



## REPORT HIGHLIGHTS PERFORMANCE AUDIT

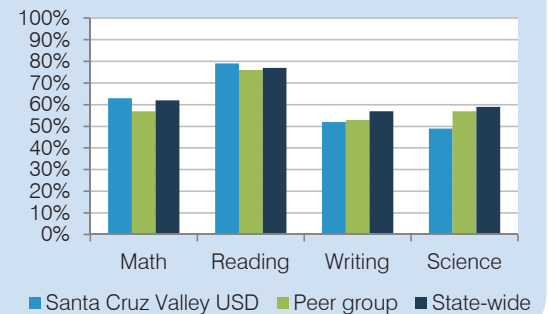
## Similar student achievement and reasonably efficient operations

### Our Conclusion

In fiscal year 2012, Santa Cruz Valley Unified School District's student achievement was similar to peer districts', and its operations were reasonably efficient overall. The District's per pupil administrative costs were much lower than peer districts', on average. However, the District lacked adequate controls over its computer network and systems. The District's per pupil plant operations costs were also lower than peer districts', in part because the District operated less square footage than the peer districts averaged, but also because the District has been proactively managing its plant operations to keep costs down by closing or leasing out unused facilities and improving its energy efficiency. Further, despite higher per pupil costs in food service and transportation, the District operated in a reasonably efficient manner in these programs as well, with a similar cost per meal as peer districts', on average, and efficient bus routes overall.

**Student achievement similar to peer districts'**—In fiscal year 2012, Santa Cruz Valley USD's student AIMS scores were slightly higher than peer districts' averages in math, similar in reading and writing, and slightly lower in science. Further, under the Arizona Department of Education's A-F Letter Grade Accountability System, Santa Cruz Valley USD received an overall letter grade of A for fiscal year 2012. Ten of the peer districts received B letter grades, six received Cs, and two received Ds. The District's 80 percent graduation rate was similar to the peer districts' 83 percent average and the State's 77 percent average.

Percentage of students who met or exceeded state standards (AIMS)  
Fiscal year 2012



**District's operations reasonably efficient**—In fiscal year 2012, Santa Cruz Valley USD's operations were reasonably efficient. Specifically, the District's per pupil administrative costs were much lower than peer districts', on average, because it did not employ certain administrative positions and paid lower salaries for some other administrative positions. The District's per pupil plant operations costs were also lower than peer districts', in part because the District operated less square footage than the peer districts averaged, but also because the District has been proactively managing its plant operations to keep costs down by closing or leasing out unused facilities and improving its energy efficiency. Despite higher per pupil costs in food service and transportation, the District operated in a reasonably efficient manner in these programs as well, with a similar cost per meal as peer districts', on average, and efficient bus routes overall.

Comparison of per pupil expenditures by operational area  
Fiscal year 2012

	Santa Cruz Valley USD	Peer group average
Administration	\$628	\$748
Plant operations	800	933
Food service	464	354
Transportation	513	369

## Inadequate computer controls increased risk of errors and fraud

**Increased risk of unauthorized access to critical systems**—In fiscal year 2012, Santa Cruz Valley USD lacked adequate password requirements for access to its accounting and student information systems. The District also allowed one employee too much access to its accounting system by giving this employee full system access. Additionally, the District maintained 24 active generic user accounts. Generic accounts are not assigned to specific individuals and create additional risk because it is difficult



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or impossible to hold anyone accountable if inappropriate activity is conducted using these accounts. The District also had inadequate procedures for ensuring that only current employees had access to its computer network. Auditors reviewed the District's network access list and found accounts for 36 users who no longer worked for the District. Additionally, the District did not have procedures to identify possible security breaches to its systems or to respond to incidents if they occurred.

**Lack of disaster recovery plan**—In fiscal year 2012, the District did not have a written, up-to-date, and tested disaster recovery plan, even though it maintained critical student and accounting information on its network and systems. A written and properly designed disaster recovery plan would help ensure continued operations in the case of a system or equipment failure or interruption.

## Recommendations

The District should:

- Implement and enforce stronger password requirements.
- Limit employees' access to only those accounting system functions needed to perform their job responsibilities.
- Eliminate or minimize generic user accounts for its network and systems and properly control any generic accounts that are considered necessary by disabling them when not in use.
- Remove employee computer network access promptly upon termination of employment.
- Develop a method to ensure that security incidents are detected in a timely fashion.
- Create a formal IT disaster recovery plan and test it periodically.