knowledge, skills, and abilities necessary to satisfactorily perform those jobs. However, there are also subjective factors to be considered, including the particular school district culture and the specific local labor market factors. There is no “one size fits all” methodology nor is there a “one size fits all” outcome for a school district’s classification and salary study. Experience, judgment, and attention to detail are keys to achieving a satisfactory study result.

It is important to understand all of the following:

- Good salary administration practices are severely hampered in North Carolina school districts due to reliance upon and inability to vary from North Carolina General Assembly pay mandates including, but not limited to, (1) frequent lack of funding for experience-based pay increases, (2) mandatory inequitable methods of pay increases (e.g. flat amount annual increases regardless of term of employment, causing 10-month employees to receive a higher monthly increase than 12-month employees performing the same or similar job), and (3) inflexible mandatory salary ranges for employees paid with state and federal funds
- All employees, at least all who care about their jobs, think their jobs are important and that they are underpaid for what they do
- A direct result of the above statement is that many employees will be temporarily dissatisfied with our recommended outcomes, since our work cannot justify increases for all employees and the Board could not afford to implement it if it did, but our recommendations are intended to help the district attract and retain the qualified employees it needs and deserves
- Employees are aware if another employee in a higher pay classification is not adequately performing their job, if their job duties do not justify the higher pay classification, or if they do not have enough work to keep them busy, and such knowledge is a morale buster
- Most employees think that quantity of work is a factor that should be considered in a classification and pay study, but an excessive quantity of work for a given employee is either an overtime issue or an issue with a supervisor’s division of work within a department or area, and

too little work for a given employee is either a Human Resources issue or an issue with a supervisor's division of work within a department or area – both need to be fixed, but that is not the job of a classification and pay study

Our methodology was to collect and analyze job duties and responsibilities data from one or more position-holders for every position being studied and, based on experience, to rank order the knowledge, skills, and abilities necessary to satisfactorily perform those duties and responsibilities (internal equity). We then compared the rank ordering with the school district's current classification rankings to identify positions that **potentially** should be higher or lower in classification ranking.

We also examined data on the classifications of similar jobs within surrounding school districts that regularly compete for employees with the district being studied. It is important to note that even within two demographically similar North Carolina school districts, positions with similar titles and departmental locations may have vastly different job duties and responsibilities. In our experience, the Central Office jobs that have the most similarities in job duties and responsibilities in most school districts include the following:

- Payroll specialist
- Accounts payable specialist
- Human resource specialist
- Superintendent's administrative assistant
- Maintenance staff
- Transportation staff
- Technology staff

Even within these job categories there is some variation among school districts in terms of certain ancillary job duty assignments, but usually the majority of job duties are similar or the same. Therefore, these job categories are used as benchmark jobs for determining external equity and are then combined with the internal rankings to recommend the overall classification rankings.

#### Administration of Recommendations

Should the Board of Education agree to implement some or all of our recommendations, it is important to have an equitable and consistent process for the salary changes (if any) for impacted current position-holders. For jobs recommended for a higher pay grade, good salary administration practice would be to place the employee on their current step on the higher pay grade/schedule as of the approved implementation date.

For jobs recommended for a lower pay grade, our recommendation is to **not** impact negatively the current pay of the current position-holder. That person accepted the job and has remained in the job at the current salary based on a good faith offer and acceptance. Good salary administration practice would be to “red circle” the position and when it next becomes vacant, advertise at the recommended lower pay grade.

However, there are two schools of thought among salary administration professionals on how to administer future pay increases for position-holders in jobs that have been red circled. One acceptable practice is to continue granting all pay increases granted to other employees until the current position holder leaves the position. The other acceptable practice is to grant pay increases for a period of time (e.g. one year or two years) and then “freeze” their pay until they leave the position or until the appropriate amount of pay at the lower pay grade would exceed their frozen pay amount. The rationale behind this practice is to give the position-holder a period of time to decide to either accept the pay freeze or to find a different job within or outside of the school system. We have worked with employers that have used both practices successfully and have no strong preference toward either practice.

#### Background Information

Rockingham County Schools (hereinafter referred to as RCS) is uniquely geographically located just south of Virginia, east and west of two smaller North Carolina county districts, and north and northeast of two of the highest local-funded school districts in the state, Guilford County Schools and Forsyth County Schools. In 1993, the current RCS was the result of the merger of four independent school districts. Any time city and county school districts merge, the pay ranges and pay schedules to be used by the merged district are among the most difficult and important decisions. Often, the highest of the original districts’ pay schedules/ranges initially form the basis for the merged district’s pay practices.

#### General Study Findings

Based on the background information above, we expected to find the central office staff salaries in RCS to be competitive (external equity), and for most job categories that was our finding. In some cases, RCS is paying more than is necessary to obtain employees with the necessary knowledge, skills, and abilities (external equity) and more than is justified by internal equity rankings. These will be identified with additional information in the detailed findings to follow. However, market conditions are constantly changing, and a few RCS positions have fallen behind competitive pay levels, also to be identified with additional information in the detailed findings to follow.

## Detailed Study Findings

### Administrative Assistants/Office Support

First of all, we recommend changing the job titles to the current practice of “Office Support.” Starting at the top and working our way down, it is understandable why school districts traditionally classified administrative assistants based on the administrator(s) they support. The superintendent obviously needs and demands clerical skills and confidentiality beyond those required of other administrators. With other central office administrator positions, however, the traditional administrative assistant job duties and responsibilities tend to be similar regardless of the title of the administrator.

In many cases, a significant percentage of the office support position holder’s job duties are specialized clerical and/or administrative support functions needed only in that department or area of the central office. Some of the most important and knowledge/skills-demanding of those specialized duties involve financial/budget management responsibilities including, but not limited to:

- Creating purchase orders or purchase requisitions
- Ensuring that purchases are in accordance with grant/budget rules and regulations
- Submitting required paperwork/information for accounts payable
- Vendor correspondence
- Grantor correspondence
- Tracking budget balances
- Communicating needs for budget amendments/transfers
- Payroll attendance and/or time reporting
- In some cases (e.g. Title 1 and EC grants), monitoring/assisting others (e.g. principals) in expending their share of grants or budgets
- In some cases, preparing budgetary reports to share with supervisors, grantors, or other stakeholders
- Other specialized knowledge and/or processes (e.g. bond building program contracting and expenditures)

The larger the budgets and the greater the amount of an office support person’s time spent on financial/budget management, the more difficult it is to get a person with the appropriate knowledge, skills, and abilities for that job.

As mentioned, superintendent support positions traditionally have been classified high enough to ensure that the superintendent gets the exact person he/she determines meets the specialized needs of supporting board members, taking and recording board minutes, handling public relations, screening and scheduling appointments, etc. RCS has classified that position at Grade 69, but the current position-holder is being paid approximately \$350.00 per month above the eligible step on Grade 69, which makes the pay roughly equivalent to a Grade 71. Grade 71 pay would be appropriate for this position based on internal and external equity factors. We recommend reclassifying the Superintendent Office Support

position from a pay grade 69 with an extra monthly amount to a pay grade 71 with no extra monthly amount.

The remainder of the Central office support positions and their current pay grade assignments include:

- Three (3) positions      Grade 67
- One (1) position        Grade 65
- Six (6) positions        Grade 63
- One (1) position        Grade 61

Often, but not always, there is some justification for **slightly** higher classifications for office support positions serving an assistant superintendent or an executive director compared to those serving directors and other administrators. The rationale, however, is not the elevated title of the supervisor; instead it is often a higher percentage of duties in the areas of budget/financial management, payroll reporting, organizing/attending significant events and travel, and/or more contact with community leaders. Based on the completed position questionnaires, this appears to be the case for the three Grade 67 positions in RCS. Based on the duties in their position questionnaires and the knowledge, skills, and abilities necessary to perform those duties, we recommend that these three positions be reclassified to Grade 65, equal to the current position that is handling student assignment and athletics budgets, among other duties.

From an internal and external equity standpoint, the six positions currently classified at Grade 63 appear to be appropriately classified, with one exception - the Title 1 position - which has job duties requiring equivalent knowledge, skills, and abilities as the Grade 65 positions, which is the Grade we recommend for the Title 1 position. The EC administrative assistant position, currently classified at Grade 61, should require equivalent knowledge, skills, and abilities as the five remaining positions at Grade 63. Therefore, we recommend that the EC administrative assistant position be reclassified to pay Grade 63.

RCS also has two positions titled "Office Manager", one in technology and one in maintenance, currently classified at Grade 64 and Grade 65, respectively. Their job duties as reported on their position questionnaires are very similar to those of the administrative assistants/office support positions, and we concur with the current classifications.

#### Finance and Finance-related

Like many North Carolina school districts that previously have had a salary professional with private sector expertise perform a classification study, RCS has classified their accounts payable position equivalent to their payroll/benefits specialists and the majority of their HR specialists (Grade 65). It is



understandable that private sector salary professionals do so. The vast majority of private sector businesses outsource many payroll office processes, including pay creation/delivery and federal and state tax reporting. State laws, regulations, and reporting requirements make it impossible for a North Carolina school district to outsource these payroll processes. Additionally, private sector accounts payable are almost always a much higher percentage of their expenses than are school district accounts payable (school district payrolls account for 85-90% of their total expenditures). Finally, state law-mandated budgetary controls and pre-audits of purchase orders and contracts make North Carolina school district accounts payable much less risky in terms of errors or other losses of funds than in a private sector business.

Based on Internal and external equity factors, we recommend that the Finance Office accounts payable accountant position be classified at Grade 63. RCS has another position in the Finance Office titled System Accountant/Lead Accounts Payable, also at Grade 65, but with an additional \$385 of monthly pay, which equates to essentially a Grade 69. Please see the organization recommendations section in our report for a discussion of what we think should happen with this position. If our recommendation is implemented, this position should be a Grade 70. A third position with Accounts Payable in its title is Internal Auditor/Accounts Payable, currently classified at Grade 65. The position-holder reported only 5% of the job as being internal auditing, with a significant percentage of time spent supporting school bookkeepers. In the organization recommendations section of our report, we have recommended a title change for this position and that certain duties currently performed by the Lead Accounts Payable position be transferred to this position. If that happens, we recommend a classification change to Grade 66.

State and federal laws and regulations impacting North Carolina school district payrolls, benefits, and human resource processes require very specialized knowledge, skills, and abilities, and errors have much higher risk for negative consequences than in any other employer. As such, from an internal and external equity standpoint, we often find these roles under-classified in North Carolina school districts. That is not the case in RCS, where the majority of these roles are classified at Grade 65. While we normally recommend pay Grade 64 for these roles, we will concur with the current classifications, asking that you keep in mind that there should be no problem attracting and retaining competent personnel in these positions. However, as we noted in the organization recommendations section of our report, with essentially 2.8 positions processing payrolls, too much overtime is required by these position-holders.

The RCS Lead Payroll Accountant position is classified at Grade 65, but like the Lead Accounts Payable position has an extra \$385 of pay making the classification essentially a Grade 69. While we normally would agree with a Grade 68-70 for this position, on the position-holder's position questionnaire she described 80% of her duties as processing payrolls, the same or very similar duties as the Payroll Accountant position. Our understanding is that the newly appointed Finance Officer, in her previous role as Assistant Finance Officer spent time in Payroll supervising, training, and preparing complex regulatory reports. Our recommendation is to not replace the Assistant Finance Officer position, move

all of the more supervisory-related payroll duties to the Lead Payroll Accountant position, making it a full-time Payroll Supervisor position and reclassifying it to Grade 70.

The net of the above recommendations is to lose a Grade 71 position, reclassify three positions by one pay grade each, and hire an additional Grade 65 Payroll Accountant position. In total, this should be a cost savings to RCS, provide better services, and provide a better division of job duties within the Finance Office.

Two finance-related positions are currently classified at Grade 65, the EC Bookkeeper (we recommend that the title be changed to EC Finance Specialist) and the Purchasing Manager. Based on internal and external equity factors, we concur with the current Grade 65 classifications.

### Human Resources

Although every North Carolina school district divides the necessary human resources job duties among their clerical staff somewhat differently, the majority of those duties, due to federal and state laws and regulations, are similar in the required knowledge, skills, and abilities as for payroll specialists. Due to the potential negative consequences of errors and complex regulations, some North Carolina school districts classify licensure and workers' compensation/disability administration duties slightly higher than the other Human Resource Office duties. All RCS human resource specialists are currently classified at Grade 65, except for the position handling employee leaves, disability, and retirements, among other HR duties, which is classified at Grade 66. One of the Grade 65 positions handles workers' compensation and another of the Grade 65 positions handles licensure (with this person receiving an extra \$125 per month that was explained to us as being a training supplement – this supplement should be ended unless there is ongoing training). Because of the division of duties in the RCS Human Resources Office and based on internal and external equity factors, we recommend that all Human Resource specialist positions be classified at Grade 65, again with the knowledge that RCS is more than competitive (external equity) with other Piedmont North Carolina school districts for these roles.

The district receptionist, currently classified at Grade 61, also spends a small percentage of time dealing with substitute teachers and student records. With the majority of the duties being receptionist-related, we concur with the current Grade 61 classification.

### Technology and Technology-related

The state classification system has four categories for technology employees, Technician I at Grade 64, Technician II at Grade 68, Technician III at Grade 72, and Wide Area Network (WAN) Engineer at grade 76. We received position questionnaires from five RCS positions titled Technology Tech II, currently classified at Grade 67, one position titled Help Desk/Tech II, currently classified at Grade 68, and one position titled PowerSchool Coordination, currently classified at Grade 68. All seven positions appear to

have similar job duties requiring similar knowledge, skills, and abilities. Additionally, if not already happening, RCS could easily lose some of these position-holders with their skills to private industry. Therefore, we recommend a pay Grade 68 for all seven of these positions.

We also received position questionnaires from four higher-level Technology position-holders, one with the title Technician III, currently at Grade 71, one with the title System Analyst, currently at Grade 72, and two with the title Technology System Engineer, currently at Grade 78, although one of the Grade 78 positions is being paid over \$700 per month more than his assigned step on Grade 78. Although it seems unusual to have two positions at Grade 78 in a district the size of RCS, we are finding that most school districts are having to pay more than the state's maximum Grade 76 for the required systems engineer skills. Grade 78 is equivalent to what most school districts are classifying these positions. For the position-holder paid off the salary schedule, we recommend granting additional steps on the schedule instead of a flat dollar amount above the entry-level step.

Similar to the Tech II position recommendation, we recommend that the Tech III position be classified at the state-recommended Grade 72 instead of the current Grade 71. Based on his position questionnaire, the position-holder in the System Analyst position appears to have some specialized, valuable skills that could justify increased pay, although we usually recommend Grade 72, the RCS current pay Grade, for the typical systems analyst positions. Based on the duties being performed, the job could easily justify a Grade 73 or 74.

One other technology-related position, the Lead Data Manager is currently classified at Grade 65. Based on internal and external equity factors, we concur with the current Grade 65 classifications.

### Transportation

RCS has classified their Mechanic I positions (Grade 61) and Mechanic II positions (Grade 65) two grades higher than recommended in the state classification system. Based on external competition for those skills, that is justifiable. Similarly, the Transportation office personnel, with one exception, appear to be classified competitively at their current grades. The one exception appears to be the EC Transportation Route Coordinator, currently classified at Grade 63, whose duties as described on the position questionnaire appear to require knowledge, skills, and abilities supporting a Grade 64 classification.

### One-of-a-Kind Positions

The EC Data Manager position is competitively and equitably classified at the current Grade 64, as is the Child Nutrition Supervisor position at the current grade 68. However, the Print Shop Manager position, classified at Grade 67, based on external and internal equity factors, should be classified no higher than Grade 65.

### Maintenance

We understand that the RCS Board of Education has approved a reorganization plan for the Maintenance Department that includes reclassifications (increased pay grades) for essentially all positions, four grades above the state classification recommendations. Since RCS had often classified other positions two pay grades above the state classification recommendations, likely we would have recommended two, or no more than three, grades above the state classification recommendations for the maintenance positions. Certainly, the newly approved pay grades should allow RCS to recruit and retain qualified maintenance staff. We also agree that reorganizing the staff into three zones of cross-functional teams should provide more efficient services.

### School-based Clerical

We have also been asked to expand our study to the school-based office positions in RCS, and we are glad to do so. Based on internal and external equity factors, these positions need some reclassifications. Many school districts that have classified school-based office positions similar to RCS have experienced significant turnover in these positions in the past few years.

The elementary Bookkeepers and Data Managers are currently classified at Grade 59. Based on internal and external equity factors, both should be classified at Grade 61.

The middle school Bookkeepers and Data Managers are currently classified at Grade 61. Based on internal and external equity factors, both should be classified at Grade 62. There is one middle school Guidance Secretary position currently classified at Grade 57. Based on internal and external equity factors, it should be classified at Grade 58.

The high school Bookkeepers and Data Managers are currently classified at Grade 61. Based on internal and external equity factors, the Bookkeepers should be classified at Grade 64 and the Data Managers should be classified at Grade 63. The high school Office Secretary positions are currently classified at Grade 57. Based on internal and external equity factors, they should be classified at Grade 59. The high school Guidance Secretaries are currently classified at Grade 59, and based on internal and external equity factors we concur with that classification.

### Recommended Pay Grades

<u>Last Name</u>	<u>Job</u>	<u>Pay Grade</u>	<u>Pay Grade</u>
LILLARD	Admin. Asst. EC	61	63
BARKER	Admin. Asst. Instruction	63	63
HANCOCK	Admin. Asst. CTE	63-35	63-35
HUNDLEY, ALLISON	Admin. Asst. Child Nutrition	63	63
STADLER	Admin. Asst. Title 1	63	63
PEARSON	Admin. Asst. Testing	63	63
EVANS	Admin. Asst. Maintenance	63-35	63-35
ISLEY	Admin. Asst. Various Curriculums	65-35	65-35
CARTER	Admin. Asst. - Instr. Support	67	65
EASTER	Admin. Asst. - Asst. Supt.	67-35	65-35
MCGUIRE	Admin. Asst. - C&I	67-50	65-50
EVERHART	Admin. Asst. - Supt./Board	69X	71
CURTIS	EC Data Manager	64	64
JOYCE, M	Office Manager Technology	64-35	64-35
BROWN	Office Manager - Maintenance	65	65
BAILEY	EC Bookkeeper	65-35	65-35
BARNES	Lead Payroll Accountant	65-385	70
BRAY	Child Nutrition Bookkeeper	65	65
GOVER	Internal Auditor/A/P Accountant	65-35	66-35
HAIRSTON	System Accountant, Lead A/P	65-385	70
ROBERTS	Payroll Accountant Purchasing Mgr./Admin. Asst.	65-20	65-20
STANLEY	Finance	65-50	65-50
TEMPLETON	A/P Accountant	65	63
WALKER	Payroll Accountant	65-25	65-25
GUTIERREZ	HR Specialist	66	65
BADGETT	HR Specialist	65-50	65-50
THOMPSON	HR Specialist	65-125	65
VAUGHN	Employee Benefits Specialist	65	65
DUNOVANT	Receptionist/Subs/Student Records	61-35	61-35
CAMPBELL JR	Mechanic II	65	65
DURHAM	Mechanic II	65-150	65-150
HAZELWOOD	Mechanic II	65	65
MAY	Mechanic II	65	65
PARKER III	Mechanic II	65	65

SMITH	Mechanic II	65-35	65-35
TERRELL	Cost Clerk Transportation	65	65
WALKER, S	Mechanic II	65	65
WRAY	TIMS Coordinator	65	65
ANGLERO JR	Mechanic 1	61	61
BURROUGHS	TIMS Secretary	61	61
PRATT	Mechanic 1	61	61
TESTER	Mechanic 1	61	61
TRAVIS	Admin. Asst. Transportation	61	61
COX	EC Transp. Route Coord.	63	64
HALL	Transportation Supervisor/Foreman	67-35	67-35
CANADY	Technician III	71-35	72
BRIDGES	Help Desk/Tech II	68-50	68-50
JOYCE, K	Powerschool Coord.	68	68
BROOKS	Technology Tech II	67	68
CASSIDY	Technology Tech II	67-35	68-35
GANN	Technology Tech II	67-35	68-35
KALINOWSKI	Technology Tech II	67-35	68-35
SMOTHERS	Technology Tech II	67-35	68-35
MCCORKLE	System Analyst	72-35	72-35
WILSON, S	Lead Data Manager	65	65
AMOS	Technology Network Engineer	78	78
BURCHELL	Technology Network Engineer	78-JB	78
DILLARD	Child Nutrition Supervisor	68	68
PULLIAM-THILL	Print Shop Manager	67	65
	Elementary Bookkeeper	59	61
	Middle School Bookkeeper	61	62
	High School Bookkeeper	61	64
	Elementary Data Manager	59	61
	Middle School Data Manager	61	62
	High School Data Manager	61	63
	Middle School Guidance Secretary	57	58
	High School Guidance Secretary	59	59
	High School Office Secretary	57	59

APPENDIX A  
THE EVALUATION TEAM

The study was conducted by Eury Consulting Services, Inc and study team members were Doug Eury, Don Martin, Kerry Crutchfield and other assigned professionals and assistants as needed. Profiles of each are stated below.

#### **Doug Eury, Ed.D.**

Doug Eury spent 33 years as a public-school educator in the state of North Carolina that included seventeen years as classroom teacher and coach. Classroom teaching assignments consisted of secondary math, middle grades social studies, and secondary physical education. Coaching duties entailed football, basketball, track and field, golf, and serving as athletic director. The remainder of his public-school tenure consisted of administrative experience at the secondary level serving as assistant principal for administration, assistant principal for curriculum and principal of North Rowan High School, North Davidson High School, and West Forsyth High School

Following his public-school career, Dr. Eury joined the School of Education faculty at Gardner-Webb University focusing on principal and superintendent preparation. That emphasis on preparation affords him the expertise in knowledge, skills, and dispositions deemed necessary for successful leadership at the school system level.

#### **Don Martin, Ed. D.**

Don Martin has served 33 years as a superintendent of schools in four districts – two in Kentucky and two in North Carolina. During his last 19 years he served as superintendent of Winston-Salem/Forsyth County Schools (53,400 students). In 2011 Dr. Martin was named the NC Superintendent of the Year and in 2009 he received the NC Distinguished Educator Award by the North Carolina Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development. He received his undergraduate degree in physics and his master of arts in teaching degree in math from Duke University and his Ed.D in Educational Administration from the University of Kentucky.

Currently Dr. Martin serves as an adjunct professor in Educational Leadership at High Point University and as an elected County Commissioner serving Forsyth County, NC.

Areas of expertise: Training superintendents and Boards of Education on how to improve their working relationship; evaluating principals; achieving financial efficiencies and budgeting; developing a comprehensive student assignment plan, passing school bond issues, constructing schools; and managing politics in the local educational setting.



### **Kerry Crutchfield**

Kerry Crutchfield has spent 37 years in school finance in Winston-Salem/Forsyth County Schools, including 30+ years as the Chief Financial Officer. Prior to joining the school system in early 1981, he was in public accounting for four years, auditing WS/FCS, other government programs, insurance companies, textile firms, hospitals, and car dealerships. He is a Certified Public Accountant and has served on the Governmental Accounting and Auditing Committee of the North Carolina Association of CPAs since its inception in the early 1980s, serving as its Chairman for two years. Additionally, he has served as President of the North Carolina Association of School Business Officials and of the North Carolina Association of School Administrators. He has served on the Board of Directors for several Not-for-Profit organizations in the Winston-Salem area.

In addition to managing an annual budget of over \$500 million, Kerry loves to teach school finance to other school district finance staff, to principals and assistant principals, to school treasurers (bookkeepers), and to school district auditors. He has taught courses for CPAs for the American Institute of CPAs in New York, Missouri, and Arkansas. He has taught or helped teach school finance to education doctoral students at UNC-G, Gardner Webb, and High Point University. He has served on multiple statewide commissions and study groups, including the Committee that developed the initial charter school application in North Carolina, and chairing the Committee that revised the State Uniform Chart of Accounts. Besides the typical areas of school finance, Kerry also has expertise in compensation plans and benefits selection and administration. He has provided consulting services for multiple school districts in North Carolina and South Carolina.

Kerry is a Morehead Scholar graduate of The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

