FairCompare™ Audit of Educational Effectiveness
and
Financial Analysis

for the

SPRINGFIELD CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT
Springfield, Ohio

Sponsored by the
Springfield Clark County Chamber of Commerce
and endorsed by the
Springfield City School District Board of Education

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SchoolMatch Mission Statement

The SchoolMatch mission is to enhance
children's educational opportunities by
providing parents, corporations and
organizations with timely, accurate,
comparative information on
public and private schools.

"By working together, pooling our resources and building on our strengths, we can accomplish great things."
– President Ronald Reagan

"We must adjust to changing times and still hold to unchanging principles."
– President Jimmy Carter

"The discovery of a problem in our schools is the most difficult part of seeking a solution to that problem. "
– Dr. Ronald Edmonds

" I was brought up to believe the only thing worth doing was to add to the sum of accurate information available"
– Dr. Margaret Mead

"Start by doing what's necessary; then do what's possible;
and suddenly you're doing the impossible."
– St. Francis of Assisi

"Plans are nothing; planning is everything."
– President Dwight D. Eisenhower

"Chance favors the prepared mind."
– Dr. Louis Pasteur

"What the best parents want for their children
educators should want for all children."
       – a parent

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PREFACE

This FairCompare™ SchoolMatch® Audit of Educational Effectiveness for the Springfield City School District was commissioned by the Springfield–Clark County Chamber of Commerce and endorsed by the Springfield City School District Board of Education as a means of improving the quality of teaching and learning in the school district.

Since March 2004, SchoolMatch consultants have collected and analyzed data from each regular elementary, middle and high school in the Springfield City School District. The Audit program was initiated in a similar fashion to that which has assisted hundreds of school systems throughout the country. The SchoolMatch site team conducted an on-site visitation to the Springfield City School District from June 1, 2004 through June 3, 2004.

Commendations to Springfield City School District Personnel

SchoolMatch evaluators commend school system personnel in attendance during the on-site visit of the SchoolMatch team of consultants for the assistance given, information provided, and the many courtesies extended. It was a pleasure to work with courteous and congenial school personnel, and school district colleagues.

The team thanks those who met team members, traveled with team members to schools or attended meetings with the Site Visit Team. They include:

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Ms. Linda Bair, Secretary, Roosevelt Middle School, Springfield City Schools
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Ms. Judy Treon, Supervisor of Transportation, Springfield City Schools
Mr. Steve Vrooman, Principal, Warder Park/Wayne Elementary School, Springfield City Schools
Mr. J.C. Wallace, President, Springfield-Clark County Chamber of Commerce
Mr. Michael Weaver, Principal, Lagonda Elementary School, Springfield City Schools
Ms. Diane Weber, Teacher, Kenton Elementary School, Springfield City Schools
Mr. Ed Weisenbach, Director of Technology, Springfield City Schools
Ms. Michelle Wheeler, Teacher, Beacon Early Childhood Center

The members of the audit team who visited the Springfield City School District were especially pleased to have a chance to visit students and teachers in the classroom. The students are vivid reminders of how this study might assist the school district and the community to create enhanced educational opportunities for Springfield's students.

History of the Audit of Educational Effectiveness

In the mid-1980s, Dr. M. Donald Thomas initiated the "Audit of Educational Effectiveness" process using carefully designed levels of effectiveness and the SchoolMatch databases. Dr. Thomas, Superintendent Emeritus of the Salt Lake City Public Schools, has achieved national recognition as a widely respected school administrator, state education reformer, researcher, author and speaker.

A few years ago, SchoolMatch assumed the responsibility of working directly with school systems to continue this important process. This educational effectiveness audit compares the Springfield City School District to similar student and staff population demographics nationwide.

Using a variety of data sources, including SchoolMatch records, data available from the U.S. and state departments of education, professional judgment and research techniques (data analysis, interviewing, polling, and others), our auditors examined a wide range of performance indicators in the Springfield City School District. These indicators range from test scores to student and staff attendance to public support for the school system (without which no school system can succeed). In each case, the results have been compared against those of the best of similar student and staff demographic populations nationwide.

The SchoolMatch Team of Consultants

In initiating the Audit for the Springfield City School District, SchoolMatch involved ten on-site visitation consultants, its databases, editorial consultants, and support staff. The on-site consultants and editors include:

FairCompare™ Audit of Educational Effectiveness

- *Dr. Richard P. Koeppe*, Chair, Senior Executive Consultant at SchoolMatch ®, and Past President of the Colorado Association of

School Executives, has 22 years experience in superintendent positions including the chief executive roles in both the Denver (CO) and Cherry Creek (CO) Public Schools. He has also served on the board of the Kent–Denver School, a private college preparatory school. He served as Professor in Educational Administration at the University of Colorado at Denver. The past–president of the Denver (CO) Rotary Club holds his Ph.D. in testing and guidance from the University of Wisconsin, Madison.

- *Dr. William L. Bainbridge,* Facilitator, currently serves as President and CEO of SchoolMatch ®, and as a Distinguished Research Professor at The University of Dayton. He is the former superintendent of three school districts in Ohio and Virginia, and former Assistant to the Ohio Superintendent of Public Instruction. He has served as a lead consultant in SchoolMatch Audits of Educational Effectiveness in school systems in over 30 states. He was named Educator of the Year by the Ohio PTA and has served as educational consultant to over 400 corporations and hundreds of school systems. He is a Fellow of the American College of Forensic Examiners and Diplomate of the National Academy for School Executives. He has been featured on NBC's Today Show, ABC's Good Morning America, CNN, NPR, CBS radio and over 400 national and local television and radio programs. He earned his Ph.D. at The Ohio State University, and completed post–doctoral studies at Columbia University.

- *Dr. Billy K. Cannaday, Jr.,* is Superintendent of the more than 55,000 student, 59 school Chesterfield County School Division in Virginia, one of the state's highest performing school systems and one of the nation's hundred largest school systems. He was named Superintendent of the Year for Virginia's Region II school divisions and is a member of the Standard Setting Advisory Committee for the Virginia Department of Education. National awards won by the school division include the US Senate Productivity and Quality Award, the top quality award for school transportation, the top school library award, and National School of Change and Title I Distinguished School awards. Chesterfield has a nonprofit public education foundation started by the business community to support schools. Business involvement today includes a sharing and exchange of people and ideas, not just financial support. Parent and community involvement is stressed, and the school division has active PTAs and other advisory groups. Dr. Cannaday previously served as Superintendent of the 23,293 student Hampton (VA) School Division, where he earlier served as Assistant

Superintendent, Director of Secondary Instruction and as a building level administrator. He also served as an administrator in the Newport News Public Schools. The recipient of the Outstanding Young Men of America Award also has marketing experience in the private sector. The Chesterfield School Division has participated in the SchoolMatch ® FairCompare Audit of Educational Effectiveness. The native of Roanoke holds a doctorate from Virginia Polytechnic Institute.

- *William R. Mason, Jr. M.Ed.* is Vice President for Consulting Services at SchoolMatch ® and Adjunct Professor in the University of Dayton's School of Education and Allied Professions. Mr. Mason is also an American College of Forensic Examiners qualified expert in school litigation issues, a former assistant superintendent of the Newark (OH) City Schools, principal, teacher, and two-time President of the Ohio Association of School Personnel Administrators. He holds a Master's Degree in educational leadership from Kent State University and continues to serve as an NCAA basketball and Lacrosse official.

- *Dr. Ramona S. Thomas* is Senior Program Officer for evaluation and knowledge management at the KnowledgeWorks Foundation in Cincinnati. She is responsible for developing and managing all aspects of the Foundation's evaluation activities, and for sharing knowledge, lessons learned, and best practices with various constituencies, most notably policy-makers. Dr. Thomas previously served with the Pathways to College Network, Andrew W. Mellon Foundation and Spencer Foundation. Dr. Thomas' professional experience includes program evaluation in urban school systems and systems consulting. She holds a bachelor's degree in applied mathematics from Brown University and a doctorate from the University of Pennsylvania, which she received with distinction.

Financial Review /Analysis and Business Management & Operational Resource Utilization

- *William A. Guy, CGFM,* Chair, Senior Executive Financial Consultant at SchoolMatch ® has over thirty years experience in public-sector financial management. The former Chief Financial Officer for the Columbus (OH) Public Schools also served as Deputy Treasurer for the State of Ohio, treasurer for the Lockland (OH) City schools and Assistant Treasurer for the Cincinnati (OH) Public Schools and has

served as President of the Central Ohio chapter of the Association of Government Accountants and President of the Ohio School Employees Retirement System Board of Directors. He has served as a SchoolMatch financial consultant in both Sarasota County Public Schools and Santa Rosa County Public Schools. Mr. Guy holds the Certified Financial Government Manager Credential awarded by the Association of Government Accountants.

- *Dr. Steven M. Sundre,* Facilitator, currently serves as Executive Vice President and Chief Financial Officer of SchoolMatch ® and as a Distinguished Research Professor at The University of Dayton. He is a former Executive Director of the Accrediting Commission on Education for Health Services Administration, Washington, D.C., where he currently serves as the elected public member of the Board. He has been a Kellogg Fellow and former graduate faculty member, The Ohio State University College of Medicine. He serves on the Board of Directors of Support for Talented Students, a non-profit organization assisting low-income children with special gifts and talents. He earned his Ph.D. in educational leadership and organizational behavior at The Ohio State University, where he received the Thomas Holy Award in educational research.

- *William Kennedy, CISA, CPA.* is Managing Partner and the Director of Consulting Services for Kennedy, Cottrell & Associates. Mr. Kennedy has responsibility for services provided to the firm's clients, including several counties, cities, townships, and school districts within the State of Ohio. These services include financial statement audits, GAAP conversions, consulting projects, and agreed upon procedures engagements. While with Kennedy, Cottrell & Associates, Mr. Kennedy has managed audit and consulting services for Upper Arlington City Schools, Fairfield Union Local Schools, and Hamilton Local Schools. He has previously served on SchoolMatch ® audit teams. Before joining Steen & Co., Mr. Kennedy was an Audit Manager for the Ohio Auditor of State's office where he gained extensive experience with governmental entities. During his time with the Auditor of State's office, Mr. Kennedy was responsible for the management of over 25 state-level agency audits, including audits of multiple Federal programs as part of the Federal Single Audit for the State of Ohio. Mr. Kennedy earned his BSBA degree in Accounting from Ohio State University. He is licensed to practice as a Certified Public Accountant and Certified Information System Auditor in the State of Ohio.

- *Dr. Bruce E Mousa*, Senior Executive Consultant at SchoolMatch ®, served as Chief Business Officer for the Worthington (OH) City Schools for many years, where he also served as Director of Business Services and Administrative Specialist for Personnel. He chaired the Ohio Public Schools Committee for the All-Ohio Safety Congress and was educational consultant to LINC Resource on the Market Linkage Project in Special Education. The former Treasurer of the Ohio Association of School Personnel Administrators was named Administrator of the year by the Ohio Association of School Personnel Administrators, and holds Certification in Strategic Planning from the AASA National Academy for School Executives. Currently he serves as a project management consultant and training instructor and is certified as a Project Management Professional (PMP) by the Project Management Institute (PMI). He received his Ph.D. in educational leadership from The Ohio State University.

- *Stephen M. Vargo, MA,* Senior Executive School Operations Consultant at SchoolMatch ®, served as Chief Operations Officer and administrator in the 70,000 student Columbus Ohio Public School District from 1990 to 1999. Previously he served as Director of the Department of Facility Management, Director of the Department of Facility Planning, Assistant Superintendent of Support Services and Supervisor in the Department of Facility Planning for that school system. The graduate of Western Michigan University completed advanced work at The Ohio State University. He holds a business manager's license and educational administrators specialist license in Ohio. In addition to working with SchoolMatch, he has served as consultant to two other educational consulting firms, Planning Advocates, Inc., and Conrath, Northrup & Rinehart.

Data and Editorial Support Team

- *Kathryn B. Bleimes* is Chief Information Officer at SchoolMatch ®. She previously served as a computer systems consultant at CHB Inc., a systems analyst at the Ross Laboratories Division of Abbott Laboratories, a Fortune 500 pharmaceutical firm, and a programmer analyst at Motorists Insurance. She is highly skilled in ColdFusion, Delphi, Clipper, HTML, Dbase, Access, Excel, COBOL, and CICS. The Past Co-President of the Wilson Hill Elementary School Parent Teacher Organization in the Worthington, OH, School District also has assisted that school system as a volunteer computer applications coordinator. She holds a Bachelor of Science

degree in computer and information science from The Ohio State University.

- *Melanie Kleinlein*, Executive Assistant at SchoolMatch ®. She previously served as a customer service representative for Bank One and as a secretary for Worthington City and Columbus Public Schools.

- *Carol Scott,* Communications Coordinator at SchoolMatch®, holds a Bachelor of Arts degree in advertising and psychology from The University of Houston.

I.   INTRODUCTION

A.   Effective Schools and Effective School Practices

Research on effective schools and school practices has clearly demonstrated that schools and school systems can become more effective. The literature describing the research defines effectiveness as:

Having high achievement among all student groups,
Having high student and staff attendance,
Having high employee and student satisfaction, and
Having high public confidence in schools.

Effective schools also "add value" to the performance levels of students: *The level of student performance increases uniformly the longer students are in school.*

The top 15-20 percent of the student population in each performance and demographic category achieves effectiveness levels. In statistical terms, effectiveness levels are those levels achieved at one standard deviation above the mean of the cohort population and are, therefore, rigorous levels of achievement.

When the following practices and objectives are implemented in a school system, the probability increases that the school system will be effective in all areas. These "Correlates of Effectiveness" include:

*1.   Strong instructional **leadership** provided by the principal.*

*2.   A comprehensive curriculum— **emphasis on learning** objectives,   learning activities, and appropriate achievement measures.*

*3.   Measurement— regular **monitoring** of student achievement and   staff/student attendance.*

*4.   A safe, orderly, disciplined, and supportive **school climate.***

*5.   **High expectations** for quality work supported by staff and students.*

Effective schools and school systems practice behaviors associated with the conditions (correlates) of effectiveness. More importantly, however, these behaviors are understood, are supported, are practiced, and are observable throughout a school system. Such behaviors can be established through effective school training programs and then adapted to each school system environment. **It should be clearly understood that conditions for effectiveness are achieved through the decisions made by adults in the school community and are fully under their direction and control.** To this end, effective schools and school systems forge extensive and positive linkages between communities and schools.

B.   The Cohort Group
**   The Process of Matching "Means"**
**   Fair Comparisons**

An Audit of Educational Effectiveness examines the degree to which the student and staff populations in a school district meet levels of effectiveness. Each school district population is examined against populations nationwide with similar demographics, some of which are currently achieving educational effectiveness and which have firmly established the conditions of effectiveness. The SchoolMatch approach compares student populations rather than school systems in order to provide more fair, accurate, and comprehensive cohort comparisons.

SchoolMatch maintains databases on each of the nation's 15,800 operating public school systems and more than 14,000 accredited private schools. From the SchoolMatch database of public school populations, other student and staff populations in the United States with similar demographic characteristics to the population in the Springfield City

School District were identified. In selecting the district's cohort group, SchoolMatch focused on school system communities that are similar to Springfield in socio-demographic make-up or composition. This large group is the Springfield City School District **cohort group**.

Within the Springfield City School District cohort group exist similar populations which have achieved effectiveness in one or more of the areas analyzed by an Audit of Educational Effectiveness (approximately 15-20% of the entire population). Also within the cohort group are student populations which perform at or below the average (mean) for the entire group, in a given category (approximately 15-20% of the population). In order to form the basis for comparison with these demographically similar populations, SchoolMatch calculates the average (mean) performance level for the cohort group in every category analyzed in the audit process. This demographically-**matched set** of populations (the cohort group) can be described in terms of the average (**mean**) in each performance area. As a result, **we may refer to the cohort group as the mean-matched group.**

Once the averages in each measurable category are calculated, the cohort group is then **mean-matched.** Once the mean for each category is determined, the effectiveness level (one standard deviation above the mean) can be calculated.

The following graph illustrates the distribution of school district student populations within a mean-matched cohort group in relationship to the cohort average in a given performance category:
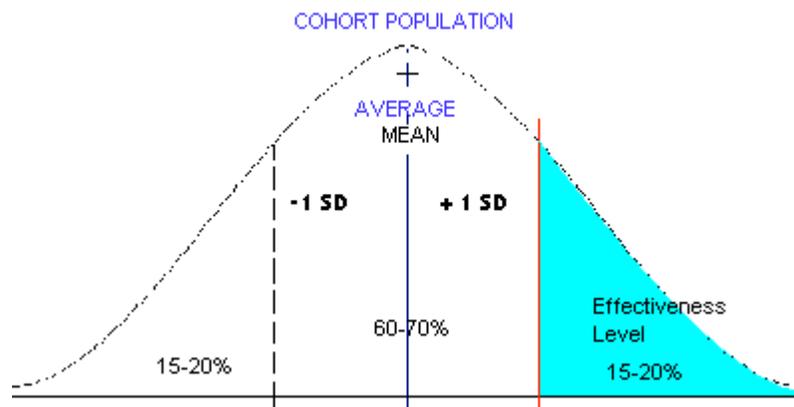
C.   The Audit of Educational Effectiveness Process

An educational effectiveness audit may include most or all of the following:

1. *An analysis of school system policies.*

2. *An analysis of test data.*

3. *An analysis of attendance data.*

4. *An examination of dropout rates.*

5. *An examination of Advanced Placement/honors classes.*

6. *An analysis of the relationship between grades awarded and* other

   student performance indicators.

7. *An examination of the curricula.*

8. *An analysis of school improvement plans.*

9. *An examination of the school district technology plan.*

The audit also consists of other activities to obtain information about the effectiveness of practices and policies in the school district, including:

1. *Interviews with school district administrators, building* administrators,
   teacher leaders, classroom teachers, students, and parents.

2. *Observations in a sample number of schools.*

3. *Administration of perception surveys to a sample number of administrators, parents, and teachers.*

4. *Examination of state, regional, and national source documents containing data relevant to the school system being examined.*

5. *Examination of accreditation documents when appropriate.*

D.   Collection and Analysis of School District Data

Auditors use information obtained through various interviews to verify data gathered through data collection forms, documents reviewed before and during the on-site visit (Appendix A), and aggregated responses from perception surveys completed by a sample of parents, teachers and administrators. Professional judgments establish reliability. The continuing observations and analyses of educational researchers have established the validity of effective school practices and the ensuing benefits to school districts that use them. These research data are readily available.

E.   The Purpose of an Audit of Educational Effectiveness

The central purpose of an educational effectiveness audit is to identify areas of school system operation or system results that are effective, as well as those areas that can and should be improved. This identification can serve as a basis for school system improvement and for the allocation of resources. Outside (SchoolMatch) auditors may also make recommendations based on the effectiveness of practices in school districts serving similar student populations.

In addition, the audit process and final report will assist the school system to:

1.   Examine school system leadership, structure, and policy development.

2.   Examine appropriateness of school system goals and objectives.

3.   Analyze pupil performance information and establish the degree to which   schools are effective.

4.   Analyze the perceptions of parents, teachers, and administrators toward existing school practices and their overall effectiveness.

5.   Establish appropriate school improvement programs.

6.   Establish accountability structures to validate school improvement.

F.   A Sample of Student Populations Demographically Similar to the Population   of the Springfield City School District

Among student populations in the more than 15,800 public school systems in the United States, the school systems listed here share similar **primary** demographic characteristics in the categories of education level of school district residents, per capita income, and poverty level of the community. **Secondary** qualifiers include relative size of the student population and the percent of the student population qualifying for free or reduced-price lunch.

The districts listed below may not be identical to the Springfield City School District in all primary or secondary demographic categories. They represent the closest overall matches nationwide to the Springfield City School District student population.

NAME	CITY	STATE
1. Allegany County Bd. of Ed.	Cumberland	MD
2. Battle Creek Public Schools	Battle Creek	MI
3. Beloit Public Schools	Beloit	WI
4. Christian County SD	Hopkinsville	KY
5. Columbia County SD	Lake City	FL
6. Danville City Public Schools	Danville	VA
7. Darlington County SD	Darlington	SC
8. Niagra Falls City SD	Niagra Falls	NY
9. St. Bernard Parish SD	Chalmette	LA
10. Troup County SD	LaGrange	GA

Please be aware that the above listed districts are not aware of their inclusion in this report. They have been selected from the SchoolMatch database. However, we believe that discussions between leaders of the school systems listed and leaders in the Springfield City School District relative to effective school practices may provide information about how demographically similar school systems manage their resources in pursuit of effectiveness.

G.   Levels of Achievement

There are four levels of achievement in effectiveness auditing:

1. **Basic:** the minimum that will be accepted.

2. **Normative:** achieved by the average of the group.

3. **Effective:** levels achieved by the top 15–20 percent of a mean-

   matched group of student populations (one standard deviation above the mean).

4. **Absolute:** levels achieved by only a few student populations. The achievement of 100 percent average daily attendance, for example, would be achievement of an absolute level.

Information related to various levels of achievement is provided in Appendix B. Although researchers differ widely on the meaning and use of test data, most agree that test data (or student performance assessments) are one important measurement of the degree to which schools and school systems are effective.

II.   SCHOOL SYSTEM POLICIES AND GOVERNANCE

The Springfield City School District is governed by a five member Board of Education. The Board of Education is responsible for establishing policies and providing support for quality educational opportunities for all students. The current members of the Board are:

The Honorable Todd Jones, President
The Honorable Christi Lockhart, Vice President
The Honorable James Bacon, Member
The Honorable James Huffman, Member
The Honorable Regina Rollins, Member

An analysis of the Springfield City School District Board of Education Policy Manual and related documents indicates that the policy manual is generally well organized and up-to-date, although very lengthy. Several policies associated with effective schools have already been adopted in the following important categories:

Instructional Objectives
Homework
Care of School Equipment
Superintendent Authority Over School Personnel
Staff Development
Personnel Evaluation
Public Involvement in School Affairs
Parent Involvement in School Governance
Separation of Policy Making and Administration/Methodology
Curriculum and Content Equity
Monitoring of Student Performance
Community Partnerships
Equal Opportunity Employment
School-Site Management
Superintendent/Principal Leadership
Public Reporting of Student Performance
School Volunteers
Access to Computers and Other Technology for All Students

The site visit team notes that several policies related to effective schooling need to be strengthened or are not present. While some of the following topics may be addressed in other policies or within

administrative procedure guidelines, or are practiced informally within the district, distinct Board policies in these areas are not apparent. The site visit team suggests that the Board of Education give attention to the development, strengthening, and/or expansion of effective policy in these areas. Model policy statements in each of the following areas (as well as other areas related to effectiveness, noted above) are included in Appendix E of this report for Board of Education review and consideration:

Periodic Reporting of Student Performance Data
School Rules and Regulations
School Unit Accountability
High Expectations of Staff and Students
Recognition of Outstanding Performance of Students and Staff
School Climate
School Standards
Data-Based Decision Making

Creating and maintaining an on-line, "read-only," *clear and easily understood* Board of Education Policy Manual is of particular importance. As the Springfield City School District's Board of Education Policy Manual is revised and improved, efforts should be pursued to keep an on-line manual current and available to all school district personnel as well as to community constituents.

III. CRITERIA FOR EFFECTIVENESS

A. ACHIEVEMENT ANALYSIS

1. Expected Levels of Achievement

There is a relationship among school system effectiveness, the socioeconomic status of the community, and the educational levels of parents. Many studies have suggested that early childhood experiences affect learning and development, with children from impoverished environments generally achieving at lower levels than those from more enriching situations. An article in the April 21, 1997 issue of *US News and World Report*, for example, supports the notion that improving social and family conditions, particularly in the early years, can enhance development.

In the late 1970s, neuroscientists discovered that children have a rapid increase in brain connectivity early in development. The research of pediatric neurologists suggests that formation of synaptic contacts in the human cerebral cortex occurs between birth and age ten. In other words, most of the brain gets built after birth. (See Peter R. Huttenlocher and Arun S. Dabholkar, "Regional Differences in Synaptogenesis in Human Cerebral Cortex," *The Journal of Comparative Neurology*, 387:167–178 [October 20, 1997]). Higher intelligence is witnessed in individuals with more stimulation and protein in the early years of life. More recent documentation indicates that "age three seems more likely to mark only the beginning of a long developmental and maturational period during which environmental stimulation and experience do matter" (See John T. Bruer, "Neural Connections – Some You Use, Some You Lose," *Phi Delta Kappan*, Vol. 81, No. 4, pp. 264–277, [December 1999]).

Recent research has shown that the family's social class has an effect on vocabulary growth and the development of language skills in children. Those from lower socio-economic classes tend be less fluent with language and have less capacity to teach their children language skills than those from higher socio-economic situations. These differentiations are quite pronounced by age three or four, and have significant implications for later cognitive and school performance. Effective schooling can reduce the consequences of lack of early exposure to strong language skills, and can, to some degree, equalize performance on language-based tasks. (See George Farkas and Kurt Beron, "Family Linguistic Culture and Social Reproduction: Verbal Skill

from Parent to Child in the Preschool and School Years," presented at the Session of Child Poverty and Deprivation, at the Annual Meeting of the Population Association of America, Washington D.C., 31 March 2001.)

Achievement has also been associated with child rearing practices, assertive mothers generally rearing children who achieve at higher levels than those reared by less assertive mothers. (See Guy Odom, *Mothers, Leadership, and Success*, Houston: Polybius Press, 1989.)

These concepts open up many opportunities for parents and schools to work together in improving learning potential.

The effective school research has abundantly demonstrated that achievement levels between poor and affluent students can be narrowed considerably while increasing levels of achievement for all students.

Nevertheless, the criteria of effectiveness are generally met at a higher level when student populations contain a small percentage of free and reduced lunch students (an indicator of poverty levels) and the educational level of parents is high school completion or above. We can generally assume that school systems which have better entry level characteristics than the state average will meet the criteria of effectiveness at a higher level than those whose entry level characteristics match or are below the state average.

Entry level characteristics used for predicting student achievement levels are items such as:

- *percent of students' mothers who have graduated from high school;*

- *percent of students with limited English proficiency;*

- *percent of students living in poverty;*

- *percent of school system families receiving public aid;*

- *percent of student population on free and reduced lunch;*

- *average family income of parents in the community;*

- *percent of teaching staff having a Master's degree or higher;*

- *the general fund expenditure per pupil, excluding capital*

expenditures; and

- *percent of teaching staff having temporary certificates or letters of authorization.*

In this audit, the items used to predict the levels at which the effectiveness criteria should be met by the Springfield City School District include:

- *percent of student population on free and reduced lunch;*

- *percent of students whose principal language is not English;*

- *percent of school system residents living in poverty;*

- *the average family and per capita income in the school district;*

- *the education level of adult residents in the community (average number of years of schooling);*

- *the general fund expenditure per pupil, excluding capital funds;*

- *percent of student population performing on grade level in grades 1–3;*

- *percent of teaching staff having a Master's degree or higher;*

- *percent of teachers having temporary certificates or letters of authorization.*

Educational researchers and auditors realize that predictions and judgments cannot be made from a single indicator. Therefore, the audit uses a multiple variable approach to making recommendations and arriving at conclusions. It is the same method used by various state departments of education to establish accountability and validate school effectiveness. It was initially developed by the South Carolina Department of Education (Division of Public Accountability) and has been used in several other states.

If a number of variables indicate some trend, and all the variables are moving in the same direction, then the confidence level of the prediction, or the conclusion, is well established. This is a commonly accepted practice in educational auditing.

To establish effectiveness levels for the Springfield City School District, we used the following conditions, as reported by the school district for the 2002–03 school year (sources noted if other than the school district):

- *[The Site Visit Team received the following important information 18 days after the Site Visit.] percent of students economically disadvantaged per 2004 ODE local report card is 69%. The Administration of the District alerted the Site Visit Team that this percentage was mis-reported by the Ohio Department of Education on the last local report card for Springfield, and will be corrected in the upcoming local report card. This percentage is higher than surrounding urban districts such as Cincinnati, Columbus, Dayton and Toledo, but lower than Cleveland or Youngstown.*

- *percent of student population receiving free and reduced lunch is 56.95%;*

- *percent of students whose principal language is not English is 1%;*

- *percent of school system residents living in poverty is 32.2%* (Source: SchoolMatch databases);

- *percent of school system residents receiving public aid is 14.8%* (Source: SchoolMatch databases);

- *the average per capita income in the community is $15,651;*

- *the education level of school system residents is 12 years of schooling;*

- *the general fund expenditure per pupil, excluding capital funds is $9,823;*

- *percent of student population deemed ready for kindergarten is 81%;*

- *percent of students retained in kindergarten is 2.65%;*

- *percent of student population performing on grade level in grade 3 is 93.4%;*

- *percent of teaching staff having a Master's degree or higher is 50.73%;*

- *percent of teaching staff having temporary certificates or letters of authorization is 4.59%*

     With the above socio–demographic profile, the Springfield City School District should establish the following effectiveness levels in order to place the district's student and staff populations among the top 15–20% of performance for similar populations:

- *The grade point average of the senior class should be 2.2 (non-weighted).*

- *The district attendance rate (ADA/ADM) should be 94%.*

- *Achievement on norm–referenced tests for Reading should be at—or above—the 63rd percentile.*

- *Achievement on norm–referenced tests for Mathematics should be at—or above—the 63rd percentile.*

- *12% of the juniors and seniors should be enrolled in the Advanced Placement program. Of all juniors and seniors, 3.4% should be taking at least one AP examination. Of the students taking AP examinations, 70% should be eligible for college credit (attain scores of 3, 4 or 5);*

- *The one-year dropout rate should be 3.8% or lower;*

- *The dropout rate, cumulative grades 9–12, should be 15.2% or lower.*

- *The Teacher Absence Index (TAI) should be at or below 5.0 days (See Appendix C).*

- *On the ACT, the school system composite score should be 20.4 or higher.*

- *On the SAT, the school system composite score should be 986 or higher.*

- *The average of the responses for each correlate of effectiveness for parents, teachers, and administrators should be at, or below, 2.0*

(See Section V, Correlates of Effectiveness).

Section IV, Effectiveness Levels, provides three significant categories for the entire school district and for each school:

1.   The mean (AVERAGE) performance for the comparison population for each variable;

2.   The performance standard when effectiveness is achieved in the school district at one standard deviation above the mean (the
EFFECTIVENESS LEVEL); and

3.   The current status of variables in Springfield City School District and individual schools within the district.

2.   Lower Grade/Upper Grade Analysis

Assuming the district's student population has similar characteristics (e.g., poverty level, parent education level) at all grade levels, students should perform at equivalent or higher levels on the achievement tests given in different grades. This kind of consistent achievement at different grade levels may be thought of as "value added" achievement. When this does not occur, a more rigorous academic program should be provided at upper grade levels. The most appropriate way to gauge value added achievement in a school district is to follow each group of students as they progress from grade to grade throughout their entire twelve years of schooling. The SchoolMatch team encourages the leadership in the Springfield City School District to establish procedures to collect data and monitor progress in this way. In the absence of twelve years' worth of data on one academic class, the SchoolMatch Audit team considered achievement data at each grade level where tests are given for one year as a kind of "prism view" of performance across the grade levels in the Springfield City School District.

The following discussion focuses on an analysis of student performance in the major subject areas of reading and mathematics. The scores presented and discussed in this report were the most recent available at the time the Audit process began.

A. NORM-REFERENCED TESTS

In October 2002, students were tested in grades 2, 3, 5 and 7 on the Iowa Test of Basic Skills (ITBS).   The following Table shows performance across the grade levels in reading and mathematics compared to the cohort mean and effectiveness level:

Table 1:   October 2002 Percentile Rank of Student Scores on the ITBS, Grades 2, 3, 5 and 7, Reading and Mathematics, compared to SchoolMatch Mean and Effectiveness Level (in bold)

SPRINGFIELD SCHOOL DISTRICT: Percentile Rank of Student Scores on the ITBS, Grades 2, 3, 5 and 7 Reading and Mathematics				
Grade	Reading	Math	SM Mean	SM Effectiveness Level
2	46	36	**47**	**63**

3	39	42	**47**	**63**
5	45	36	**47**	**63**
7	37	45	**47**	**63**

   Reading: District-wide scores in reading approach the mean for similar student populations in Grade 2 and in Grade 5. Reading performance in Grade 3 and in Grade 7, as measured by the ITBS, is considerably below the mean for groups of similar students nationwide. In addition, it would appear that reading scores are generally declining as students advance within the elementary grades and into middle school. The following graph illustrates:

Graph 1:   **READING: Percentile Rank of School District Average Student Scores on the ITBS, Grades 2, 3, 5 and 7 – in Reading, October 2002, Compared with SchoolMatch Mean and Effectiveness Level**
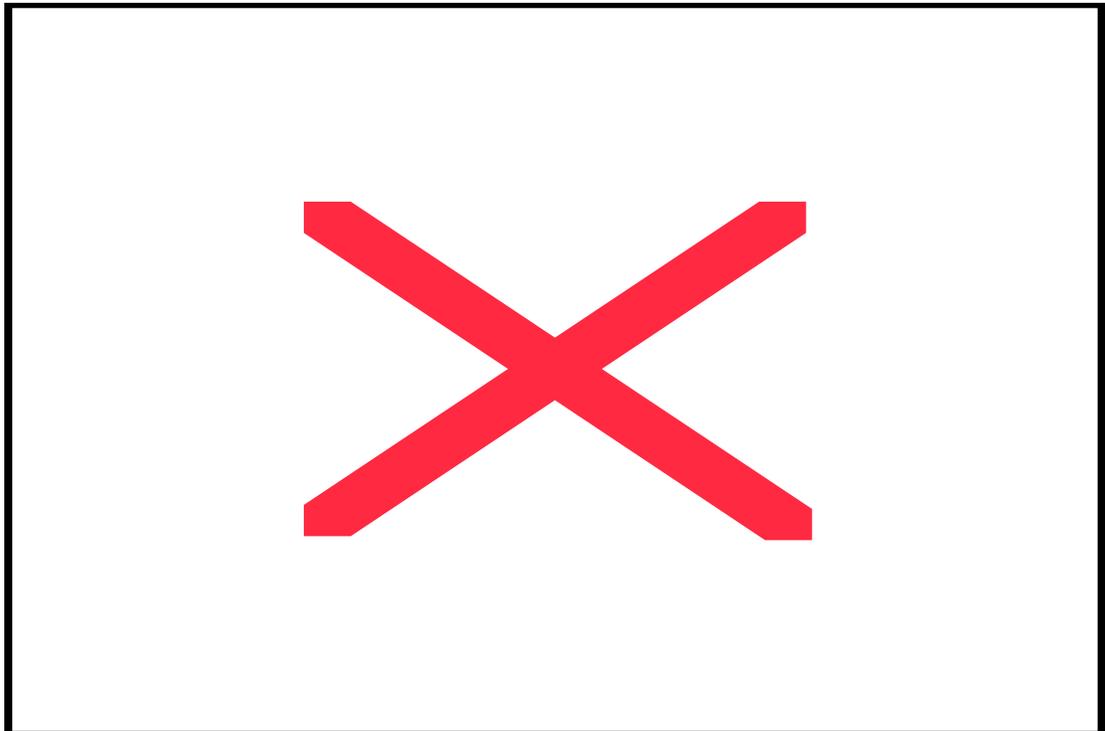
Mathematics: In mathematics, district-wide scores are below the mean of like student populations in all four grades in which the ITBS is given in the Springfield City Schools. Student performance in mathematics improves somewhat in Grade 3 and in Grade 7; however, student performance in Grade 2 and in Grade5 approaches one standard deviation below the mean (the 30th percentile for the cohort group), or the lowest 15-20% of like student populations. The following graph illustrates:

Graph 2:   **MATHEMATICS: Percentile Rank of School District Average Student Scores on the ITBS, Grades 2, 3, 5 and 7 – in Mathematics, October 2002, Compared with SchoolMatch Mean and Effectiveness Level**

Springfield Average Student Performance, IOWA Norm-Referenced Tests, October 2002

Percentile Rank	Mean	Effectiveness Level	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 5	Grade 7
	47	63	36	42	44	45
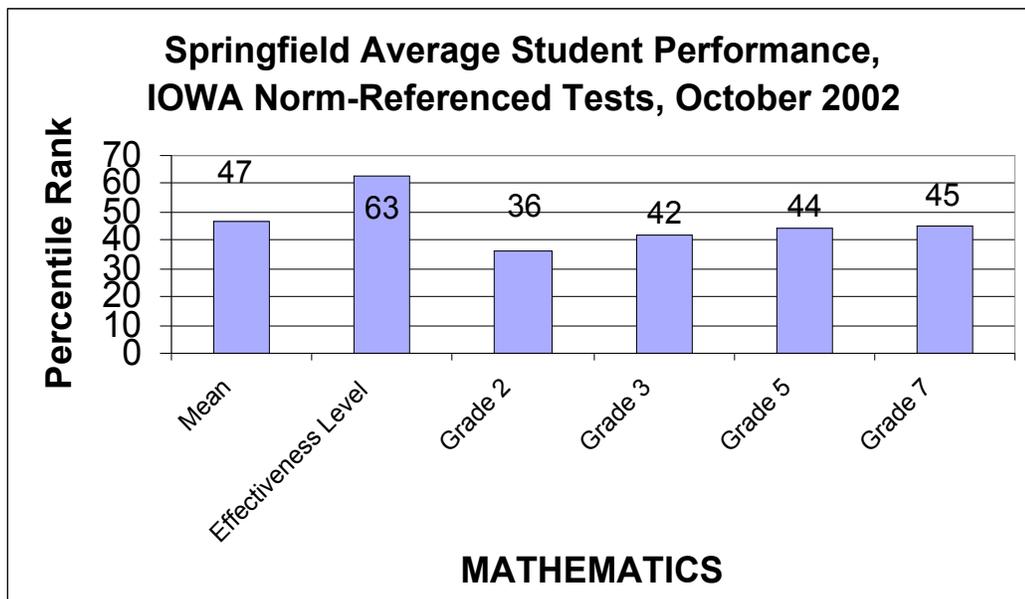
MATHEMATICS

Curiously, student performance in mathematics and in reading seems to alternate as students advance through the grades. While one goes up, the other goes down. For example, reading performance in Grade 2 is stronger than mathematics performance in Grade 2, while the reverse is true in Grade 3. Again in Grade 5, reading performance is slightly stronger than mathematics, but mathematics performance exceeds performance in reading in Grade 7. Effectiveness levels are not reached at any grade level. While mean level performance is approached for reading at Grade 2 and 5, and mathematics in Grade 5 and Grade 7, student performance in reading (Grades 3 and 7) and in mathematics (Grade 2) is closer to one standard deviation <u>below</u> the mean (<30) for

similar student populations. This would place Springfield City School's students in the lower 15–20% of the cohort group.

B. STANDARDS-BASED TESTS

The Ohio Proficiency Test is designed to measure student mastery of key subject areas at specific grade levels throughout elementary and secondary grades. Because state-mandated tests vary greatly from state to state, it is not appropriate to compare results on the Ohio Proficiency Test to results from other states on their statewide exams.

The tables presented below are to be used for consideration and review of performance within the Springfield City Schools only. It may be useful to examine performance among schools and relationships to state passing percentages (% of test-takers that met or exceeded state performance standards).

Table 2:   **READING: Percent of Springfield City School District Students in Grades 4, 6, 9 and 10 at or above the proficient rate, Compared with Statewide Results, March 2003.**

READING: March 2003 Ohio Proficiency Test % Met or Exceeded Standards		
Grade	**Springfield City School District**	**State**
4	44.8	66.3
6	36.0	65.0
9	73.0	86.9
10	88.1	93.8

Table 3:   **MATHEMATICS: Percent of Springfield City School District Students in Grades 4, 6, 9 and 10 at or above the proficient rate, Compared with Statewide Results, March 2003.**

MATHEMATICS: March 2003 Ohio Proficiency Test % Met/Exceeded Standards		
Grade	**Springfield City School District**	**State**

4	36.4	58.6
6	26.6	52.8
9	45.2	71.2
10	66.8	82.0

Student performance (as measured by the percent of test-takers who met or exceeded the state standards) in reading generally fell well below statewide performance levels. However, performance gaps seem to narrow in the upper grades in reading. Gaps in mathematics performance remain consistently wide throughout the grade levels tested. As measured by the Ohio Proficiency Test, value-added achievement is not attained for mathematics mastery, while the evidence suggests some value-added achievement for reading.

C. OVERALL ANALYSIS: **Upper-Grade Lower Grade Norm-Referenced and Standards-Based Test Results**

By using both the Iowa Test of Basic Skills (ITBS) and the Ohio Proficiency Test, the school district provides a comprehensive testing program for evaluation of student learning in:

- Grade 2   ITBS
- Grade 3   ITBS
- Grade 4   Ohio Proficiency Test
- Grade 5   ITBS
- Grade 6   Ohio Proficiency Test
- Grade 7   ITBS
- Grade 9   Ohio Proficiency Test
- Grade 10   Ohio Proficiency Test

Analysis of testing results for 2002-2003 suggests that value-added achievement in mathematics is not present in the Springfield City Schools. While performance in mathematics on the ITBS in early grades appears to improve between Grade 2 and Grade 7, Ohio Proficiency scores suggest a consistently negative and wide gap in student performance in Grade 4 through 10.

In contrast, while reading scores measured by the ITBS in the early grades decline from Grade 2 to Grade 7, the gap in reading proficiency test scores appears to narrow from Grade 4 to Grade 10. For example, the gap in Grade 4 was 21.5. By Grade 10, the gap had narrowed to 5.7.

3.   **Cross-Subject Analysis**

Cognition is the process by which knowledge is acquired through the use and interpretation of environmental symbols. When groups of students achieve results that indicate aggregate performance at a particular level in one area, the group should be expected to achieve aggregate performance at the same level in other cognitive areas. Groups can do just as well in one cognitive area as in any other cognitive area.

Evidence suggests that differences in achievement levels among groups in various subject areas do not result from differences in cognitive ability; that is, one subject is not inherently easier or more difficult than any other. All things being equal, humans are born with about equal potential to learn any subject (barring neurological deficits or extreme gifts). The original research of Dr. David Ausubell at the University of Illinois and more recent studies at the Departments of Pediatrics and Neurology at the University of Chicago (under the direction of Peter R. Huttenlocher, M.D. and Arun S. Dabholkar, M.D.) confirm that the differences in the ways children learn at different ages are due largely to the development of cerebral synapses, which can be greatly influenced by environmental stimulation and protein in the diet.

Equalization of expectations of cognition among groups should not be applied to individuals within those groups. Every group contains individuals who perform either far below or far above the norm or average of the group. Harvard educator Howard Gardener cautions that such group analysis should not be directly applied when reviewing the performance of each individual student, in light of "multiple intelligences." Multiple intelligences differentiations are an entirely separate issue in that such research deals with individual differentiated abilities that cut across domains. Within cognitive domains, achievement levels should be similar among various groups.

The following discussions focus on the major subject areas of reading and mathematics.

A. NORM-REFERENCED TESTS

Results from October 2002 show scores in reading and mathematics on the Iowa Test of Basic Skills (ITBS) that vary by grade level. In Grade 2, reading performance exceeds performance in mathematics, while the reverse is true in Grade 3. Performance in reading and mathematics are roughly equivalent in Grade 5. However,

mathematics performance is significantly higher than reading performance in Grade 7.

Graph 3: **Comparison of Performance in Reading and Mathematics on the Iowa Test of Basic Skills, October 2002, Grades 2, 3, 5 and 7.**

Comparison of Performance in Reading and Mathematics on the ITBS, October 2002

Percent Passing

Grade	Reading	Mathematics
Grade 2	46	36
Grade 3	39	42
Grade 5	44	45
Grade 7	37	45

Reading — Mathematics
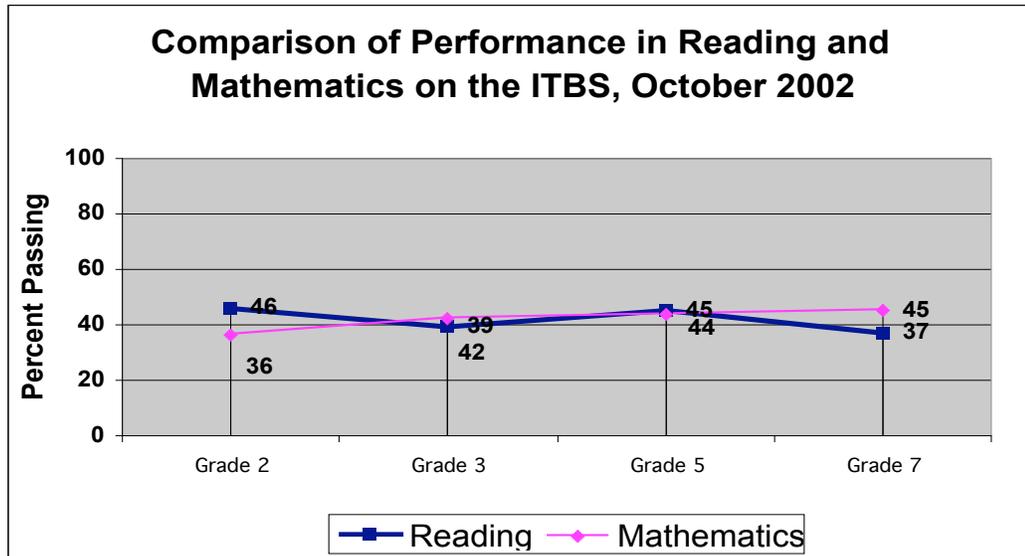
B. STANDARDS-BASED TESTS

On the Ohio Proficiency Test, performance in reading is generally higher than in mathematics, although both dip in Grade 6. There is evidence of improvement in mastery of both subject areas as students progress through the early grades to the upper grades.

Graph 4: **Comparison of Performance in Reading and Mathematics on the Ohio Proficiency Test, March 2003, Grades 4, 6, 9 and 10.**
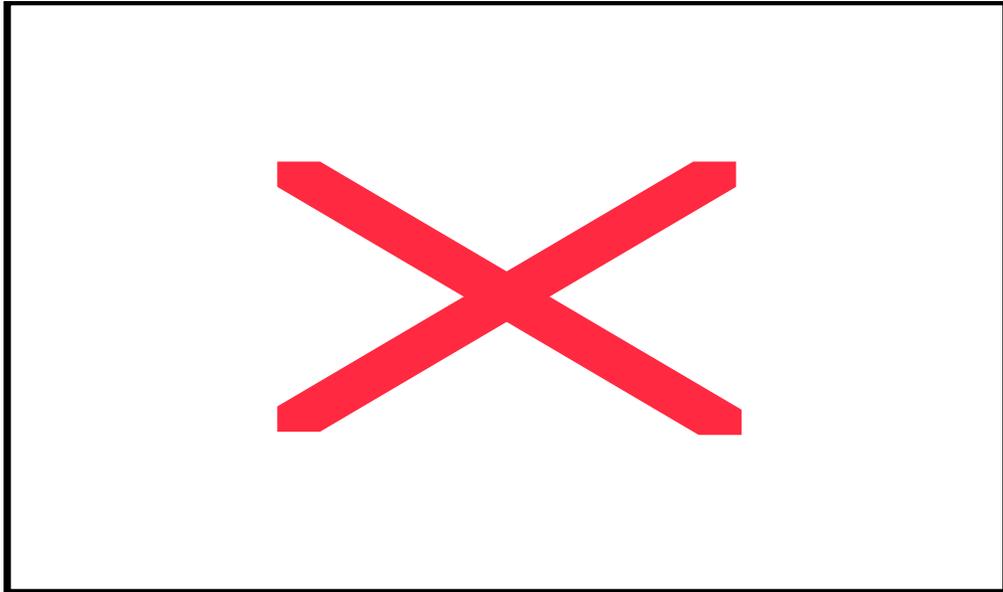
C. OVERALL ANALYSIS: Cross-Subject
Norm-Referenced and Standards-Based Test Results

Recorded student performance on the ITBS suggests an unevenness in mathematics and reading instruction in the early grades. At times performance in reading exceeds performance in mathematics, and at other times the reverse is true. Ohio Proficiency Test scores would seem suggest that students do consistently better on the reading tests than on the mathematics tests.

However, group achievement differs significantly from subject to subject. School officials would benefit from examining factors such as the nature and quality of instruction, time on task, testing situations, environmental influences and nutrition issues to determine how to equalize student performance in the important areas of reading and mathematics. Some of these factors are under the control of school personnel, and can be organized to produce positive effects on student achievement.

4.   Achievement on College Entrance Exams: ACT and SAT

District-wide performance on the ACT in 2002–03 is above the mean and approaching the effectiveness level for similar student populations. Performance on the SAT exceeds the mean for the cohort group, but does not approach the effectiveness level. It is important to note the predominant test in Ohio and in the Springfield City School District is the ACT, which should be given more weight in consideration of student performance. (See graphs below).

Graph 5

Springfield School District ACT Results 2002-03

	Mean	Effectiveness Level	District Status
Average Composite Score	18.4	20.4	19.7
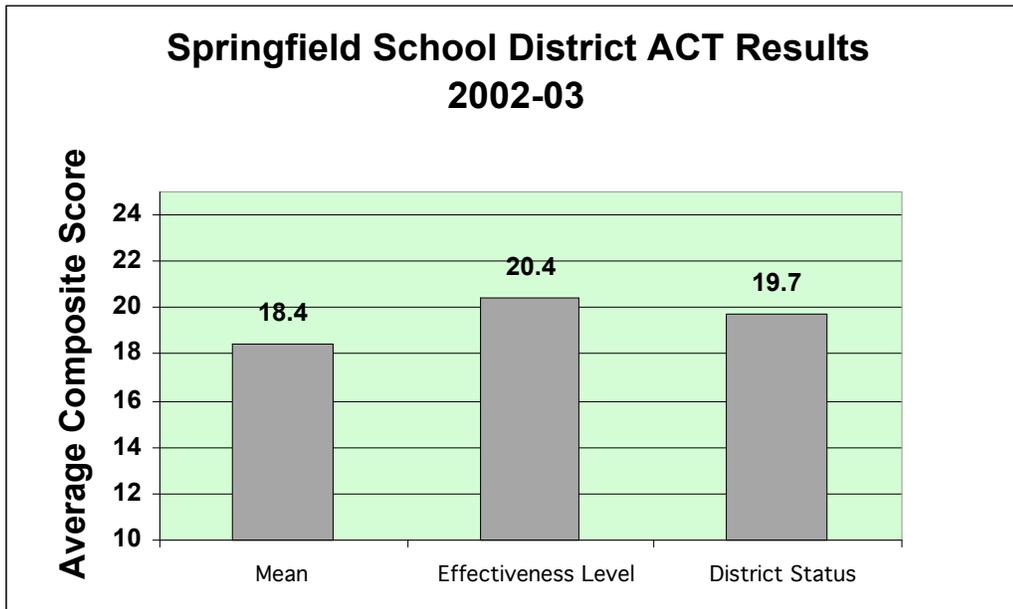
Graph 6

It is important to note the predominant test in Ohio and in the Springfield City School District is the ACT, which should be given more weight in consideration of student performance. Please see Page 34.

Springfield School District SAT Results 2002-03

Category	Average Composite Score
Mean	950
Effectiveness Level	986
District Status	956
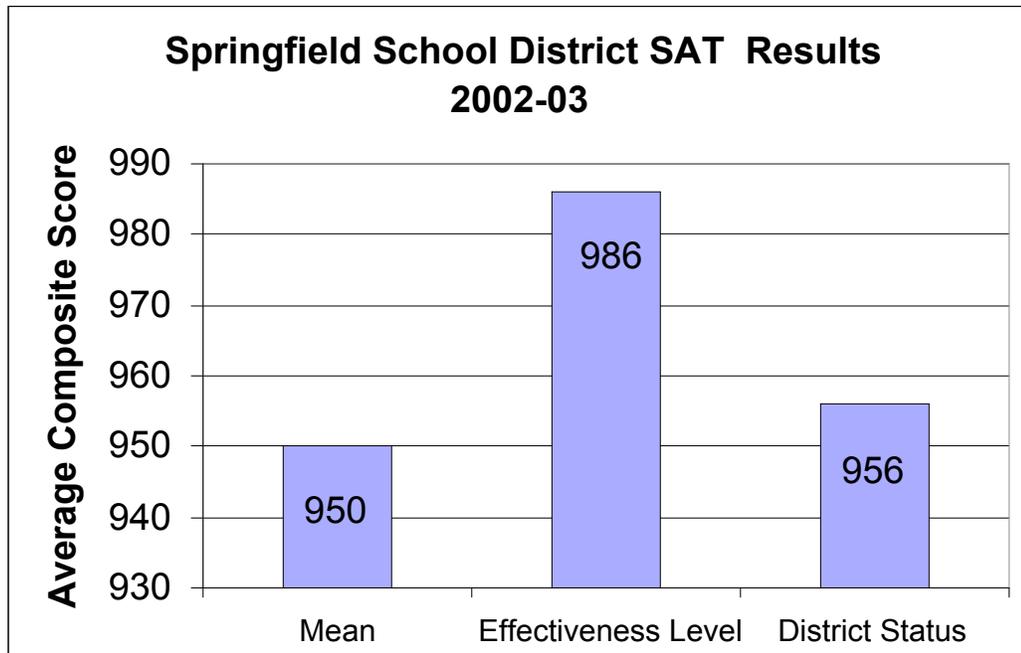
5.   Advanced Placement Program Analysis

Having an Advanced Placement program in the high school creates a stronger academic press for the students and higher expectations for student achievement. The ability of the district to be successful in this effort is related to its willingness to train its teaching staff and to establish a more rigorous curriculum.

The means and effectiveness levels for enrollment, percent taking exams, and percent earning eligibility college credit are established for populations of high school Juniors and Seniors nationwide enrolled in AP classes.

Enrollment

The enrollment of Juniors and Seniors in Advanced Placement courses is 8.2%. This places the number of Juniors and Seniors enrolled in Advanced Placement courses at very close to one standard deviation <u>below</u> the mean for similar student populations across the country.

Graph 7
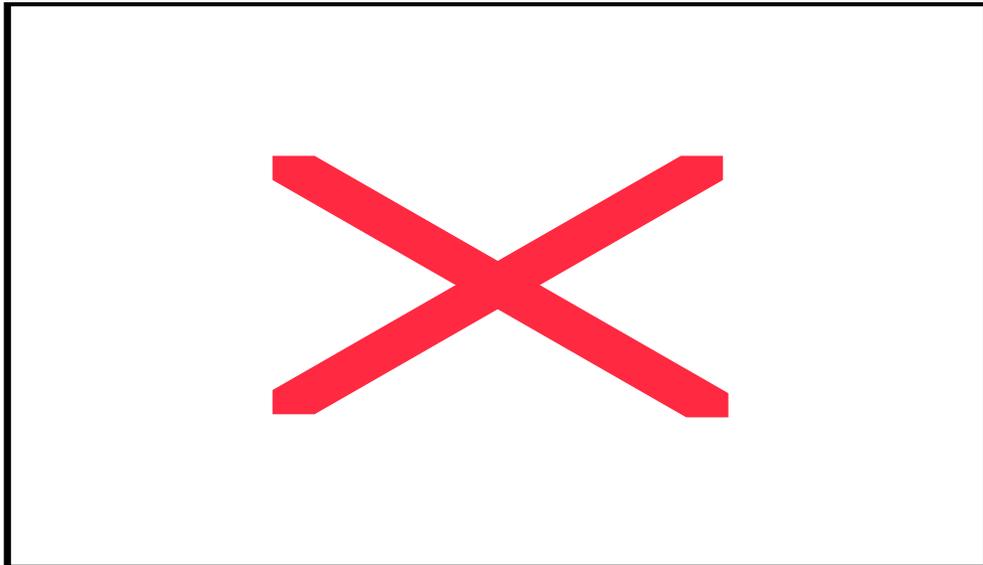
Percent Taking AP Exams

Overall, the percent of juniors and seniors who take one or more AP exam achieved the effectiveness level in 2002–03. Juniors and seniors

taking the AP exams represent 5.2% of the juniors and seniors in Springfield City Schools.

Graph 8

**Springfield City School District
Percent Juniors and Seniors Taking
AP Exams, 2002-03**

Category	Percent
Mean	3.0%
Effectiveness Level	3.4%
District Status	5.2%
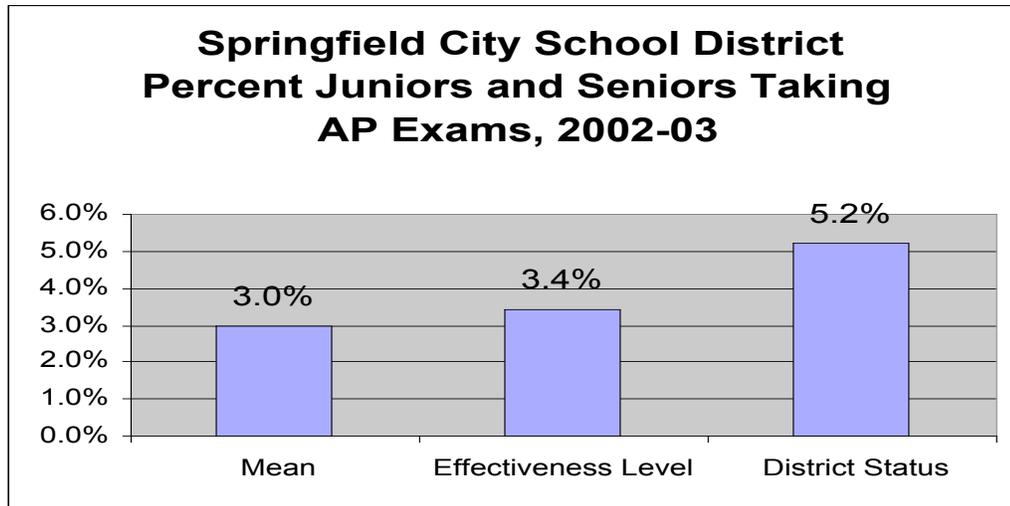
Percent Eligible for College Credit

The percent of junior and senior AP test-takers who were eligible for college credit by earning a 3, 4 or 5 on one or more AP exam was 60.1% in 2002-03. This figure is slightly above the mean for similar student populations nationwide.

Graph 9

Springfield City School District Percent AP Test - Takers Earning 3, 4 or 5, 2002-03

Percent Eligible for College Credit (Score of 3,4, 5)

Category	Percent
Mean	60.0%
Effectiveness Level	70.0%
District Status	60.1%
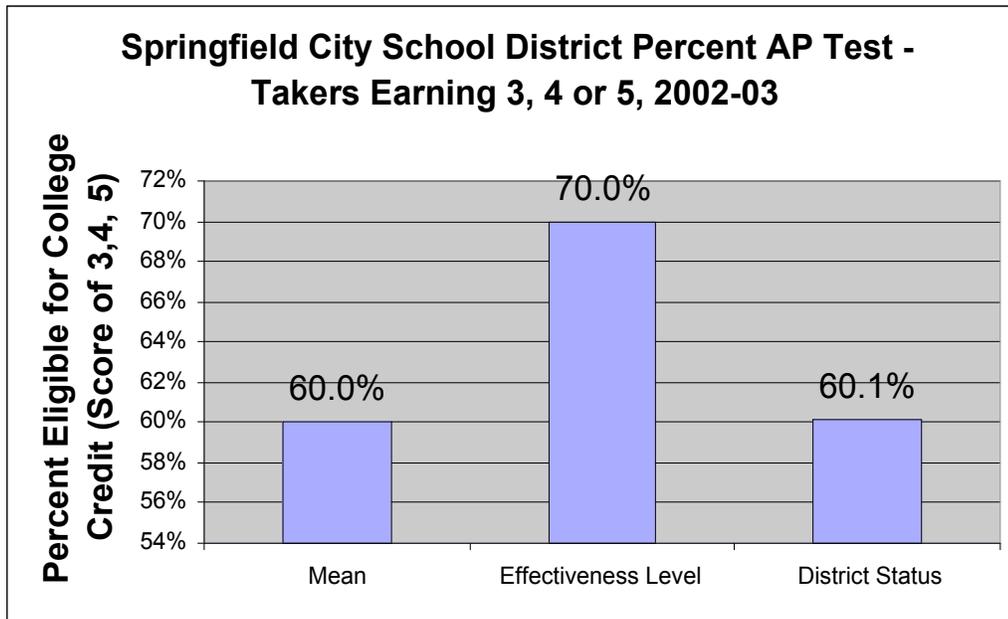
Overall Discussion

Officials in the Springfield City Schools should give serious attention to efforts to increase the number of high school students who enroll in the AP program. The evidence suggests that the percentage of AP program enrollees who go on to take one or more Advanced Placement tests make the District among the most effective (top 15–20%) among similar school systems across the country. While performance on AP examinations (those students receiving a 3, 4 or 5 score) is at the mean, increasing the number of students enrolling in AP will promote overall rigor of the curriculum and should increase performance levels. In any event, a strong and vibrant Advanced Placement program will contribute to increased student academic expectations and performance.

There is, however, a marked unevenness in Advanced Placement test participation and performance results between students at North High School and students at South High School.

Advanced Placement Program	North	South
Percentage of juniors & seniors enrolled in AP courses	7.30%	9.93%
Percentage of juniors & seniors taking AP examinations	6.30%	3.10%
Percentage of tested eligible for college credit (score of		

While the percentage of students enrolling in AP courses at South High School is higher, the number of students taking AP examinations and their performance on these tests is markedly lower than is the case for students at North High School. Efforts should be undertaken to improve and enhance AP course offerings at South High School in order to increase student performance levels. It should be noted that the Springfield Board of Education, administration and faculty have made efforts to secure an International Baccalaureate Program (IB) at both the Diploma and Certificate levels to increase availability of academically rigorous college preparation courses.

**6.   Achievement / Grade Point Average:
        Grade Inflation Analysis**

An analysis of grade point averages indicates that, generally, the highest grade inflation occurs in the lowest achieving schools. This is suggestive of low expectations for those students who most need to have higher expectations. Schools with grade inflation tend to reward low quality work and grades may not reflect actual learning levels.
        The Springfield City School District's grade point average for the 2002–03 senior class was calculated at 2.65. The mean (average) GPA for the cohort of similar student populations is 2.4, and the effectiveness level is 2.2.

Graph 10
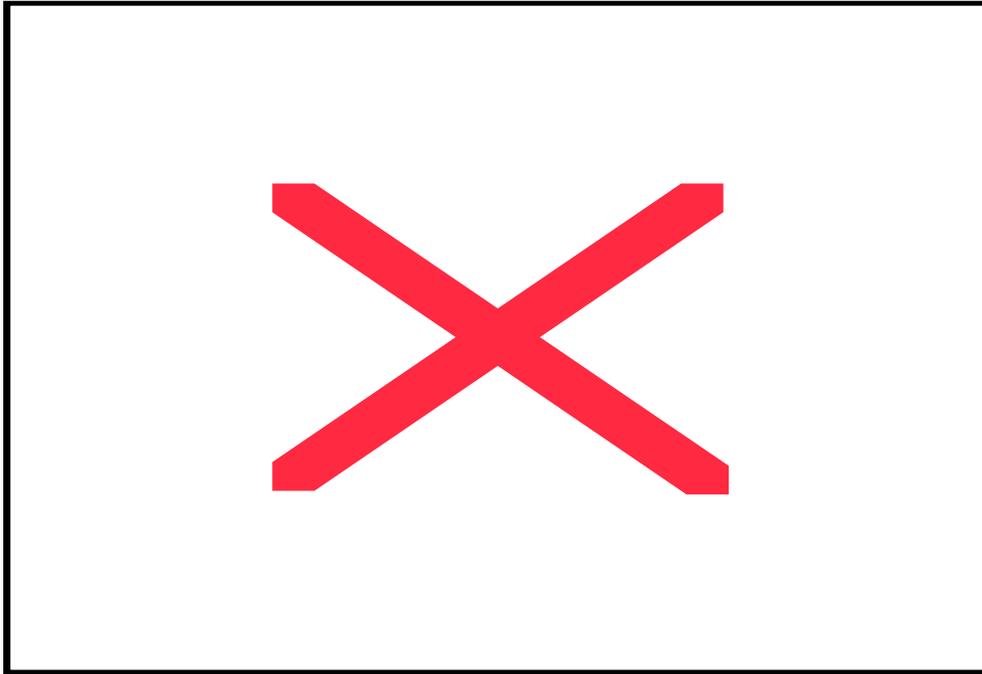
An analysis of student performance data indicates that some grade inflation may exist in the Springfield City School District. To achieve and maintain effectiveness for overall Grade Point Average, the district should continue or establish the following practices:

(a). Establish district-wide criteria for rigorous grading standards;
(b). Train teachers in the district-wide standards; and
(c). Use data collection and analysis to monitor student grades and

populations of students' grade point averages.

The benefits of rewarding high quality work and holding high expectations for all students is generally evidenced in lower overall grade point average, higher performance on college entrance examinations, and a capacity for more students to achieve at high levels in Advanced Placement and other rigorous academic programs.

B.   ATTENDANCE ANALYSIS

1.   Student Attendance

The average student attendance rate during the 2002–03 school year was 93.8%.   The effectiveness level is 95% and the mean is 92%. District–wide student attendance levels for this school year was above the mean, but below the effectiveness level for similar student cohorts..

Graph 11

Springfield Student Attendance Rates 2002-03
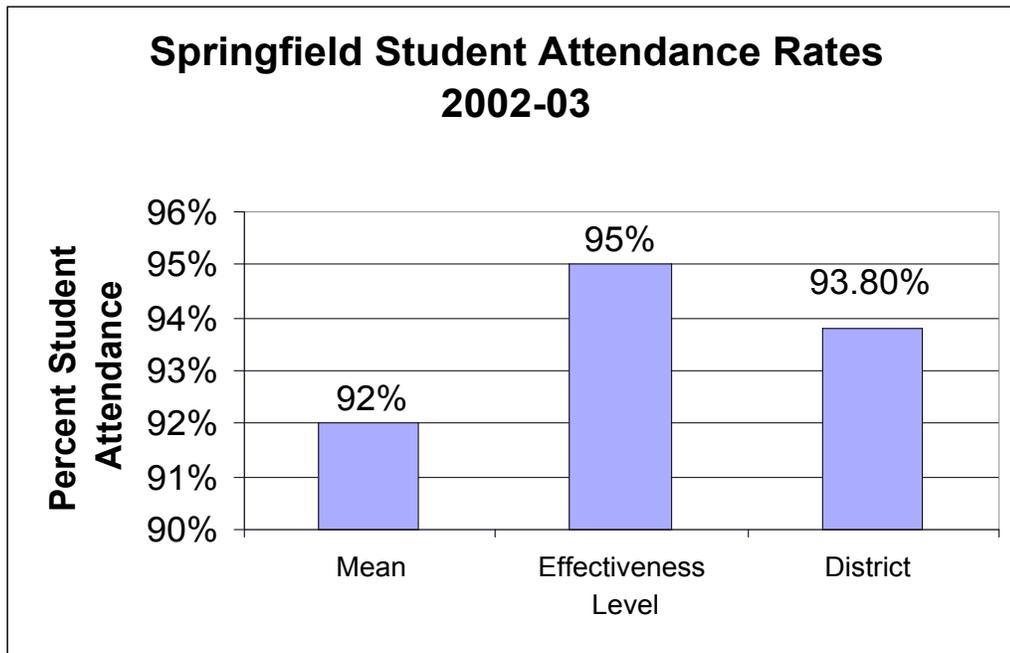
Disclosure of attendance goals to students and parents is often helpful in attaining higher levels of student attendance. Examination of practices in schools and school systems which have achieved effective student attendance percentages may reveal methods to be applied to further increasing student attendance in the district.

2.   Teacher Attendance

The average number of days of teacher absence in the Springfield City School District for the 2002–03 school year was 6.68 days per teacher. The effectiveness level is 5 days per teacher per year, and the mean is 7 days. Generally speaking, the higher the teacher absence rate, the less effective is a school system (e.g., continuity of instruction; monitoring student achievement; positive attendance role modeling for students; cost of substitute teachers depleting funds which could be used for instruction).

Only discretionary absences are included in the calculation of the teacher absence rate (see Appendix C).

Graph 12

**Springfield City School District
Teacher Absence Rate 2002-03**

	Mean	Effectiveness Level	Current District Status
Days Absent	7	5	6.68
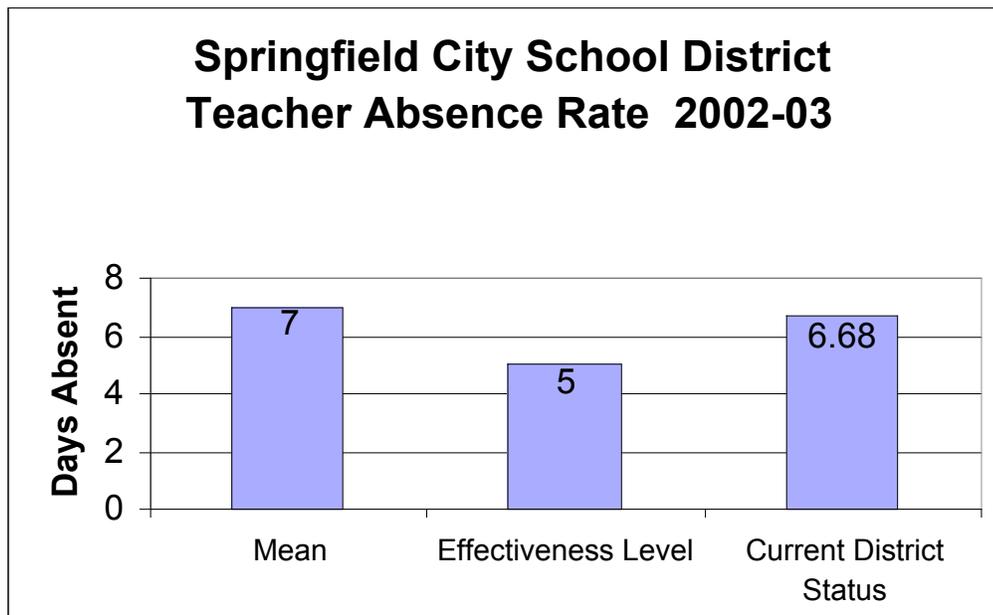
Teacher attendance may be improved by publicizing absence rates, designing school district policy to recognize and reward teacher attendance, and implementing practices across the district adopted from buildings where teacher attendance is effective.

C. DROPOUT INFORMATION

The dropout rate in this audit is established for grades 9–12 on a four–year cumulative basis. In the Springfield City School District the calculated cumulative dropout rate is 17.2%.

The four–year projection is calculated based on the principle that it is worthwhile to consider what percentage of an incoming class in a given year will drop out of the school district by the time they are seniors. To determine this rate, we use the current year's dropout rate as a starting point and calculate what percentage of students would drop out, if the rate were unchanged over the following four years. In the Springfield City School District, based on a one–year drop out rate of 4.3 %, the gross estimate is that 17.2% of the current freshman class could leave school by the end of their projected senior year.. In other words, if the current drop out rate does not change, we would expect that approximately 17 of every 100 freshmen who began high school in the 2002–2003 school year in Springfield City School District may separate from public education by their senior year in 2005–2006.

The effectiveness level for this demographic group is 15.2% or lower. The mean cumulative dropout rate for the cohort is 18.0%.   The cumulative dropout rate in the Springfield City School District is better than the mean but not the effectiveness level.

Graph 13

Cumulative (4-year) Dropout Rate
Springfield City School District 2002-03
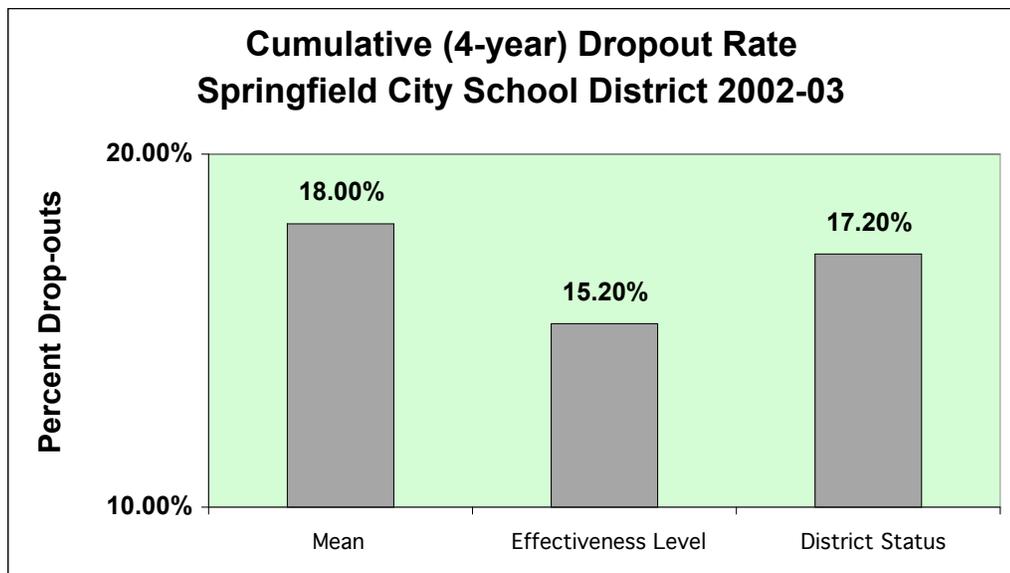
The most effective ways, overall, to reduce the number of students who drop out of school, are to provide ways for students to succeed based on concrete, attainable goals and to promote participation in school activities.

The principal bases for student success are the ability to read at or very near grade level and to receive effective instruction. Efforts to improve student achievement in reading will have short and long-term benefits in overall student success and, all other things equal, will have a positive effect on the school's holding power over high school students.

The Springfield City School District has initiated several programs to increase holding power toward graduation. Some of these include:

- Developing alternative education offerings and reclamation programs with the Keifer Center.
- Developing a mentoring program with the Rotary Club.
- Engaging in a number of community partnerships aimed at dropout prevention.

These programs may be the primary reason for the increase in the graduation rate reflected over the last four years.

In addition to those, these specific strategies may be effective in increasing the numbers of students who complete a high school education in the district.

Alternative educational opportunities
Economic incentives for high-risk students
Mentoring programs with high-profile community leaders
Mentoring programs linking high school students with younger
    students in the school system
Work/study options
Block scheduling
Class acceleration scheduling
Community partnerships aimed at dropout reduction
Intensive counseling sessions for high-risk students
Reclamation programs for students who have dropped out of
school
Intensive awareness programs aimed at families of high school
students

IV. CORRELATES OF EFFECTIVENESS

The Educational Testing Service conducted surveys in 55 cities across the nation to measure dissatisfaction rates among school district constituents (See *10/27/99 Education Week*, "ETS Analysis Tracks Parent Dissatisfaction."). Of the many important observations, one stands out:

> Regular surveys of school district constituents are encouraged in order to continue to garner strong community support.

The ***SchoolMatch Survey of Perceptions*** gauges the perceptions of three major school system constituents: administrators, teachers and parents. Survey questions are based on the Correlates of Effectiveness and specific related elements in the following areas:

1. Strong instructional **leadership**
2. A comprehensive curriculum with an **emphasis on learning**
3. A positive **school climate**
4. Regular **monitoring** of performance and attendance
5. **High expectations** supported by staff and students

More information about the Correlates of Effectiveness and effective school practices may be found in the Introduction, Part A of this report.

Data Collection:

Information related to the Correlates of Effectiveness is collected in two ways:

ß   *through interviews with school officials and leaders; and*
ß   *through questionnaires distributed by the District to randomly selected groups of parents, teachers and administrators. 418 teachers, 179 parents and 86 administrators responded.*

The data obtained are used to establish the degree to which the correlates are perceived by each group to be operating in the Springfield City School District.

The questionnaire uses a scale of 1–4 to evaluate the various elements of an effectiveness correlate:

ß   *1 indicates an element is perceived to be very strong;*

ß   *2 indicates an element is perceived to be strong;*
ß   *3 indicates an element is perceived to be weak; and*
ß   *4 indicates an element is perceived to be very weak.*

An average score of 2.0 or lower for an effectiveness correlate indicates that the correlate is perceived as established in the school district. Correlates with averages greater than 2.0 need attention. Likewise, individual elements within a particular correlate can be improved when behaviors associated with effectiveness correlates and their individual elements are established; that is, school personnel consistently display them. Values less than 2.0 show increasingly positive support, while values over 2.0 indicate declining support for an element or correlate.

Overview of Discussion

The discussion of perception survey results can take many forms. In some cases, auditors may consider variances among responses to individual elements, may comment on the most and least effective elements identified by each group, may identify patterns of agreement and disagreement, or may combine these, and other, approaches. In all cases, the form of the discussion is tailored to the unique variables and patterns within a particular school system.

On the following tables of Correlates, the order of Effectiveness Elements within each correlate reflects the aggregate of all stakeholder responses and is designated as **"Stakeholder #__."** The Capital Letter in parenthesis after the rank is the original position the effectiveness element occupied in the questionnaire that was circulated to the stakeholder groups. The mean for every question for each stakeholder group follows in the additional columns within the table for each Correlate.

In analyzing the perception survey data, it is important to look for significant differences and similarities in the aggregate group responses. Identification of such patterns offers school system leadership both pathways to improvement and opportunities to communicate the positive things happening in the district. The site visit team has identified some of the most significant findings related to each correlate of effectiveness.

For this report, SchoolMatch consultants searched for patterns of agreement that revealed the areas of greatest effectiveness and greatest concern for each of the five correlates. **The lowest mean scores given by each group to individual elements indicated areas of greatest effectiveness. Conversely, the highest mean scores given by each**

group to individual elements indicated areas of greatest concern.
The discussions focus on those elements to which more than one group gave one of their lowest or highest mean scores, even when those scores meet or fall below the 2.0 level.

Please review the summary data presented on the pages following the discussion of results for each correlate in order to locate other patterns which may be helpful in enhancing that correlate within the district.

The following perception survey results were obtained from an analysis of all complete teacher and administrator perception surveys received in the SchoolMatch offices.

A.   LEADERSHIP

This factor supports clear efforts to improve school effectiveness and student learning. The district is well organized in support of student priorities when the perceptions meet the value of 2.0. Values less than 2.0 show increasingly positive support, while values over 2.0 indicate declining support for an element or correlate.

An analysis of the perception data for the LEADERSHIP correlate indicates that all three stakeholder groups – – parents, teachers and administrators – – do not believe effectiveness levels are present in the LEADERSHIP correlate. The results:

Parents:	2.372
Teachers:	2.436
Administrators:	2.432

Overall Patterns: There appears to be remarkable overall unanimity among the three groups that leadership, as measured by the 15 elements in the survey, is not effective. Parents judge two of the elements as effective, teachers indicate six of the elements are effective, and administrators endorse two of the elements as effective. Noticeably absent from the most effective elements are those related to overall school system leadership and communication.

Areas of Greatest Effectiveness: Two elements are judged effective by all three groups, and they focus attention at the building level, as does the third and fourth most endorsed effectiveness elements. Taken together, perceptions indicate that all three stakeholder groups are reasonably assured that certain leadership elements are in place at the building level.

Rank Element

#1   The principals give teachers and staff members the chance to learn and improve.
*   (D)*
#2   Parents, teachers and students can talk with the principal when
*   they need to. (M)*
#3   Teachers and staff work well together. (J)
#4   Teachers and staff are high-quality and effective. (I)

Areas of Greatest Concern: There appears to be uniformity of perception on the four elements of leadership least effective in the

Springfield City Schools. All three groups place these elements among the four lowest, with one exception. While administrators do not rank Element O dealing with spending among the least four effective elements, both parents and teachers see this element as the principal concern among the leadership elements.

Rank *Element*

#15   The district is currently spending its money wisely. (O)
#14   Clear communication takes place within the school system (B)
*#13   School district leaders involve teachers, parents and students in
decisions. (G)*
*#12   The superintendent and other administrators are good leaders for
the teachers.*
      (F)

Conclusions: It is unusual to see an administrative group consistently
agree with the negative perceptions of parents and to a lesser degree
with teachers in the leadership category. While control of formal
communication channels is generally a prerogative administrative and
policy leaders in a school system, administrators rank clear
communication within the district and system-level leadership for
teachers among the least effective elements. Conversely, all three groups
tend to see principal/teacher/staff leadership elements in a more positive
light. There appears to be general unanimity about the lack of effective
leadership in the district at top levels.

INDICATORS OF SCHOOL EFFECTIVENESS: LEADERSHIP			
This correlate reflects a clear effort on the part of school district leadership to support improvement in effectiveness and student learning. A district is well organized in support of student priorities when perceptions meet, or fall below, the average of 2.0.			
	Parents	**Teachers**	**Administrators**
Mean scores by responding group:	**2.372**	**2.436**	**2.432**
Stakeholders #1 (D) The principals give teachers and staff members the chance to learn and improve.	**1.983**	**1.758**	**1.887**
Stakeholders #2 (M) Parents, teachers and students can talk with the principal when they need to.	**1.947**	**1.791**	**1.903**
Stakeholders #3 (J) Teachers and staff work well together.	2.054	**1.919**	2.100
Stakeholders #4 (C) The principals set school goals and let parents and teachers know about them.	2.283	**1.985**	2.083
Stakeholders #5 (I) Teachers and staff are high-quality and effective.	2.195	**1.873**	2.155
Stakeholders #6 (K) Schools measure how well they are doing in meeting improvement goals.	2.155	**1.997**	2.110
Stakeholders #7 (N) The administrative team is doing a good job of communicating the district's current financial condition.	2.392	2.437	2.247
Stakeholders #8 (F) The principals visit classrooms frequently.	2.448	2.403	2.357
Stakeholders #9 (H) School policy is clear and is the same for everybody.	2.432	2.811	2.778
Stakeholders #10 (L) Decisions are made after hearing from those affected; decisions are clear and reasonable.	2.481	2.740	2.736
Stakeholders #11 (A) There is clear planning and organization in the school	2.542	2.834	2.732

system.			
Stakeholders #12 (E) The superintendent and other administrators are good leaders for the teachers.	2.565	2.946	2.819
Stakeholders #13 (G) School leaders involve teachers, parents and students in decisions.	2.670	2.982	2.778
Stakeholders #14 (B) Clear communication takes place in the school system.	2.624	3.050	3.083
Stakeholders #15 (O) The district is currently spending its money wisely.	2.822	3.052	2.714

B.   EMPHASIS ON LEARNING

This factor indicates that the schools' main priority is the learning of students. Distractions and interruptions of instruction and learning are minimized when this correlate is met at the 2.0 level. Values less than 2.0 show increasingly positive support, while values over 2.0 indicate declining support for an element or correlate.

An analysis of the perception data for the EMPHASIS ON LEARNING correlate indicates all three groups of stakeholders – parents, teachers and administrators – do not believe the correlate reaches effectiveness in the Springfield City Schools. The values given to the correlate are:

> Parents: 2.135
> Teachers: 2.120
> Administrators: 2.156

Overall Patterns: A major theme emerging in the analysis of Emphasis on Learning is the need for additional funds to provide a quality education, an assessment that the district currently has inadequate resources, and a perception that the district also lacks a plan for addressing future learning needs of students. Considerable agreement centers on these needs. (Elements R, Q and P)

In addition, there are two elements of this correlate that reflect stakeholder perceptions of effectiveness. All stakeholder groups agree that students are rewarded and recognized for good work and academic achievement. (Elements A & B)

However, there are also areas of wide divergence. For example, parents do not agree with teachers that a variety of ways are used to motivate students and increase participation in learning activities (Element H). Similarly, parents do not agree with teachers and administrators that building administrators are available to talk with when needed (Element M). In addition, while teachers may believe staff members think about student learning and interests when they make decisions, parents and administrators do not.

Areas of Greatest Effectiveness: The areas of greatest effectiveness relate primarily to student recognition and reward, and access to school-based computers:

Rank Element

#1 Students are praised and rewarded for their achievements. (A)
#2 The district provides students with computers at school. (N)
#3 The school formally recognizes good academic work throughout the school year. (B)

Areas of Greatest Concern: There is remarkable unity in perception of the three elements that are least effective as indicators of emphasis on learning:

Rank Element

#15 The district makes special arrangements for students who do not have computers at home. (O)
#14 There are few interruptions in the classroom. (F)
#13 Instructional materials are most important when making budget decisions. (J)

Conclusions: While student recognition programs appear to be in place and emphasized, items that can enable and extend student learning need attention. For example, support for instructional materials in the budgeting process is perceived to take a backseat. Similarly, computer access to students outside normal school hours could extend learning impact. Such attention to learning materials by district officials coupled with a reduction of classroom interruptions may be productive avenues to explore as ways to improve learning outcomes.

Finally, there is both general and strong agreement that the district lacks adequate resources, needs to secure additional funding and could benefit from the development of a plan to meet future educational needs of children.

INDICATORS OF SCHOOL EFFECTIVENESS: EMPHASIS ON LEARNING

With this correlate, it is clear through the allocation of resources, structure of the school, and rationale for decisions, that the school's main priority is the learning of the students. Distractions and interference of instruction and learning are minimized.

	Parents	Teachers	Administrators
Mean scores by responding group:	**2.135**	**2.120**	**2.156**
Stakeholders #1 (R) The district needs additional funding in order to provide and perpetuate a quality educational program.	**1.862**	**1.472**	**1.589**
Stakeholders #2 (A) Students are praised and rewarded for their achievements.	**1.949**	**1.774**	**1.892**
Stakeholders #3 (N) The District provides students with computers at school.	**1.824**	**2.008**	**1.863**
Stakeholders #4 (B) The school formally recognizes good academic work throughout the school year.	**1.905**	**1.838**	**1.907**
Stakeholders #5 (D) Teaching and other school activities focus on student performance, responsibility and skills.	**2.039**	**1.839**	**1.932**
Stakeholders #6 (H) Teachers use many different ways to motivate students and increase participation in learning activities.	2.147	**1.740**	2.071
Stakeholders #7 (M) People can talk with the building administrators when they need to.	2.253	**1.875**	**1.849**
Stakeholders #8 (E) The school supports activities that help teachers improve their skills.	2.106	**1.940**	**1.973**
Stakeholders #9 (K) Audiovisual material and equipment are available and used.	**2.020**	2.055	2.096
Stakeholders #10 (G) The library is open when kids need to use it.	**1.881**	2.114	2.211
Stakeholders #11 (I) Staff members think about the students' learning and interests when they make decisions or solve	2.268	**1.819**	2.139

problems.			
Stakeholders #12 (C) The school gives students the chance to learn beyond classroom requirements.	2.227	2.209	2.055
Stakeholders #13 (L) Instructional aides help out in the classroom.	**2.040**	2.409	2.232
Stakeholders #14 (J) Instructional materials are most important when making budget decisions.	2.108	2.269	2.329
Stakeholders #15 (F) There are few interruptions in the classroom.	2.378	2.649	2.417
Stakeholders #16 (P) The district has developed a plan to meet the future educational needs of students.	2.466	2.469	2.429
Stakeholders #17 (Q) The district has adequate resources to provide a quality educational program.	2.469	2.850	2.806
Stakeholders #18 (O) The district makes special arrangements for students who do not have computers at home.	2.595	3.157	3.116

C.   SCHOOL CLIMATE

This factor is manifest in student respect for the physical plant, strong parent involvement and positive staff and student morale. Values less than 2.0 show increasingly positive support, while values over 2.0 indicate declining support for an element or correlate.

An analysis of the perception data for the SCHOOL CLIMATE correlate indicates that all three stakeholder groups – parents, teachers and administrators – – do not perceive the correlate to be effective in the Springfield City School District. One element (F) was considered effective by all groups.   The values given to the correlate are:

Parents:	2.188
Teachers:	2.392
Administrators:	2.376

Overall Patterns: Generally, elements of School Climate effectiveness that relate to individuals tend to be perceived as more effective than elements related to overall school system policy and/or the implementation of that policy.

Areas of Greatest Effectiveness: Except for acceptance of different student backgrounds, the perceptions regarding the remaining areas of effectiveness do not meet effectiveness levels for all three groups. Taken together, however, elements of pride in school participation at various levels can be surmised. Students participate in activities in buildings that are considered clean and orderly under direction of a staff complement that is considered cooperative.

Rank *Element*

#1   There is acceptance of different student backgrounds. (F)
#2   Many students attend and take part in school activities. (B)
#3   The buildings and outside areas are clean and orderly. (E)
#4   Teachers, staff and administrators cooperate well with each other. (D)

Areas of Greatest Concern: A variety of concerns were expressed by all groups when examining School Climate effectiveness elements. Principal among them is the sense that the school system does not convey a positive image through the news media. Four additional cited elements relate to concerns about how funds are allocated throughout the

Springfield City Schools. There are questions regarding programs for non-college bound students, vocational and career education and staff remuneration.

<u>Rank</u> <u>Element</u>

#14   The school system has a positive image in TV and newspapers in the community.
        (I)
#13   Program funding priorities recognize the needs of non-college bound students. (M)
#12   Parents take part in many school committees and functions. (H)
#11   School employees are adequately paid.
#10   School district spending in the area of vocational and career education is appropriate. (L)

Conclusions: School leaders should pay more attention to the needs and interests of non-college bound students. Priorities and programs regarding vocational and career education should be reviewed and communicated to community stakeholders so that all groups clearly understand how non-college bound students are being served by the Springfield City Schools. Efforts to improve the image of the school system should be undertaken, with special attention paid to relationships with news medial outlets. Encouraging parental involvement is another way school officials can improve both school system image and productivity.

INDICATORS OF SCHOOL EFFECTIVENESS: SCHOOL CLIMATE

Students and parents should exhibit pride and loyalty to their school. The entire school community should possess a commitment to the school's goals. This quality is manifest in student respect for the physical plant, strong parent involvement, and positive staff and student morale.

	Parents	Teachers	Administrators
Mean scores by responding group:	**2.188**	**2.392**	**2.376**
Stakeholders #1 (F) There is acceptance of different student backgrounds.	**2.026**	**1.745**	**1.958**
Stakeholders #2 (B) Many students attend and take part in school functions.	**1.994**	2.294	2.100
Stakeholders #3 (E) The buildings and outside areas are clean and orderly.	**2.000**	**2.029**	2.167
Stakeholders #4 (D) Teachers, staff and administrators cooperate well with each other.	**2.041**	**2.031**	2.153
Stakeholders #5 (G) All student groups participate in school activities.	2.093	2.158	2.278
Stakeholders #6 (C) There is not much vandalism at the school.	2.093	2.338	2.211
Stakeholders #7 (A) Parent volunteers help out a lot at the school.	2.058	2.565	2.389
Stakeholders #8 (J) Teacher and student absences are low.	2.229	2.424	2.394
Stakeholders #9 ( ) Fringe benefits such as health insurance and retirement contributions of school district employees are at an appropriate level.	2.294	2.475	2.264
Stakeholders #10 (L) School district spending in the area of vocational and career education is appropriate.	2.363	2.614	2.639
Stakeholders #11 (K) School employees are adequately paid.	2.542	2.645	2.534
Stakeholders #12 (H) Parents take part in many school committees and functions.	2.143	2.755	2.757

Stakeholders#13 (M) Program funding priorities recognize the needs of non-college bound students.	2.490	2.655	2.634
Stakeholders #14 (I) The school system has a positive image in TV & community newspapers.	2.490	2.655	2.634

D.   MONITORING STUDENT PROGRESS

This factor indicates that systematic procedures exist for measuring student achievement. Such procedures document achievement in specific areas, establish need for instructional improvement and develop priorities for the allocation of resources. Values less than 2.0 show increasingly positive support, while values over 2.0 indicate declining support for an element or correlate.

Analysis of the perception data for the MONITORING correlate indicates that all three groups – parents, teachers and administrators – do not believe the overall correlate related to Monitoring Student Progress is effective. The values given to the correlate are:

> Parents: 2.261
> Teachers: 2.190
> Administrators: 2.198

Overall Patterns: While all three groups perceive testing programs are in place, there is considerable confusion about how clear the standards are for measuring student learning. Additionally, all three groups appear of like mind by expressing considerable concern over the management of the school system's resources. There is, however, disagreement among the groups on the degree to which certain effectiveness elements are in place. For example, parents believe attendance is taken and parents are informed of absences, while both teachers and administrators disagree.

Areas of Greatest Effectiveness: Only Element E was judged as effective in the Springfield City Schools by all three stakeholder groups. The next three elements closest to being effective are noted below and are distinctive because at least one stakeholder group rated each element as effective.

Rank Element

#1   Tests are given regularly in all subjects to see how well students are doing. (E)
#2   School test scores and other achievement information are shared

regularly with parents and others. (H)

#3   *Schools make sure students are learning by testing their skills and then finding ways to help them improve. (C)*

#4   *Special program teachers, teachers in regular classrooms, and counselors talk to each other and work together often. (F)*

Areas of Greatest Concern: On the management side, the three stakeholder groups express considerable concern about the way the resources of the Springfield Public Schools are managed.

On the instructional side, there is a considerable difference of opinion between teachers and the other two stakeholder groups. While teachers believe one-on-one instructional assistance is in place (Element G), parents clearly do not and administrators appear to support the parental perception. Indeed, parents list this element as their strongest concern. Additionally, there appears to be some confusion about the standards that are used to measure gains in student learning (Element A). All three stakeholder groups do not believe those standards are clear.

Rank *Element*

#9 *The district has efficiently managed the resources available to it. (I)*
#8 *Standards used to measure gains in learning are clear to everyone and stress what students know and what they can do. (A)*
#7 *Teachers help students one-on-one throughout the school day. (G)*

Conclusions: Renewing efforts to more clearly describe and monitor standards by which student performance is judged seem warranted. As an indicator of student performance, the causes for the diversity of opinion on student absence management needs to be explored.

Also, it would appear that no stakeholder group is satisfied with the management of resources in the District, suggesting that attempts be made to discover why this is so in order to fix perceived problems, identify alternate courses of action and improve overall communication regarding resource deployment.

INDICATORS OF SCHOOL EFFECTIVENESS: MONITORING STUDENT PROGRESS

This factor stipulates that systemic procedures exist for measuring the achievement of students across a wide spectrum of their learning experiences. Such procedures document the change in student achievement in specific areas, curriculum areas in need of improvement, priorities for the allocation of resources, and others.

	Parents	Teachers	Administrators
Mean scores by responding group:	**2.261**	**2.190**	**2.198**
All Stakeholders #1 (E) Tests are given regularly in all subjects to see how well students are doing.	**2.006**	**1.838**	**1.863**
All Stakeholders #2 (H) School test scores and other achievement information are shared regularly with parents and others.	2.234	**1.992**	**2.000**
All Stakeholders #3 (C) Schools make sure students are learning by testing their skills and then finding ways to help them improve.	2.296	2.108	2.096
All Stakeholders #4 (F) Special program teachers, teachers in regular classrooms, and counselors talk to each other and work together often.	2.137	2.148	2.164
All Stakeholders #5 (B) Learning goals are clear in every subject.	2.368	2.138	2.123
All Stakeholders #6 (D) Teachers take attendance and contact parents when children are absent.	**1.941**	2.295	2.319
All Stakeholders #7 (G) Teachers help students one–on–one throughout the school day.	2.510	**1.976**	2.268
All Stakeholders #8 (A) Standards used to measure gains in learning are clear to everyone and stress what students know and what they can do.	2.380	2.294	2.230
All Stakeholders #9 (I) The district has efficiently managed the resources available to it.	2.503	2.932	2.736

E.   HIGH EXPECTATIONS

This factor indicates the school staff is dedicated to having each student learn at the highest possible level. Challenging experiences are conducted to have students contribute their best work. Values less than 2.0 show increasingly positive support, while values over 2.0 indicate declining support for an element or correlate.

Analysis of the perception data for the HIGH EXPECTATIONS correlate indicates that all three stakeholder groups – parents, teachers and administrators – believe a majority of effectiveness element expectations are in place. The values given to the correlate by each group are:

Parents:	1.999
Teachers:	1.880
Administrators:	2.033

Overall Patterns: The three most highly perceived elements of effectiveness suggest that all three groups believe students understand performance expectations. At the same time, all stakeholder groups seem to suggest that learning activities and materials could be more demanding, and that performance, as measured by standardized tests, is below expectations.

Areas of Greatest Effectiveness: Rules regarding homework, attendance, promptness and preparation are noted as meeting effectiveness levels for the High Expectations correlate:

Rank *Element*

#1   Teachers regularly require learning beyond the classroom, e.g., homework
     assignments. (A)
#2   Rules regarding attendance and promptness are made explicit in
     class. (B)
#3   Students are expected to be fully prepared for their classes. (D)

Areas of Greatest Concern: As noted below, all three groups question the rigor of learning activities and materials, although teachers believe the effectiveness level is reached. However, all three groups are much more assured in their perception that student performance on standardized tests does not meet expectations. While teachers and

administrators are willing to see their personal income taxes raised to support the schools, parents are not.

Rank *Element*

#11 *Scores on standardized tests are as good as or better than scores from other*
        similar schools. (I)
#10 *Classroom learning activities and materials are at a demanding*
        cognitive level, e.g., materials require analysis, generalizations, and
        evaluation over memorization and recall. (G)
#9   *If Springfield City Schools need more money, I would personally be*
        willing to pay higher taxes. (K)

Conclusions: Rules governing student performance are in place, but student performance expectations are perceived as unmet. Parents and administrators suggest that improving rigor in the classroom may be warranted. Generally, all stakeholders seek higher expectations for the student body, although parents appear unwilling to increase their taxes at the present time.

INDICATORS OF SCHOOL EFFECTIVENESS: HIGH EXPECTATIONS

This factor stipulates that the school staff is dedicated to having each student reach his or her potential in terms of learning and personal growth. Challenging experiences are conducted to have each student reach this goal.

	Parents	Teachers	Administrators
Mean scores by responding group:	**1.999**	**1.880**	**2.033**
All Stakeholder #1 (A) Teachers regularly require learning beyond the classroom, e.g., homework assignments.	**1.864**	**1.677**	**1.817**
All Stakeholder #2 (B) Rules regarding attendance and promptness are made explicit in class.	**1.736**	**1.677**	**1.859**
All Stakeholder #3 (D) Students are expected to be fully prepared for their classes.	**1.704**	**1.688**	**1.859**
All Stakeholder #4 (E) During classroom instruction, teacher–student interaction is the dominant instructional mode.	**1.811**	**1.716**	**1.831**
All Stakeholder #5 (J) Improved funding is necessary in order to improve student performance.	**1.974**	**1.716**	**1.831**
All Stakeholder #6 (H) Students are held responsible for missed work.	**1.814**	**1.901**	2.200
All Stakeholder #7 (C) Rules regarding attendance and promptness are applied consistently in class.	**1.893**	**1.906**	**2.029**
All Stakeholder #8 (F) Students are actively engaged with learning activities throughout most of the class time.	**2.013**	**1.901**	2.200
All Stakeholder #9 (K) If Springfield City Schools need more money, I would personally be willing to pay higher taxes.	2.468	**1.931**	**1.971**
All Stakeholder Rank #10 (G) Classroom learning activities and materials are at a demanding cognitive level, e.g., materials require analysis, generalizations, and evaluation over memorization and recall.	2.144	**1.928**	2.229

All Stakeholder Rank #11 (I) Scores on standardized tests are as good as or better than scores from other similar schools.	2.639	2.692	2.706

V. OBSERVATIONS REGARDING EDUCATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS

The SchoolMatch Site Visit Team offers the following general observations:

- It appears that the top down central office leadership approach has focused on creating systemic change without giving adequate attention to creating the internal capacity and commitment to sustain those changes over time. Aside from the school improvement process, members of the Site Visit Team were told by many of those interviewed and surveyed that executive leadership staff often make decisions with little or no input from other building and community based stakeholder groups. Central to building the capacity for sustained improvement is the need for greater involvement by employees, employers, parents, and the community in critical decisions that affect the short and long term success of the school system

- With a free and reduced lunch count of 56.95%, a poverty rate of 32.2%, and kindergarten readiness rate of 81%, the population served by the Springfield City School District has some of the characteristics of small urban districts which do not correlate well with similar higher performing districts on criterion referenced tests. On the other hand, these indicators do not compare favorably with similar cohort districts across the state and nation. The Audit Team believes much of the discrepancy in student achievement scores can be attributed to a lack of curriculum alignment with the Ohio standard and proficiency tests. Frequent changing of curriculum programs and other initiatives work against sustaining effective reform initiatives, thereby creating considerable frustration among building staffs. In spite of these challenges, audit team interviews found teachers to be committed to creating a learning community that supports their professional growth and seeks to improve student academic performance.

- The decline of the industrial and commercial base in Springfield has created a situation where there appear to be more people retired in the community than currently employed.

- The weight of academic emergency has created strain on the professional staff and some student out-migration in the district has occurred.

- During visits and interviews by audit team members, we found compassion and commitment on the part of building level and support staff creating a healthy environment for teaching and learning.

VI.   EDUCATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS COMMENDATIONS

The SchoolMatch Site Visit Team wishes to commend the Springfield City School District for the following goals, programs and practices:

Leadership

- Board of Education leadership: The Board of Education appears to be diligently and properly exercising its statutory policy-making and oversight functions and not micro-managing at the school building level as site team members have observed in many other school systems. Principals and other school leadership personnel indicate that Board members understand their role is not to direct or be involved in the day-to-day activities of the school unit.

- Baldrige-based improvement efforts: The school system has initiated Baldrige systemic and systematic improvement plans at the building level with over 200 staff members trained.

- Benchmarking classified staffing levels: Efforts have been established to provide benchmarking for classified staffing levels in order to produce staffing equity among school buildings, reduce personnel and more appropriately assign staff.

- Replacing and consolidating buildings in partnership with the Ohio Schools Facilities Commission: The District is to be commended for developing and implementing a capital improvement plan designed to leverage state money to provide 82 percent of the investment to replace all existing schools facilities.

Emphasis on Learning

- Advanced Placement programs: The District is to be commended for the percentage of students taking Advanced Placement Examinations (5.2%) which exceeds the mean of 3.0% and the effectiveness level of 3.4%. Additionally, the Board is to be commended for its 2003 decision to pay fees for all students taking Advanced Placement examinations. Such an action removes financial barriers that might inhibit students from earning collegiate credit through the AP program.

- Expanded summer school and extended day programs: The District is to be commended for increasing the number of extended day and summer school programs for students with the greatest needs.

- Early childhood education: Strong initiatives in early childhood education through partnerships with Head Start and the implementation of the Beacon Early Childhood Center have been undertaken. The District is to be commended for its efforts to provide instructional and developmental services for pre-school children.

- Restructured middle school program: The Audit Team commends the District for the implementation of instructional blocks in mathematics and language arts at the middle school level.

- School instructional leadership teams. There are leadership teams at each level at each school as well as within disciplines at the high school level. Leadership teams are effective in curriculum development, implementation and data-driven assessment.

- Curriculum coaches at the elementary level: The District is to be commended for establishing curriculum coaches at the elementary level to help coordinate instructional improvement revisions and better address instructional challenges caused by increasing student mobility. Such efforts help to establish a consistent curricular effort throughout elementary buildings in the District. The initiative augments building leadership in their instructional improvement role.

School Climate

- Latch-Key program and community access of buildings: The District is to be commended for providing an after-school latch-key program (2:30 pm to 6 pm) during school days. In addition, District facilities are highly utilized by community groups after school hours for recreation, community programs and meetings.

- Keifer-Mercy Health Center: The District is to be commended for the six year and on-going working relationship with Mercy Hospital to provide a health center at Keifer Alternative High School. The Center provides a broad range of health services to students in the alternative school and their families throughout the week, thereby providing access to services otherwise unavailable to students and their families. The Health Center staff has been integrated into the Keifer program and school community.

- Building level professional staff climate: Teachers and principals are to be commended for establishing a productive and cooperative working relationship at the building level that is student-centered and emphasizes attention to student learning. Additionally, perception survey data confirm major stakeholder groups agree that teachers and staff work well together.

Monitoring Student Progress

- Improved student achievement in middle school student performance: Student achievement in core academic areas reflects substantial gains over the last four years (2000-2004), as documented by District reporting of student achievement in 6th grade reading, science, writing and mathematics on the Ohio Proficiency Test. (See Appendix F.)

- Special needs children: The District is to be commended for providing opportunities for special needs children in all buildings and at all levels. Programs offered match the diversity of "specialness" in the school population. The staff is to be commended for the implementation of innovative approaches to facilitate the transition from early childhood to K-12 school experiences.

High Expectations

- Champion City Scholars: The District is to be commended for their collaboration with the Clark State Community College Foundation in the development of the Champion City Scholars Program. This program provides 7th through 12th grade students with scholarships, orientation and early awareness of collegiate opportunities and environments.

- National Scholarship Recognition: The District is to be commended for its instructional efforts that resulted in four students achieving National Merit Scholar status during the current school year. In

addition, the District recorded four perfect scores on the mathematics portion of the SAT.

Operations

- Work Requests: The maintenance plant operations department responds to work requests in a timely manner and documents results for the buildings. In the experience of audit team members, this is a highly unusual and extremely positive.

- Health Insurance: The District revised the health insurance plan for employees that saved on the costs of fringe benefits.

- Special Bus Driver Program: Transportation department staff developed a "Our Kids" program in which bus drivers raise money to purchase necessary coats, shoes, book bags, etc., for needy children.

- Purchasing Agreements: Purchasing agreements with vendors and purchasing councils are used to gain competitive pricing for District supplies and equipment.

VII. EDUCATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS
RECOMMENDATIONS

The following includes recommendations made by the Site Visit Team for the improvement of Springfield City Schools. All recommendations are not of the same priority. The Site Visit Team believes special emphasis and attention be given immediately to those recommendations that deal with systemic and cultural leadership improvement. Those items of priority have a greater opportunity to create systemic change that will result in valued and desired outcomes for the Springfield community.

The Site Visit Team observed hardworking and caring central administrators who need to focus on those issues, concerns and communications with the highest payback in terms of increased student and system performance.

Continue mission and constancy of purpose – maintain focus on what is working.

Communication, Community Relations & School System Leadership

- The Communication Process: Greater attention should be given to the entire communication process in the Springfield City School District. It is recommended:

  1. The District Leadership consider a communications audit. Such assessments are available from university communication faculty and graduate students approved by the Organizational Communication Division of the International Communication Association (ICA).

  2. The District Leadership should develop and implement a strategic communications plan, based on the results of the communications audit.

  3. Staff development and training for administrators should include segments on verbal, written, non-verbal and other communication skills.

4. The massive facility construction in Springfield presents an opportunity to display a positive image in the Greater Springfield-Clark County area. Extensive efforts should be made to showcase visual images of the new and modern school buildings on cable television, in the newspaper and on brochures.

5. Improved communication between the central office executive leadership staff and various internal and external stakeholder groups should be initiated to build trust and confidence in decisions made. A comprehensive communication plan should be developed to ensure that building and central office staff are informed on a timely basis when decisions are made. A comprehensive communication plan should be developed to improve external and internal collaborative relationships and implement feedback systems to monitor and measure the effectiveness of central office communication efforts.

6. In communicating with building principals, specific actions need to be taken to increase knowledge of district decision making. Examples of such efforts should include:(1) sharing of recommendations for the Board of Education well in advance of meetings, (2) regular attendance of the Superintendent at bi-weekly meetings with the entire leadership team, (3) utilization of electronic newsletters from the Superintendent's desk to all administrators in the District, (4) sharing of all documents regarding studies conducted for the District, and (5) involvement of building level administrators in District decisions.

7. Expanding regular and on-going relationships with the local cable access Channel 26 to regularly inform the community is recommended. Many districts make extended use of this medium to broadcast school meetings and activities.

8. The Site Visit Team recommends the District give heightened attention to a unified communication effort to identify the school system as an integral part of the community. Research indicates a simple and identifiable logo can be a low-cost way of creating unity. For example, a uniform signage policy with a District logo prominently displayed on all buildings would be helpful. Similarly, school administrators and other key members of the school community should have business cards that carry a uniform logo. Such communications devices have been shown to greatly improve community recognition of the services provided by the school

district, thereby promoting better communication and an improved image throughout the school system.

9. The District has not made efforts in recent years to track students past graduation. An effort to survey 25-26 year old graduates of North and South High Schools should be pursued to more systematically determine how well graduates perceived they were prepared for post-high school endeavors. Sponsors could be solicited to help underwrite the investment. The resulting feedback will be most valuable in ongoing efforts to calibrate the curriculum to current needs.

- Sensitivity to Diversity: Extensive diversity in the District requires heightened attention to communication issues and consequences, especially at the building level. Principals interviewed discussed the diverse student population served in each building. Such references suggest principals are struggling with the diversity of not only student backgrounds but their academic needs as well. The Site Visit Team recommends District leadership seek external training and/or professional development for all staff to assure sensitivity to, and awareness of, different learning styles that reflect varied student backgrounds, cultural experiences and economic circumstances.

- Student mobility: The District is currently experiencing high student mobility rates and students transfer from one school to another within the district, often multiple times during the school year. Such a situation inhibits student learning, increasing instructional stress and often results in poor student performance. The Springfield City Schools is not alone in experiencing the negative impact of increasing student mobility. However, school officials must re-double their efforts to better understand student mobility, take rigorous steps to better manage student transfer within the District and adopt instructional procedures and protocols to minimize poor student performance. Several school systems across the country are aggressively dealing with student mobility. Springfield school officials may find it helpful to open a dialogue with leaders in these school communities. The Site Visit Team recommends two such school systems for consideration: (1) San Bernardino Public Schools, San Bernardino, CA, and (2) Nashua Public Schools, Nashua, NH.

- Rebuilding public trust: School system leadership needs to take steps to engage the community and rebuild public trust in the District. This effort should include measures to make plans and the reasons for decisions more obvious. Such efforts will also require

revisiting/revising Board policy on public involvement in school affairs and governance. It is also recommended that the Board of Education include a residency requirement for the Superintendent of Schools in negotiating the contract of the chief executive officer.

- Welcoming policy: Efforts should be undertaken to develop a standard policy for school staff to use in welcoming and encouraging parents, residents and employers to visit school buildings and classrooms, and to enhance interaction. Such efforts should help increase the comfort level of any and all visitors when they wish to visit schools, and ultimately enhance involvement in schools, programs and services.

- Business Advisory Council: Re-think selection process for Business Advisory Council to assure appropriate representation of businesses located within SCS boundaries

Human Resource Management

- Structured interviews: At the current time, the human resource department uses no structured researched-based methods for interviewing candidates for employment. Use of a structured-type, researched-based interview allows for consistency of candidate review, assures legal compliance and provides the District with an opportunity to screen candidates to meet specific criteria or an established standard. The Site Team recommends District leadership adopt a structured researched-based interview process in order to facilitate improvement in hiring practices and assure quality candidates for advertised positions. Additionally, appropriate training and staff development for school leaders involved in staff selection should be adopted in order to create a more effective interview process.

- Staffing: An aggressive teacher candidate recruitment program is critical to the success of the instructional program, particularly in specialized areas. Currently, recruiting is limited to colleges and universities in the immediate geographic area.   This practice does not allow for identification of a sufficient pool of applicants in order to assure the selection of the highest quality candidates. Therefore, the Site Visit Team recommends expanding the current teacher recruitment program to include a wider array of teacher preparation programs.

- Administrator development: Since it has been a practice in the Springfield City Schools to promote many administrators from within

the system, it is important to establish a systematic process for the recruitment, selection, development and appointment of administrators, particularly building principals. Specifically, it is recommended that the National Association of Secondary School Principals' (NASSP) assessment program be used to recruit and ultimately select individuals for administrative positions.

- Temporary certificates: District leaders report the percentage of teaching staff with temporary certificates or letters of authorization is 4.59 percent. The Site Visit Team notes this condition allows for non-credentialed staff to teach students in areas where they are not properly trained. As a result, students receive a less than optimum level of instruction. Therefore, the Site Visit Team recommends the District consider revising its policies to exclude the employment of individuals who hold temporary certificates.

- Administrative evaluation plan: The current administrative evaluation plan appears to be dysfunctional. It does not allow for establishment of standards, accountability or performance measures, and is often treated as a perfunctory exercise. This practice lowers professional expectations, reduces the importance of accountability, diminishes leadership development and creates the potential for lowered morale. Therefore, the Site Team recommends the District develop and implement an administrative evaluation plan that includes teacher, peer and supervisor input. The plan should tie administrative performance to compensation.

- Teacher evaluation plan: The current Professional Agreement contains a provision for teacher appraisal. The Site Visit Team believes that consistent implementation of the teacher evaluation plan will improve classroom instruction and contribute to enhanced student growth and performance. To that end, the Site Visit Team recommends that careful attention be consistently paid to timeliness, content and uniformity of teacher evaluation criteria contained in the endorsed and adopted Professional Agreement. The teacher evaluation plan needs to be followed and administrators held accountable for completing evaluations.

- Staff Attendance: Data provided by school system officials indicate the discretionary teacher absence rate for 2002-2003 of 6.68 days per teacher. The formula for computing the teacher absence index is found in Appendix C. The effectiveness level should be no more than 5 days per teacher per year. Generally speaking, the higher the teacher absence rate the less effective is a school system. The Site

Visit Team recommends school officials work with the Springfield Education Association to identify and develop a plan to improve teacher attendance.

- Computerized personnel records: The human resource office has a computerized system of personnel records that is inadequate, outdated and does not record information the District currently needs to make personnel decisions. Examples include the inability to document the credentials of applicants for employment as well as staff certification status, degrees, years of service, eligibility for limited and continuing contracts and other personnel records. The personnel system has not been reviewed nor updated for a number of years. The Site Visit Team recommends the District immediately review and make necessary changes to insure the human resources department has a timely, accurate, user-friendly electronic system of tracking personnel records.

Operational Resource Utilization

- Pay scale for bus drivers: Bus drivers are currently paid at the same hourly rate, whether they are actually driving to or from a field trip or athletic activity, or standing by at the site for a return trip. Drivers are not actually performing a driving duty during this "down time." The Site Visit Team recommends the District implement/negotiate a pay scale for bus drivers that distinguishes between drive-time and down-time.

- Time and control system: Classified staff currently record their hours including extra time and overtime using a paper system. This type of system is extremely inefficient because it requires supervisors to spend an inordinate amount of time in approving accurate times for work completed. The Site Visit Team recommends a computerized time and control system be implemented to record and report time. This system should be compatible with the payroll system and should begin on a pilot basis with the transportation department.

- Operation of new buildings: The District has opened new buildings in September, 2003, and are continuing to open new buildings for the 2004-2005 school year. Contractors' warranties expire one year after the date the District officially occupies the building. District maintenance and plant operations staff have not received operations and maintenance manuals, equipment specifications, as-built drawings and training on new equipment, preventive maintenance and other building operational procedures, even though the buildings have

been operational for nine months. This has caused, and will continue to cause, maintenance operations issues that the District staff will not be able to properly address when the year warranty is completed. The Site Visit Team recommends that as-built drawings, equipment specifications, operations and maintenance manuals and training on new equipment needs to be provided for District staff before or at the time the District assumes occupancy of new buildings. These documents need to be provided immediately for the buildings the District has already occupied.

- Computerized work request system: The District currently operates its work request system for the maintenance and plant operations requests using e-mail and telephone calls. The requests are recorded by hand on paper forms. The District has an opportunity with their share of the maintenance bond issue to establish a computerized work request system. This system has not yet been established due to lack of receiving proper materials and software. Therefore, the Site Visit Team recommends the maintenance plan required by the Ohio Schools Facilities Commission (OSFC) be fully implemented as soon as possible, using a computerized work request system.

- Space for Transportation: Currently, the transportation staff is located in two small offices. Bus storage and mechanics space is also very limited. The Site Visit Team recommends the District evaluate means of providing adequate space for buses and transportation staff.

- Maintenance and plant operations staff training: The maintenance and plant operations staff currently are assigned to complete work requests according to their specific trade and skill training. Staff work outside their skills and trade, but are not trained properly to meet the needs of multiple types of requests. The new building construction also requires a maintenance and plant operations staff that can respond to multiple types of trades, requiring a higher level of technology. The Site Visit Team recommends the maintenance and plant operations staff be provided training to meet the needs of multiple trades requests and to meet the requirements of maintaining highly technical equipment in the buildings.

Strategic Decision-Making and Planning

Develop a Strategic Plan: The Site Visit Team recommends collegially developing and implementing, and evaluating a School Board adopted **strategic plan** for continuous school improvement which includes the

following: specific goals, objectives, strategies, student, staff, and school accountability measures, evidence of accomplishments and reporting timelines. This plan should be reviewed and updated annually with an eye toward assessing progress toward meeting goals over the next 3–5 years. All stakeholders, especially building level administrators and employee organizations should be involved in the development of this plan to ensure ownership for its implementation, sustainability, and commitment to achieving desired outcomes.

SPRINGFIELD, OHIO SCHOOL DISTRICT FINANCIAL ANALYSIS

The Springfield, Ohio City School District, like most other Ohio school districts, derives its operating revenues through a combination of state and local sources. The major portion, state support at 70%, is distributed via the provisions of the Ohio foundation program. The local support is derived from property taxes assessed upon the real estate and personal property (tangibles) located in the school district.

Ohio's foundation program calculates a basic cost for each district by multiplying the per pupil foundation level (formula amount) times the number of pupils residing in the district (formula ADM). The current formula amount level set by the legislature is $5,058 per pupil (FY04).

The local share of the basic program cost is calculated as 23 mills (.023) times the district's total property valuation. This local share is subtracted from the basic program cost to arrive at state formula aid.

In addition to formula aid, various categorical aid programs are provided for special education, career and technical education, gifted education, transportation, and disadvantaged pupil aid (DPIA). Still other programs including equity aid, parity aid, excess cost supplement aid and charge–off supplement aid are provided to address certain policy issues or correct flaws in the formula.

Revenue from the foundation is expected to produce $46,639,000 in FY04.

Local revenue for school support is derived almost entirely from property taxes. With a taxable valuation of $648,105,576 (FY04), local taxes are expected to produce $ 17,000,000.

Springfield Revenue

Other
2%

US Government
0%

Local
28%

State
70%

- Local
- State
- US Government
- Other

Percentage of Revenue from State Sources

School System	Percentage
Troup	64.52%
St. Bernard	55.14%
Springfield	70.00%
Niagara Falls	69.40%
Lenior	7.60%
Darlington	55.47%
Danville	63.22%
Christian	74.28%
Battle Creek	69.95%
Altoona	58.96%

Percentage of Revenue (x-axis: 0.00% – 80.00%)
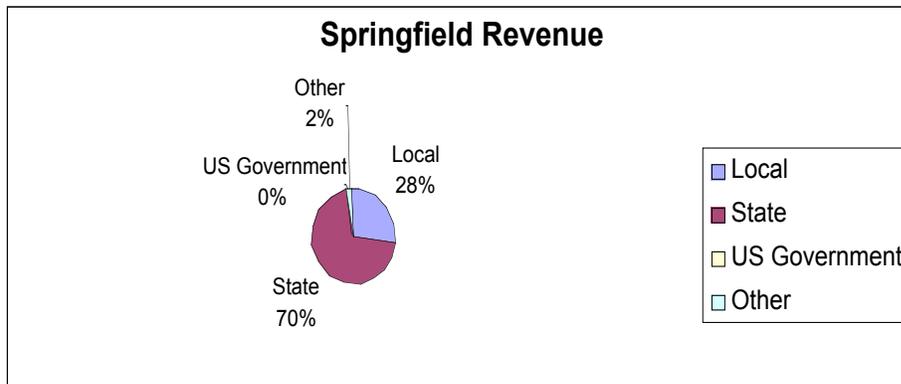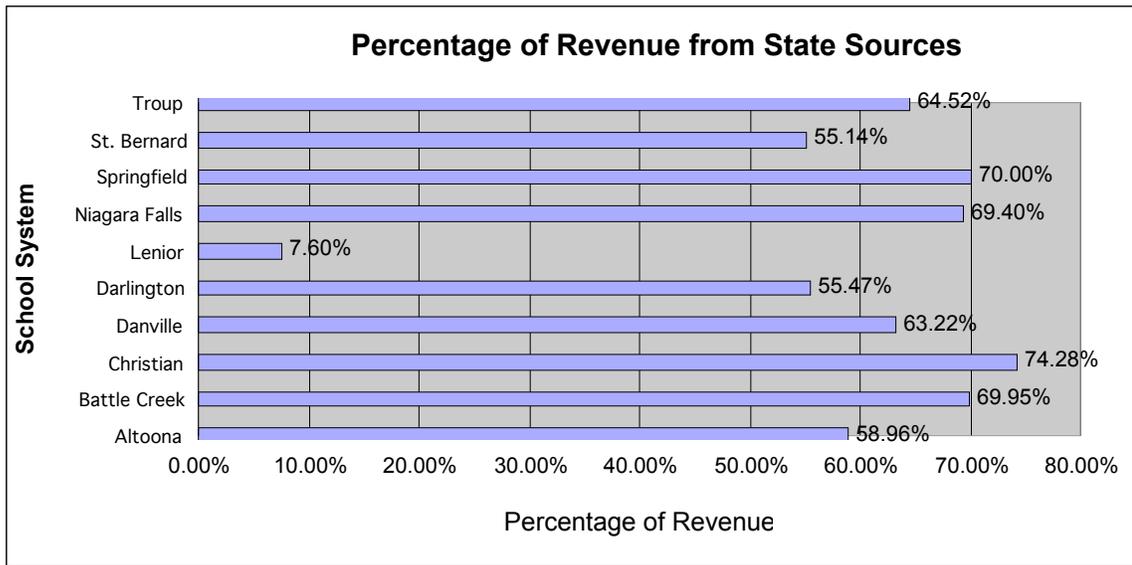
An examination of the revenue patterns of other similar school districts reveals little except for the large percentage of Springfield's revenue coming from the state.

As discussed later, the transfer of approximately 635 students to charter schools and for open enrollment, have cost the district approximately $3.5 million in FY04 alone. The district is unable to reduce expenditures in a commensurate amount because of student distribution, teacher contracts, teacher certification etc.

The percentage of income derived from federal sources is very low compared with several of the peer districts. This leads to the question of whether the district is receiving all of the federal income that may be available. Several districts have found recently that federal income for items such as computers is available. The District should make a significant effort to ascertain if additional federal revenue is available.

Percentage of Expenditures - Instructional Programs

School System	Percentage
Troup	66.66%
Saint Bernard	65.41%
Springfield	54.31%
Niagara Falls	51.33%
Lenoir	36.90%
Darlington	58.27%
Danville	78.11%
Christian	56.51%
Battle Creek	61.50%
Altoona	67.04%

Pecentage (x-axis: 0% – 100%)
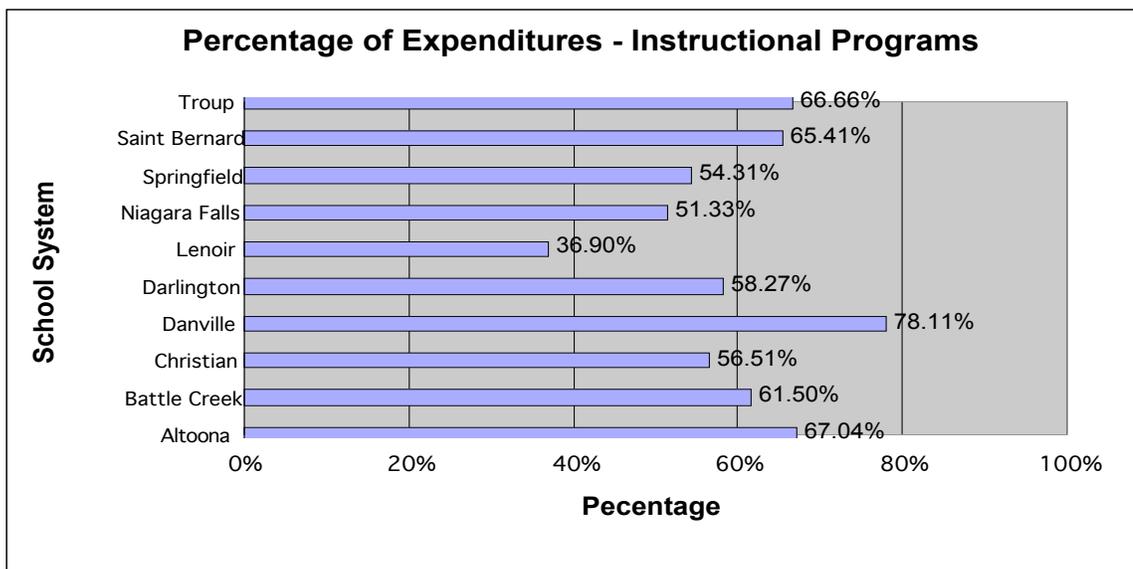
An examination of the expenditures pattern of other similar districts reveals very little except that Springfield spends a smaller percentage of its funds on direct instructional programs than many others.

While general fund revenue has increased between FY02 and FY04 from $68.5 million to $70.5 million, expenditures have increased much faster. The fund balance at the beginning of FY01 was $15.2 million. It has declined so that the ending fund balance at 6/30/04 is expected to be a deficit of –$1.5 million.

In discussions with the treasurer, and later with the assistant treasurer, it was revealed that at the time the board of education approved raises for teachers and others, for FY02 and subsequent years, the board of education was told that cuts would be needed to fund these raises. Many of these cuts were never made.

The district's latest forecast for FY 05, shows the ending balance further in the red amounting to –$5.3 million. The treasurer presented a group of reductions made up of retirement incentives, reductions in force, reductions of summer hours, and reductions in pay level which he maintains will close this gap for FY05. However, one must be suspicious after the poor follow–through cited above.

As a general guideline, the Government Finance Officers Association recommends that 5% to 15% of recurring revenues be maintained as unreserved general fund balance. Springfield has fallen below this range. As of June 30, 2004 Springfield's unreserved general fund balance will be in the negative.

Expectations of salvation from either the state foundation or property taxes are without merit. While property taxes will contract considerably with the expiration of the five–year emergency levy of seven mills, the state foundation may also contract because of an increasing tax duplicate and fewer students. A one million–dollar reduction in state foundation would not be surprising for FY05. A $2.5 million reduction in property taxes is also likely for FY06.

Observations

- During fiscal year 2004, the District lost a total of approximately 635 students because of transfers to community schools and to county school districts. This resulted in a loss of funding from the

Ohio School Foundation of approximately $3.5 million. The District projects another 300 students transferring out of the District in FY05.

- At the time of our review, the district still did not have a single computer database covering staff from both a human resources and payroll perspective. The District's software vendor has not yet provided a single database as an option.

- Although the District's middle schools and high school have converted to electronic grade reporting using the District's software, the elementary schools continue to utilize a paper-based grade reporting system.

Commendations

- The district seems to have done a good job managing its health, life, and dental insurance benefits. The district pays approximately 80% of the cost of health insurance while the employee pays the rest. The district pays 100% of the cost of dental and life insurance for full time employees. The district is self-insured for health insurance; and appears to be maintaining an appropriate balance for incurred but unreported claims. However, no actuarial report was available to support this balance. It also has a stop-loss contract, as well as maximum liability contracts.

- The Springfield City School District has worked quite effectively with the Ohio School Facilities Commission (OSFC) to construct eight new elementary schools and four new middle schools. The state is paying 82% of the cost of this construction, with the rest being paid from a local bond issue. A decision on high school facilities is due shortly.

- While the district is facing huge financial problems, it appears not to be due to a lack of 5-year financial forecasting. The treasurer was able to produce a five-year financial forecast that had been prepared within the last two weeks.

- The District's MIS Director has been with the District for over 30 years and appears very capable of addressing the District's information technology needs, including equipping schools with up-to-date technology and protecting the District's technology assets from viruses, hackers, and other attacks. He is able to

accomplish this even considering the District's limited financial resources.

Recommendations

1. Pursuant to the agreement between the Board of Education and Springfield Education Association, district teachers received raises of 5% as of August 1, 2002 and 4.5% as of August 1, 2003. An additional 5% raise is due to be enacted August 1, 2004.

   At the time the agreement was entered into, the District's ability to fund the raises was contingent upon reductions in staffing levels over the term of the agreement. The District Treasurer communicated the forecasted staffing reductions to the Board of Education. However, as of the time of our review, although many difficult reductions in staffing have been made, sufficient reductions in staffing to meet the budget shortfall have not occurred. Thus, the District is now facing a deficit cash balance in the amount of $1.5 million for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2004. Prior to the agreement, the District maintained a fund balance of approximately $15.2 million. Even larger deficits are forecast for subsequent years should no staffing reductions be made.

   In an attempt to minimize anticipated deficits, the District has implemented a retirement incentive plan, which is projected to save the District $1.7 million in fiscal year 2005. The District has also identified reductions in force in the amount of $1.4 million. Additional salary savings due to non-renewal of some administrative contracts is expected to result in a savings of $677,000. Steadily declining enrollment numbers over the past few years lend support for the need for these staffing reductions.

   These savings are contingent upon action by the administration and Board to ensure that the reductions are made and not later reversed. The District should make every effort to ensure that these reductions in force and other salary savings are finalized and made permanent.

2. Even with the staffing reductions discussed above, the District still faces substantial operating deficits should either/or a planned emergency operating levy for the November 2004 ballot and the renewal of the District's current operating levy, which expires in 2005, fail. Forecasted cash fund deficits are as follows:

June 30, 2005	$5.3 million
June 30, 2006	$13.7 million
June 30, 2007	$25.0 million
June 30, 2008	$37.1 million

We are aware of no proposals by the State of Ohio or any other authority to rescue school districts that are in financial difficulty; therefore, it is incumbent upon District officials to do everything in their power to ensure the passage of the emergency levy in November. We recommend that the District prepare a contingency plan of spending reductions to be implemented in the event of failure of the emergency levy.

IX.   EFFECTIVENESS LEVELS

SPRINGFIELD CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT

AND

INDIVIDUAL SCHOOL

EFFECTIVENESS LEVELS,

MEAN (AVERAGE) COMPARISON LEVELS,

AND

CURRENT DISTRICT and SCHOOL PERFORMANCE LEVELS

A. DISTRICT RESULTS

Springfield City Schools

Grades PK-12. Please also see Appendix F for data which arrived during the site visit in early June, 2004.

Categories of Effectiveness	Mean (Average)	Effectiveness Level	Current District Status
Norm-Referenced Tests:			
Reading	47th percentile	63rd percentile	46th percentile (gr. 2)
			39th percentile (gr. 3)
			45th percentile (gr. 5)
			37th percentile (gr. 7)
Mathematics	47th percentile	63rd percentile	36th percentile (gr. 2)
			42nd percentile (gr. 3)
			44th percentile (gr. 5)
			45th percentile (gr. 7)
Advanced Placement:			
Percent of juniors and seniors enrolled in AP courses	10%	12%	8.2%
Percent of juniors and seniors taking AP examinations	3.0%	3.4%	**5.2%**
Percent of tested eligible for college credit (score of 3,4 or 5) on AP examination	60%	70%	60.1%
American College Test (ACT)	18.4	20.4	19.7
Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT)	950	986	956
Dropout Rate,	18%	15.2%	17.2%

Grades 9–12 cumulative			
Senior Class Grade Point Average	2.4	2.2	**2.65**
Student Attendance Rate	92%	95%	93.8%
Teacher Absence Index (TAI)	7 days	5 days	6.68 days

DISTRICTWIDE TEST RESULTS FOR THE OHIO PROFICIENCY TEST, MARCH 2003

A. READING: Springfield City School District Students in Grades 4, 6, 9 and 10 Compared with Statewide Results, March 2003.

Grade	Springfield Students	Total Number of Students Tested	State
4	44.8	611	66.3
6	36.0	747	65.0
9	73.0	315	86.9
10	88.1	103	93.8

B. MATHEMATICS: Springfield City School District Students in Grades 4, 6, 9 and 10, Compared with Statewide Results, March 2003.

Grade	Springfield Students	Total Number of Students Tested	State
4	36.4	605	58.6
6	26.6	747	52.8
9	45.2	560	71.2
10	66.8	262	82.0

B.   INDIVIDUAL SCHOOL RESULTS

North High School

Grades 9–12

Categories of Effectiveness	Mean (Average)	Effectiveness Level	Current School Status
Advanced Placement:			
Percent of juniors and seniors enrolled in AP courses	10%	12%	7.3%
Percent of juniors and seniors taking AP examinations	3.2%	3.7%	**6.3%**
Percent of tested eligible for college credit (score of 3,4 or 5) on AP examination	60%	70%	**74.2%**
American College Test (ACT)	19	21	19.5
Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT)	960	996	976
Dropout Rate, Grades 9–12 cumulative	11.6%	10.4%	14.9%
Senior Class Grade Point Average	2.4	2.2	**2.51**
Student Attendance Rate	92%	95%	93.8%
Teacher Absence Index (TAI)	7 days	5 days	6.33 days

OHIO PROFICIENCY TEST RESULTS: NORTH HIGH SCHOOL

Reading and Mathematics, Grades 9 and 10, March 2003.

Grade 9	North High Students	Total Number of Students Tested	State
Reading	82.0	111	86.9
Mathematics	56.3	221	71.2

Grade 10	North High Students	Total Number of Students Tested	State
Reading	93.4	33	93.8
Mathematics	69.8	114	82.0

South High School
Grades 9-12

Categories of Effectiveness	Mean (Average)	Effectiveness Level	Current School Status
Advanced Placement:			
Percent of juniors and seniors enrolled in AP courses	7%	10%	**9.93%**
Percent of juniors and seniors taking AP examinations	3%	3.3%	3.1%
Percent of tested eligible for college credit (score of 3,4 or 5) on AP examination	50%	65%	23%
American College Test (ACT)	17.8	19.8	**20**
Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT)	910	946	905
Dropout Rate, Grades 9-12 cumulative	41.2%	21.2%	**21.0%**
Senior Class Grade Point Average	2.2	2	**2.53**
Student Attendance Rate	90%	94%	90.5%
Teacher Absence Index (TAI)	7.5 days	5.5 days	7.32 days

OHIO PROFICIENCY TEST RESULTS: SOUTH HIGH SCHOOL

Reading and Mathematics, Grades 9 and 10, March 2003.

Grade 9	South High Students	Total Number of Students Tested	State
Reading	68.2	144	86.9
Mathematics	37.6	265	71.2

Grade 10	South High Students	Total Number of Students Tested	State
Reading	86.0	45	93.8
Mathematics	69.5	97	82.0

CLARK MIDDLE SCHOOL			
Grades 6–8			
Categories of Effectiveness	**Mean (Average)**	**Effectiveness Level**	**Current School Status**
Norm–Referenced Tests:			
Reading	43rd percentile	59th percentile	41st percentile (gr. 7)
Mathematics	43rd percentile	59th percentile	30th percentile (gr. 7)
Student Attendance Rate	90%	94%	**94.3%**
Teacher Absence Index (TAI)	7.5 days	5.5 days	6.12 days

OHIO PROFICIENCY TEST RESULTS: CLARK MIDDLE SCHOOL

Reading and Mathematics, Grade 6, March 2003.

Grade 6	**Clark Students**	**Total Number of Students Tested**	**State**
Reading	23.6	149	65.0
Mathematics	19.0	150	52.8

FRANKLIN MIDDLE SCHOOL			
Grades 6–8			
Categories of Effectiveness	**Mean (Average)**	**Effectiveness Level**	**Current School Status**
Norm–Referenced Tests:			
Reading	43rd percentile	59th percentile	29th percentile (gr. 7)
Mathematics	43rd percentile	59th percentile	37th percentile (gr. 7)
Student Attendance Rate	90%	94%	93.5%
Teacher Absence Index (TAI)	7.5 days	5.5 days	9.13 days

OHIO PROFICIENCY TEST RESULTS: FRANKLIN MIDDLE SCHOOL

Reading and Mathematics, Grade 6, March 2003.

Grade 6	Franklin Students	Total Number of Students Tested	State
Reading	33.7	89	65.0
Mathematics	24.7	89	52.8

HAYWARD MIDDLE SCHOOL			
Grades 6–8			
Categories of Effectiveness	**Mean (Average)**	**Effectiveness Level**	**Current School Status**
Norm–Referenced Tests:			
Reading	43rd percentile	59th percentile	27th percentile (gr. 7)
Mathematics	43rd percentile	59th percentile	37th percentile (gr. 7)
Student Attendance Rate	90%	94%	**94.8%**
Teacher Absence Index (TAI)	7.5 days	5.5 days	12.3 days

OHIO PROFICIENCY TEST RESULTS: HAYWARD MIDDLE SCHOOL

Reading and Mathematics, Grade 6, March 2003.

Grade 6	Hayward Students	Total Number of Students Tested	State
Reading	15.5	141	65.0
Mathematics	8.3	141	52.8

ROOSEVELT MIDDLE SCHOOL			
Grades 6-8			
Categories of Effectiveness	**Mean (Average)**	**Effectiveness Level**	**Current School Status**
Norm-Referenced Tests:			
Reading	43rd percentile	59th percentile	49th percentile (gr. 7)
Mathematics	43rd percentile	59th percentile	57th percentile (gr. 7)
Student Attendance Rate	92%	95%	**94.6%**
Teacher Absence Index (TAI)	7 days	5 days	8.53 days

OHIO PROFICIENCY TEST RESULTS: ROOSEVELT MIDDLE SCHOOL

Reading and Mathematics, Grade 6, March 2003.

Grade 6	**Roosevelt Students**	**Total Number of Students Tested**	**State**
Reading	56	182	65.0
Mathematics	42	185	52.8

SCHAEFER MIDDLE SCHOOL			
Grades 6-9			
Categories of Effectiveness	**Mean (Average)**	**Effectiveness Level**	**Current School Status**
Norm-Referenced Tests:			
Reading	43rd percentile	59th percentile	41st percentile (gr. 7)
Mathematics	43rd percentile	59th percentile	46th percentile (gr. 7)
Student Attendance Rate	92%	95%	93.1%
Teacher Absence Index (TAI)	7 days	5 days	8.91 days

OHIO PROFICIENCY TEST RESULTS: SCHAFER MIDDLE SCHOOL

Reading and Mathematics, Grade 6, March 2003.

Grade 6	**Schafer Students**	**Total Number of Students Tested**	**State**
Reading	47.8	173	65.0
Mathematics	37.1	173	52.8

FULTON ELEMENTARY			
Grades K-5			
Categories of Effectiveness	Mean (Average)	Effectiveness Level	Current School Status
Norm-Referenced Tests:			
Reading	39th percentile	55th percentile	42nd percentile (gr. 2) 31st percentile (gr. 3) 28th percentile (gr. 5)
Mathematics	39th percentile	55th percentile	30th percentile (gr. 2) 25th percentile (gr. 3) 28th percentile (gr. 5)
Student Attendance Rate	90%	94%	**94.7%**
Teacher Absence Index (TAI)	7.5 days	5.5 days	**5.48 days**

OHIO PROFICIENCY TEST RESULTS: FULTON ELEMENTARY

Reading and Mathematics, Grade 4, March 2003.

Grade 4	Fulton Students	Total Number of Students Tested	State
Reading	30.5	56	66.3
Mathematics	34.7	51	58.6

KENTON ELEMENTARY			
Grades K–5			
Categories of Effectiveness	**Mean (Average)**	**Effectiveness Level**	**Current School Status**
Norm-Referenced Tests:			
Reading	48th percentile	65th percentile	57th percentile (gr. 2) 46th percentile (gr. 3) 56th percentile (gr. 5)
Mathematics	48th percentile	65th percentile	54th percentile (gr. 2) 48th percentile (gr. 3) 46th percentile (gr. 5)
Student Attendance Rate	92%	95%	**94.8%**
Teacher Absence Index (TAI)	7 days	5 days	**3.85 days**

OHIO PROFICIENCY TEST RESULTS: KENTON ELEMENTARY

Reading and Mathematics, Grade 4, March 2003.

Grade 4	Kenton Students	Total Number of Students Tested	State
Reading	55.2	66	66.3
Mathematics	44.8	73	58.6

KENWOOD ELEMENTARY			
Grades K–5			
Categories of Effectiveness	**Mean (Average)**	**Effectiveness Level**	**Current School Status**
Norm–Referenced Tests:			
Reading	43rd percentile	59th percentile	27th percentile (gr. 2) 29th percentile (gr. 3) 46th percentile (gr. 5)
Mathematics	43rd percentile	59th percentile	20th percentile (gr. 2) 29th percentile (gr. 3) 38th percentile (gr. 5)
Student Attendance Rate	90%	94%	**93.7%**
Teacher Absence Index (TAI)	7.5 days	5.5 days	7.37 days

OHIO PROFICIENCY TEST RESULTS: KENWOOD ELEMENTARY

Reading and Mathematics, Grade 4, March 2003.

Grade 4	Kenwood Students	Total Number of Students Tested	State
Reading	30.5	56	66.3
Mathematics	34.7	51	58.6

LAGONDA ELEMENTARY			
Grades K-5			
Categories of Effectiveness	Mean (Average)	Effectiveness Level	Current School Status
Norm-Referenced Tests:			
Reading	47th percentile	63rd percentile	36th percentile (gr. 2) 39th percentile (gr. 3) 36th percentile (gr. 5)
Mathematics	47th percentile	63rd percentile	21st percentile (gr. 2) 36th percentile (gr. 3) 40th percentile (gr. 5)
Student Attendance Rate	92%	95%	**95%**
Teacher Absence Index (TAI)	7 days	5 days	6.73 days

OHIO PROFICIENCY TEST RESULTS: LAGONDA ELEMENTARY

Reading and Mathematics, Grade 4, March 2003.

Grade 4	Average Scores: Lagonda Students	Total Number of Students Tested	State Average
Reading	63.9	80	66.3
Mathematics	56.3	80	58.6

LINCOLN ELEMENTARY			
Grades K-5			
Categories of Effectiveness	**Mean (Average)**	**Effectiveness Level**	**Current School Status**
Norm-Referenced Tests:			
Reading	37th percentile	53rd percentile	31st percentile (gr. 2) 28th percentile (gr. 3) 38th percentile (gr. 5)
Mathematics	37th percentile	53rd percentile	24th percentile (gr. 2) 34th percentile (gr. 3) 27th percentile (gr. 5)
Student Attendance Rate	90%	94%	93.3%
Teacher Absence Index (TAI)	7.5 days	5.5 days	**4.66 days**

OHIO PROFICIENCY TEST RESULTS: LINCOLN ELEMENTARY

Reading and Mathematics, Grade 4, March 2003.

Grade 4	Lincoln Students	Total Number of Students Tested	State
Reading	48.7	38	66.3
Mathematics	40.0	38	58.6

MANN ELEMENTARY			
Grades K-5			
Categories of Effectiveness	**Mean (Average)**	**Effectiveness Level**	**Current School Status**
Norm-Referenced Tests:			
Reading	37th percentile	53rd percentile	**58th percentile (gr. 2)** 42nd percentile (gr. 3) **61st percentile (gr. 5)**
Mathematics	37th percentile	53rd percentile	**57th percentile (gr. 2)** 42nd percentile (gr. 3) **61st percentile (gr. 5)**
Student Attendance Rate	90%	94%	**95.2%**
Teacher Absence Index (TAI)	7.5 days	5.5 days	5.79 days

OHIO PROFICIENCY TEST RESULTS: MANN ELEMENTARY

Reading and Mathematics, Grade 4, March 2003.

Grade 4	**Mann Students**	**Total Number of Students Tested**	**State**
Reading	56.1	71	66.3
Mathematics	44.3	63	58.6

PERRIN WOODS ELEMENTARY			
Grades PK-5			
Categories of Effectiveness	**Mean (Average)**	**Effectiveness Level**	**Current School Status**
Norm-Referenced Tests:			
Reading	37th percentile	53rd percentile	48th percentile (gr. 2) 34th percentile (gr. 3) 42nd percentile (gr. 5)
Mathematics	37th percentile	53rd percentile	39th percentile (gr. 2) 45th percentile (gr. 3) **58th percentile (gr. 5)**
Student Attendance Rate	90%	94%	**94.6%**
Teacher Absence Index (TAI)	7.5 days	5.5 days	5.89 days

OHIO PROFICIENCY TEST RESULTS: PERRIN WOODS ELEMENTARY

Reading and Mathematics, Grade 4, March 2003.

Grade 4	Perrin Woods Students	Total Number of Students Tested	State
Reading	46.8	46	66.3
Mathematics	32.6	46	58.6

SNOWHILL ELEMENTARY			
Grades K-5			
Categories of Effectiveness	Mean (Average)	Effectiveness Level	Current School Status
Norm-Referenced Tests:			
Reading	57th percentile	73rd percentile	66th percentile (gr. 2) 69th percentile (gr. 3) 72nd percentile (gr. 5)
Mathematics	57th percentile	73rd percentile	56th percentile (gr. 2) 72nd percentile (gr. 3) 67th percentile (gr. 5)
Student Attendance Rate	93%	96%	**95.9%**
Teacher Absence Index (TAI)	6.5 days	4.5 days	4.62 days

OHIO PROFICIENCY TEST RESULTS: SNOWHILL ELEMENTARY

Reading and Mathematics, Grade 4, March 2003.

Grade 4	Snowhill Students	Total Number of Students Tested	State Average
Reading	75.3	52	66.3
Mathematics	71.4	49	58.6

SNYDER PARK ELEMENTARY			
Grades K–5			
Categories of Effectiveness	**Mean (Average)**	**Effectiveness Level**	**Current School Status**
Norm-Referenced Tests:			
Reading	41st percentile	57th percentile	38th percentile (gr. 2) 42nd percentile (gr. 3) 42nd percentile (gr. 5)
Mathematics	41st percentile	57th percentile	34th percentile (gr. 2) 46th percentile (gr. 3) 41st percentile (gr. 5)
Student Attendance Rate	90%	94%	**94.3%**
Teacher Absence Index (TAI)	7.5 days	5.5 days	7.18 days

OHIO PROFICIENCY TEST RESULTS: SNYDER PARK ELEMENTARY

Reading and Mathematics, Grade 4, March 2003.

Grade 4	Snyder Park Students	Total Number of Students Tested	State
Reading	41.7	56	66.3
Mathematics	27.3	47	58.6

WARDER PARK-WAYNE ELEMENTARY			
Grades PK-5			
Categories of Effectiveness	Mean (Average)	Effectiveness Level	Current School Status
Norm-Referenced Tests:			
Reading	47th percentile	63rd percentile	52nd percentile (gr. 2) 43rd percentile (gr. 3) 45th percentile (gr. 5)
Mathematics	47th percentile	63rd percentile	39th percentile (gr. 2) 47th percentile (gr. 3) 42nd percentile (gr. 5)
Student Attendance Rate	92%	95%	94.15%
Teacher Absence Index (TAI)	7.0 days	5.0 days	10.39 days

OHIO PROFICIENCY TEST RESULTS: WARDER PARK-WAYNE ELEMENTARY

Reading and Mathematics, Grade 4, March 2003.

Grade 4	Warder Park Students	Total Number of Students Tested	State
Reading	52.2	78	66.3
Mathematics	35.8	85	58.6

BEACON CENTER			
Early Childhood Special Education			
Categories of Effectiveness	**Mean (Average)**	**Effectiveness Level**	**Current School Status**
Teacher Absence Index (TAI)	7.5 days	5.5 days	12.0 days

ELMWOOD SPECIAL CENTER			
Grades 1–12			
Categories of Effectiveness	**Mean (Average)**	**Effectiveness Level**	**Current School Status**
Norm–Referenced Tests:			
Reading	37th percentile	53rd percentile	51st percentile (gr. 2) 25th percentile (gr. 5)
Mathematics	37th percentile	53rd percentile	19th percentile (gr. 2) 15th percentile (gr. 5)
Student Attendance Rate	90%	94%	91.2%
Teacher Absence Index (TAI)	7.5 days	5.5 days	**5.56 days**

KEIFER COMMUNITY CENTER
Grades 8–12

Categories of Effectiveness	Mean (Average)	Effectiveness Level	Current School Status
Dropout Rate	41.2%	21.2%	29.3%
Senior Class Grade Point Average	2.2	2.0	1.98
Student Attendance Rate	90%	94%	88.4%
Teacher Absence Index (TAI)	7.5 days	5.5 days	**5.44 days**

OHIO PROFICIENCY TEST RESULTS: KEIFER COMMUNITY CENTER

Reading and Mathematics, Grades 9 and 10, March 2003.

Grade 9	Keifer Students	Total Number of Students Tested	State
Reading	42.1	39	86.9
Mathematics	21.1	52	71.2

Grade 10	Keifer Students	Total Number of Students Tested	State
Reading	82.1	12	93.8
Mathematics	34.5	33	82.0

X. APPENDICES

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             Effective August 1, 2003

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APPENDIX A

LIST OF DOCUMENTS

EXAMINED

APPENDIX A: LIST OF DOCUMENTS EXAMINED

1. SchoolMatch Databases

2. SchoolMatch Springfield City School District "Report Card"

3. SchoolMatch "School/Community Data" for the Springfield City School District

4. Board of Education Policy Manual

5. Map of School District Including School Attendance Boundaries, 2004

6. 2000–2001 Organizational Chart

7. Springfield City Schools, Home Schooling Report, 2003–2004

8. Springfield City Schools, Open Enrollment Report, 2003–2004

9. Springfield City Schools, Community School Report, 2003–2004

10. Springfield City Schools, Organizational Chart (adopted by the Board of Education, September 26, 2002, Resolution C–3)

11. Springfield City Schools, Administrative Organizational Chart, adopted February 12, 2004

12. Springfield City Schools, 2004 Voter Survey, Final Report, April 16, 2004

13. Springfield City Schools, 2004 Entrance Survey, Final Report, April 23, 2004

14. Springfield City Schools, 2004 Exit Survey, Final Report, April 23, 2004

15. "High Expectations: Transforming High School for Springfield's Future," A White Paper on Rethinking High School Education for the Springfield City Schools, Scott A. Spears, Superintendent, June, 2002. Springfield City Schools, Office of the Superintendent.

16.   Springfield City Schools, Strategic Improvement Plan, Presented September, 2001.

17.   Springfield City Schools, Progress on Strategic Improvement Plan Goals, December, 2003.

18.   Newsletter, Springfield – Your City Schools, the Story Behind the Story

19.   Springfield City Schools, Newspaper Coverage, 2003–2004 (Representing clips compiled June 1, 2003 through May 26, 2004)

20.   Mailer: Springfield City Schools, "A Quick Look Inside Our Schools," Summer, 2003

21.   Springfield City Schools, School Calendar, 200–2004

22.   Springfield City Schools, "Staff Insider," (A monthly newsletter by and for employees of the Springfield City Schools) May, 2004, April, 2004, March, 2004, February, 2004, January, 2004, December, 2003, November 2003

23.   Brochure: Assessment Instruments used by the District for Gifted Identification, (Information for Parents) Springfield City School District, Volume 3, January, 2004

24.   Brochure: Identification of Children Who Are Gifted (Eligibility Criteria, Excerpt from HB 282, Springfield City Schools

25.   Brochure: District Policy and Plan for the Identification of Children Who Are Gifted (Information for Parents) Springfield City Schools

26.   Brochure: School Age Child Care (SACC) Program, Jefferson Center, Springfield City Schools

27.   Brochure: Action Research Mini-Grant, Springfield-Wittenberg Teacher Institute, Wittenberg University

28.   Agreement Between Teamsters Local 284 and The Springfield City School District, Effective October 1, 2001, through September 30, 2004

29.   Professional Agreement Between the Board of Education, Springfield, Ohio and Springfield Education Association, 2002–2005

30.   Springfield City Schools Committee Report: "Staff Attendance Task Force Final Report," June, 2003 (Memorandum of Understanding, Staff Attendance, November 6, 2003 notation)

31.   High School Program of Studies, Springfield City Schools, 2003–2004

32.   Deliberating the 1 vs. 2 High School Decision for SCS – A policy decision of great magnitude for our schools and community

33.   Retrospective 2000–2004, Draft, Initiatives for the Springfield City Schools, Scott A. Spears, Superintendent

34.   Justice Action Mercy, Fact Sheet, An organization committed to empowering people, facts about education in our community.

35.   Summer 2004 Extended School Year Programs, Springfield City Schools

36.   Dollars and Sense, The Cost Effectiveness of Small Schools, KnowledgeWorks Foundation

37.   Region's Lifestyles, Spring, 2004

38.   Region's Business, Spring, 2004

39.   Visitors Guide, Springfield Clark County, Ohio

40.   Agenda, Springfield–Clark County Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors, June 2, 2004

41.   High School Benchmarks, Plant OPS/Maintenance Staff 2004–2005

42.   Springfield City Schools Comprehensive Annual Financial Report FY03

43.   Springfield City Schools Comprehensive Annual Financial Report FY02

44.   Ohio Department of Education SF-3 Report for Springfield City Schools FY04

45.   Springfield five-year Financial Forecast Data 5/2/04

46. Springfield City Schools Experience at the Polls

47. List of other Reductions, Springfield Treasurer 6/3/04

48. Springfield City School District Audit Performed by Auditor of State FY03

49. Effect of 23 Mill Charge-off, Springfield City Schools Treasurer

50. Springfield City Schools, Benefits and Costs, 01-01-04

51. Stop-Loss Agreement Between Anthem Blue Cross and Blue Shield and Springfield City Schools

52. Springfield City Schools District Treasurer's calculation of 3 years salary increases

53. Sample Millage Calculation Notes and Explanation Prepared by Springfield City Schools Treasurer, 06-02-04

54. Springfield City Schools, Expenditure Reduction estimates prepared by Springfield City Schools Treasurer, 05-04

55. 3-year forecast prepared by Springfield City Schools Treasurer, not dated

56. Springfield City Schools Board of Education Resolution dated 5/14/04 Agreement with Ohio Department of Education to avoid deficit balance in FY05

57. Salary schedules and Rule and Regulations for Certificate Administrative Personnel & Classified Administrative Personnel & Select Exempt Administrative Employees 7-27-03 through 7-31-04

58. Springfield City Schools, Self-Insured Fund, 4/1/04

59. Springfield City Schools, Teacher Salary Schedule, 8/1/03

60. Springfield City Schools, Teacher Salary Schedule, 8/1/04

61. Springfield City Schools, Supplemental Salary Schedule, 2003-2004

62. Springfield City Schools, Supplemental Salary Schedule, 2004-2005

63.   Springfield City Schools, Teamster Salary Schedule, 2003–2004, Effective 10/1/03

64.   Springfield City Schools, District Administrators Daily Group Rate Chart, Effective 8/1/02

65.   Springfield City Schools, Permanent Appropriations

66.   Agreement Between Board of Education of the Springfield City School District and Teamsters Local Union NO. 284, 9/1/03 through 8/31/04

APPENDIX B

LEVELS OF ACHIEVEMENT

APPENDIX B: LEVELS OF ACHIEVEMENT

There are different levels of achievement – from minimum to absolute. Depending on where a school/school district begins, it ought to work to achieve higher levels, unless it already is at the absolute level. In most human activities, there are four levels of achievement:
- § Basic or minimum achievement
- § Normative achievement
- § Effective achievement
- § Absolute achievement

1.   Basic or Minimum Achievement
Basic levels are the minimum levels that will be accepted, below which adverse action will occur, and below which performance is not acceptable. Minimum levels for schools are usually established:
- § by the state,
- § by the state board of education,
- § by the department of education, or
- § by the local school board.

In some areas, minimum levels may be established by accreditation agencies. Often basic levels deal with books, certification, adequate space and personnel, curriculum guides, philosophy, etc. To meet basic levels of achievement only is to be minimally effective.

2.   Normative Achievement:
Normative achievement levels are those levels achieved by the average of a group. This level of achievement places a school at the center of a group of mean-matched schools. Being average is not generally considered an excellent position.

3.   Effective Achievement:
Effective achievement levels (or "Effectiveness Levels") are those levels achieved by schools that are one standard deviation above normative levels. They are usually achieved by 15–20 percent of the group. Being one standard deviation above the mean of a population is considered to be effective. If at this level, a school is doing extremely well – a level reached by 20–25 percent of schools in a mean-matched group of schools.

4.   Absolute Achievement:
Absolute achievement levels mean being the best in any category. Only one or a

few schools attain absolute achievement levels. Absolute levels are extremely difficult to
achieve, but there are always a few who do. Having 100 percent average daily attendance, for example, is achievement of an absolute level.

APPENDIX C

FORMULA FOR COMPUTING

TEACHER ABSENCE INDEX

| APPENDIX C: | FORMULA FOR COMPUTING TEACHER ABSENCE |
| | INDEX (TAI) |

The formula for computing the Teacher Absence Index (TAI) of teachers is as follows:

$$\frac{A - [B + C]}{D}$$

where:

A = the total days of absence of all teachers during the entire school year.

B = the total days of absence of all teachers during the year which were composed of periods of five or more days of consecutive absence.

C = the number of days of absence which were school-related and approved for all teachers during the entire year.

D = the total number of teachers.

APPENDIX D

SCHOOL ACCOUNTABILITY PROGRAM:

MODEL FORM

APPENDIX D:	SCHOOL ACCOUNTABILITY PROGRAM MODEL

SCHOOL UNIT ACCOUNTABILITY

Accountability Program for Monitoring Specific School Improvement Objectives

School _____

Principal _____

Policy base: Policy requiring superintendent of schools to establish accountability for achieving school improvement objectives. School improvement objectives are to be established against effectiveness levels and the school's database.

School Improvement Objectives: (samples)
- ß Increase attendance from ____ percent ADA to ____ percent ADA.
- ß Improve the achievement levels in mathematics at grade twelve from
- ß 49 percent to 65 percent passing.

Central Office Supervisor _____

Critical Dates: **Activity Accomplished:**
[date]   Report reviewed by School Board
[date]   School improvement plan developed
[date]   Review of progress
[date]   Review of progress
[date]   Evaluation of school improvement
[date]   Report to School Board

Products required:
School improvement objectives related to effectiveness levels over a 3-year period.
Analysis of pre-post student attendance data.
Final report to the school board and the community.

Dissemination required:
School improvement objectives to appropriate persons/groups.
Data analysis to appropriate persons/groups.
School board reports to appropriate persons/groups.

Compliance validation:

_____   _____
Superintendent of Schools   Principal

APPENDIX E

SUGGESTED LANGUAGE FOR

BOARD OF EDUCATION POLICIES

RELATED TO SCHOOL EFFECTIVENESS

Springfield City School District

As the Board of Education of the Springfield City School District continues its revision of existing policy, the SchoolMatch visitation team recommends that the Board consider using the following suggested language for policies which need to be strengthened or adopted. These suggested policies are grounded in effective school research and have been developed by SchoolMatch auditors, based on expertise and the consultation of reference materials, state Board of Education policy guidelines, and School Board policy manuals from effective school systems around the country.

Contained here are model policies for each of the 26 areas examined for effective policies by SchoolMatch auditors. In the Springfield City School District, several policies related to effectiveness are in place (see Section II, pages 18–19). Areas in which the site visit team believes policies need to be strengthened or developed are noted with an asterisk (*).

Suggested School Board Policy Language

1. Instructional Objectives

It is the policy of the District to establish long–range strategic instructional objectives which shall be annualized. There will be three to five year appropriate annual targets.

2. Homework

Homework, as long as it is properly designed, carefully planned and geared to the development of the individual student, meets a real need and has a definite place in the educational program. Homework is not used for disciplinary purposes. The extent and type of homework given is decided by the classroom teacher within the framework of specific instructional plans.

Homework is assigned to help the student become more self-reliant, learn to work independently, improve the skills that have been developed and complete certain projects such as the reading of worthwhile books and the preparation of research papers. Home study assignments also afford a way for parents to acquaint themselves with the school program and their own children's educational progress.

3. Care of School Property

It is the policy of the school district to inventory all school properties and update the inventory on an annual basis, and to account for deletions and additions.

4. Superintendent Authority Over School Personnel

It is the policy of the Board of Education that the Superintendent of Schools shall have sole responsibility within the law for the employment, placement, transfer and termination of employees within provisions of state laws and federal regulations.

5. Staff Development

All staff will receive appropriate staff development for all new programs introduced in the district. In addition, staff will be involved in decision-making to determine the areas of the school program in which they desire or need additional training.

6. Personnel Evaluation

A determination of the efficiency and effectiveness of the professional and support staffs is a critical factor in the overall operation of the district. An ongoing evaluation program is implemented to provide a record of service, to provide objective evidence for employment and personnel decisions and to promote the improvement of instruction as part of the goals of the district. Procedures used in the evaluation process are subject to Board approval or in accordance with the negotiated agreement. Complete and appropriate evaluation records are maintained.

7. School-site Management

It is the policy of the School Board that the Superintendent of Schools establish school-based decision making in the District and that school

site management operate within the limits of budget controls, Board policies, professional ethics and the requirements of law. Decentralization shall be accompanied with school unit accountability measures. The Superintendent shall provide a yearly report on the degree to which school- based decision-making is contributing to enhanced school results and management efficiency.

8.* Policy on Periodic Reporting of Student Performance Data

It is the policy of the Board of Education that teachers provide a rigorous program of instruction and evaluation, including homework, and that all school personnel shall maintain high expectations for all students. Pupil performance data shall be a high priority for all schools. It is the policy of the Board of Education to periodically report pupil performance data to parents (guardians) and to the community.

9.* School Rules and Regulations

The Board reviews regulations developed by the administration to implement policy. The Board revises or nullifies such regulations only when they are inconsistent with policies developed by the Board or when they are not in the best interest of the District.

The Board's approval of regulations is accomplished by the same procedures established for the adoption of policies.

Before issuance, District-wide regulations are properly titled and coded as appropriate to subject and in conformance with the codification system selected by the Board. Those officially approved by the Board are so marked; all others appearing in the manual are considered approved, provided they are in accordance with the accompanying Board policy.

10. Public Involvement in School Affairs

Policy A:
Community participation in the schools is essential to promote and maintain the quality of education for all students. In addition to electing fellow citizens to represent them on
the School Board, all citizens may express ideas, concerns and judgments about the schools to the administration, to the staff, to any appointed advisory body, and to the Board. Ideas should be expressed to the responsible individual in an appropriate fashion.

The Board and the staff give consideration to the advice they receive from individuals and community groups. Final authority for all decisions rests with the Board.

Policy B: (full text)

Community participation in the schools is essential to promote and maintain the quality of education for all students. In addition to electing fellow citizens to represent them on the school board, all citizens may express ideas, concerns, and judgments about the schools to the administration, to the staff, to any appointed advisory body and to the Board. Ideas should be addressed to the responsible individual in an appropriate fashion. Residents may be invited by the Board to act as advisors, individually and in groups, in such areas as:

1. clarifying general ideas and attitudes held by residents in regard to the schools;
2. developing Board policies under which the school system is to be managed;
3. establishing administrative arrangements and regulations designed to help implement these policies;
4. determining the purposes of courses of study and special services to be provided for students;
5. evaluating the extent to which these purposes are being achieved by present policies and/or
6. solving a specific problem or set of closely related problems about which a decision must be made.

The Board and the staff give consideration to the advice they receive from individuals and community groups. Final authority for all decisions rests with the Board.

11. Parent Participation in School Governance

The Board of Education recognizes that a child's education is a responsibility shared by the school and family, and believes that parent participation in the schools is of primary importance. The Board agrees that to effectively educate all students, school personnel and parents must work together as knowledgeable partners. It is the policy of The Board of Education that each school will provide structures for parents and community members to be involved in specific school-level shared decision-making activities. These activities are not restricted to, but may include, the following:

a. Participation of an active Parent/Teacher Organization
b. Elected Parent Representatives
c. Representation on school committees and school improvement teams dealing with subjects such as curriculum, discipline, homework or other issues of mutual concern to parents and school personnel

12.* School Unit Accountability

It is the policy of the Board that the Superintendent of Schools establish an individual school accountability program. Guidelines for the accountability program shall be developed by the Superintendent, and each school shall utilize school databases to establish effectiveness levels to be achieved, the time period over which effectiveness levels are to be attained and the method by which these levels will be measured. Yearly reports of progress shall be made. Principals shall be trained in understanding school demographics, school effectiveness levels, and strategies for improving school results. The attainment of school effectiveness levels shall be a portion of the evaluation of the principal's performance.

13. Superintendent/Principal Leadership

It is the policy of the District that the Superintendent and Principal shall have the
responsibility and authority to select, provide supervision, and evaluate all staff members who report to them.

14. Separation of Policy-making and Administration/Methodology

The Board of Education believes that the legislation of policies is the most important function of a school board and that the execution of the policies should be the function of the Superintendent and staff. Board policies should be broad statements of general direction and accountability with authority delegated to the Superintendent for implementation.

Therefore, the Superintendent shall have the authority for the execution of Board policies, the operation of the internal system designed to serve the school program, and for keeping the Board informed about school operations.

15.* High Expectations of Staff and Students

The Board encourages students and staff to set high expectations for themselves. The Board further encourages students and staff to celebrate their achievements, once accomplished.

16. Curriculum and Content Equity

It is the policy of the District to provide equal opportunity to students and staff in selecting courses and assuring that the curriculum and content be free of racial and gender bias.

17. Monitoring Student Performance

The Board has established high student achievement as an important student priority. Student performance shall be monitored using systematic procedures to measure student achievement. Such procedures document achievement in specific areas, establish need for instructional improvement and develop priorities for the allocation of resources. Reports on student performance shall be presented to the Board and to parents on a regular basis.

18. Policy on Public Reporting of Student Performance Data

Policy A:
It is the policy of the Board of Education that teachers provide a rigorous program of instruction and evaluation, including homework, and that all school personnel shall maintain high expectations for all students. Pupil performance data shall be a high priority for all schools. It is the policy of the Board of Education to periodically report pupil performance data to parents (guardians) and to the community.

Policy B:
The Superintendent shall make available to the public, on a regular basis, the results of student assessment at the school level and the district level.

19.* Recognition of Outstanding Performance by Students and Staff

The Board recognizes that from time to time staff and students set themselves apart by outstanding performance and/or achievement. The Board directs the Superintendent to call attention with appropriate recognition, including financial incentives, to those accomplishments on an ongoing basis.

20. Community Partnerships

It is the policy of the school district to establish community partnerships which support the educational efforts of the school district. Such partnerships shall be approved by the principals of the schools in which they are established and shall be presented to the school board for information purposes.

21.* School Climate

The Board recognizes the importance of school climate for engaging students in quality work and in establishing a climate conducive to optimal student learning. School climate includes such elements as student respect for the physical plant, strong parent and community involvement, and positive staff and student morale. The Board directs the Superintendent to address school climate and measure school climate in the respective buildings on a periodic basis.

22.* School Standards

It is the policy of the District that the Superintendent establish school improvement plans for each school based on individual school demographics and current individual school results in student achievement. Each principal shall maintain a school database to be used for developing school improvement plans.

23. School Volunteers

The Board believes one of the greatest resources available may be found in the citizens of the community who have special knowledge and talents to contribute to the District. The use of citizens as volunteers within the school program enhances the educational process not only for students but also for the community as well. Volunteers may provide additional support in the classroom, promote community–school cooperation in facilitating the learning process and provide for individuals who have expertise in various areas to be used as resource persons.

Recruitment and selection of volunteers is done at the local building level. Interested individuals should contact the building principals or his/her designee. The interest and abilities of the volunteers are to be considered when making assignments.

All volunteers shall be registered with the District office and at the

appropriate building. Standard procedures for record keeping include hours contributed by various volunteers, types of services or donations made and an application kept on file at the local school for any volunteer who works directly with students, especially in tutorial relationships.

Volunteers who work directly with students may be required to have a criminal record check.

24. Equal Opportunity Employment

The district provides equal opportunities for employment, retention and advancement of all personnel.

This Board encourages all personnel to assist in the accomplishment of this goal through their personal commitment to the concept of equal opportunity for all personnel regardless of race, color, national origin, citizenship status, religion, sex, economic status, age or disability.

25.* Data-based Decision-making

The Board has established high student achievement as an important student priority. Student achievement data shall be used to establish district goals as well as school-by-school achievement objectives. Achievement data shall also be used for planning and allocation of resources. Annual and long-range plans shall be developed on the basis of databases which will include school, local, state and federal statutes.

26. Access to Technology

The Board of Education directs the Superintendent to develop a technology plan that includes provision of appropriate computer laboratories, allocations for classroom technology, transportation to and from computer lab facilities, a resource of "check-out" computer and software for use by students off-site (particularly by students who qualify for free and reduced price lunch), and adequate technical support and training for staff.

APPENDIX F:	SPRINGFIELD CITY SCHOOLS STUDENT PERFORMANCE TREND DATA, OHIO PROFICIENCY TEST, 1997–1998 THORUGH 2003–2004, GRADES 4 AND 6

APPENDIX G:	SPRINGFIELD CITY SCHOOLS ORGANIZATIONAL CHARTS, FEBRUARY 12, 2004 AND SEPTEMBER, 2002

APPENDIX H:	OHIO DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION–DIVISION OF SCHOOL FINANCE SF–3 REPORT

APPENDIX I: PAST SPRINGFIELD CITY SCHOOLS EXPERIENCE AT THE POLLS

APPENDIX J: **SPRINGFIELD CITY SCHOOLS–TEACHER SALARY SCHEDULE EFFECTIVE AUGUST 1, 2003**

APPENDIX K:	SPRINGFIELD CITY SCHOOLS–TEACHER SALARY SCHEDULE EFFECTIVE AUGUST 1, 2004

APPENDIX L: LIST OF OTHER REDUCTIONS FROM SPRINGFIELD TREASURER–JUNE 3, 2004

APPENDIX M: **SPRINGFIELD CITY SCHOOLS FIVE YEAR FORCAST MADE MAY 21, 2004**