



June 29, 2017

State of Arizona  
Office of the Auditor General  
2910 N. 44th Street, Suite 410  
Phoenix, AZ 85018

Attn: Debra Davenport, Auditor General  
Michael Quinlan, Audit Manager

Dear Ms. Davenport and Mr. Quinlan,

Blue Ridge Unified School District has received and reviewed the Preliminary Draft Performance Audit conducted for fiscal year 2015. While the report provided welcome recommendations to enhance and improve district procedures, it also provided validation of the District's efforts in providing a quality education to its students, support for its staff, and reflecting its commitment to fiscal responsibility as effective stewards of taxpayer funds.

The information shared has provided Blue Ridge an opportunity to make improvements toward continued efficiency, compliance and transparency. The District will comply with all recommendations wherever feasible within the limitations of resources, as noted in the District's response. Blue Ridge Unified School District's mission is to prepare every student for success in career and college readiness. The District will maintain a tight focus on aligning and maximizing District resources in pursuit of our mission.

Blue Ridge Unified School District would like to thank your audit team for the insight, professionalism, and courtesy throughout the process. Our staff would like to express our appreciation for the chance to engage in meaningful collaboration with the Auditor General's Office. Please do not hesitate to contact us with any questions or comments regarding our response.

Sincerely,

Michael L. Wright  
Superintendent of Schools

## **Finding 1: District should strengthen purchasing, computer, and building access controls**

District Response: The District concurs with this finding and has taken steps to correct these findings.

**Recommendation 1:** The District should ensure that it requires an independent review and approval for all of its purchases prior to the purchases being made.

District Response: District management will ensure that all purchases are independently reviewed and approved before purchases are made. The District will also remind all staff members of the process and procedures of purchasing before a purchase order is created.

**Recommendation 2:** The District should implement and enforce stronger password requirements for its computer network and accounting system.

District Response: The District concurs with the recommendation and has changed the criteria used for creating computer access passwords. These requirements meet common guidelines for stronger passwords.

**Recommendation 3:** The District should limit employees' access to the accounting system to only those accounting system functions needed to perform their job responsibilities, including transferring administrator-level access to someone outside of the business office.

District Response: The District concurs with the recommendation and will define access levels as defined by job positions and appropriate security access will be implemented. The IT Administrator will be trained on managing access controls for the accounting system by the software vendor.

**Recommendation 4:** The District should review its formal IT contingency plan to ensure it is complete and test it periodically to identify and remedy any deficiencies.

District Response: The District concurs with this recommendation and will review the district's current contingency plan to ensure it currently and thoroughly meets the needs of the District. The District will also create a way to test the plan for effectiveness.

**Recommendation 5:** The District should implement controls over its process for producing, distributing, and tracking building keys, including maintaining a complete and up-to-date distribution log, establishing a process for determining the appropriate access level for key holders, and implementing a user agreement outlining the rules and policies that must be followed regarding the use of district keys.

District Response: The voters of the district approved a \$15 million bond in November 2016 which will allow the District to implement controls over its process for producing, distributing and tracking building keys, including maintaining a complete and up-to-date distribution log, establishing a process of determining the appropriate access level for key holders, and implanting a user agreement outlining the rules and policies that must be followed regarding the use of District keys.

## **Finding 2: District should improve controls over transportation program**

District Response: The District concurs with this finding and has already implemented new procedures to ensure compliance with this recommendation.

**Recommendation 1:** The District should accurately calculate and report to ADE the actual miles driven and eligible students transported for state transportation funding purposes and ensure it maintains documentation to support the numbers reported.

District Response: District management will ensure that the transportation staff will accurately calculate and report to ADE the actual miles driven and eligible students transported for state funding purposes and will ensure it maintains documentation to support the numbers reported. The District will also ensure that staff is trained to follow the state guidelines regarding this process.

**Recommendation 2:** The District should ensure that bus preventative maintenance is conducted in a systematic and timely manner in accordance with its schedule and the State's *Minimum Standards*.

District Response: The district has implemented a bus preventative maintenance schedule in a systematic and timely manner in accordance with its schedule as determined by the Transportation Supervisor. In order for the district to maintain compliance with the State's Minimum Standards, the transportation staff has implemented a new procedure where each bus deficiency is addressed and repaired immediately.